

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
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**Executive Board**

**Minutes of January 11, 2017 Meeting**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hymel on January 11, 2017 at 3:42 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945.

**Board Members Present:**

County of Marin	Matthew Hymel
Marin County Sheriff	Robert Doyle
Fire Services	Richard Pearce
Police Departments	Mike Norton
Ross Valley Cities/Towns	Todd Cusimano

**Board Members Absent:**

City of San Rafael	Chris Gray
City of Novato	Matt McCaffrey
Southern Marin Cities/Towns	Greg Chanis
Special Districts	Tom Roach

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA Deputy Executive Officer- Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Operations Officer	Pat Echols
County Communications Engineer	Richard Chuck
Recording Secretary	Lauren Pallas

A. Election of Executive Board Vice Chair

Cassingham noted with the departure of Jim McCann from the Executive Board, election of a new Executive Board Vice Chair was in order.

Hymel asked for nominations. Doyle nominated Cusimano. There were no other nominations.

*M/S/P Doyle/Pearce to elect Cusimano as Executive Board Vice Chair.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

B. Consent Calendar

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved with one motion unless a member of the Executive Board or the public requests that separate action be taken on a specific item.

- 1) Minutes from November 9, 2016 Executive Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Report No. 50 on Strategic Plan Implementation
- 3) Bi-monthly Report on MERA Reserve Funds Balance
- 4) Report No. 25 from Next Gen Project Oversight Committee (NGPOC)
- 5) Confirmation of Next Gen Project Oversight Committee (NGPOC) –  
Members and Alternates

Cassingham requested the removal of Item B-5 from the Consent Calendar for an update.

*M/S/P Pearce/Cusimano to approve Consent Calendar Items 1 through 4 as presented.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

Cassingham noted that Item B-5, Confirmation of Next Gen Project Oversight Committee (NGPOC) Members and Alternates, should be revised as it has been confirmed there is no alternate for Committee Member McCarthy.

*M/S/P Pearce/Cusimano to approve Consent Calendar Item 5 as revised.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

C. Executive Officer's Report – (Cassingham)

1) MERA Participation in the Marin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Jeffries presented his Report, noting County OES has started a process to develop a Multi-Agency Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. OES has reached out to Special Districts, including MERA, to join in this effort. This will require little effort from MERA since its hazards have already been identified by its member agencies. Our participation could permit application for FEMA type grants for resiliency projects.

Jeffries will provide descriptions of MERA's current and Next Gen Systems to OES. Since he already represents the City of Novato and Novato Fire at these meetings, and can easily represent MERA. After the Board of Supervisors approves the Plan, it will be presented to the various agencies for their approval in mid-2017. Cassingham noted she had sent a letter to Doyle regarding MERA's administrative intent to participate.

2) Updated on Non-Member MERA System User Letters of Agreement (LOAs)

Cassingham updated her report noting there are now 8 non-member user agreements in hand of the 22 total non-member users. Marin General, Nicasio Fire Volunteers and Norcal Ambulance have just returned their LOAs. The challenge has been identifying point people to shepherd the LOAs through each agency's approval channels.

Cassingham hoped all LOAs would be signed and returned in the next month or two. Pearce asked if help was needed should there be reluctance or pushback. Cassingham said some language changes have been accommodated without impacting the intent of the LOAs.

3) Other Information Items

Cassingham noted a Notice of Cancellation of the January 25, 2017 Governing Board meeting will be distributed and posted tomorrow due to lack of agenda items. It is hoped the Motorola final proposal and contract will be on the Governing Board's February 22, 2017, meeting agenda.

D. Operations Reports – (Echols)

1) Update on Next Gen Project

Echols provided a Project update noting we are in the home stretch with Motorola. Nearly all of the technical issues have been addressed with the exception of Fire Station Alerting and the GPS option now under review. The Finance Ad Hoc Advisory Board met with the Negotiating Team last week to review Motorola's numbers, which were optimistically received. Gaffney will review cost details and get back next week.

Echols said MERA General Counsel and County Counsel will be reviewing contract terms and conditions in light of the Proposal components. The County's standard contract was part of the vendor RFP and it was identified as the base document. Motorola, in their proposal, made comments and suggested certain revisions. Motorola also has its own contract called Communications Services Agreement that they have proffered as their standard customer agreement for our consideration. Embedded within the Proposal are technical terms and conditions related to Project performance that will have legal implications.

Echols said there will be a DPW and MERA staff meeting after this one to review MERA General Counsel's comments, which will be followed by a conference call with County Counsel. The intent is to have the final contract go to the Governing Board on February 22 and the Board of Supervisors on March 7. Jeffries said we are looking at a prepackaged change order for Station Alerting with cost estimates from two vendors. By then, the review of the GPS option should be done.

Pearce said some horse trading of sites has been discussed along with a review of existing and greenfield sites. He also noted Chuck's photos of the level of effort required to install MERA mobiles in the rear of new vehicles, which requires extensive interior disassembly. Echols said DPW will go back to Motorola since the \$75 installation quote per car will require a new estimate due to the intricacy of work needed for trunk mounting.

In response to Pearce, Echols said Motorola has responded to the coverage analyses of 4 to 5 San Francisco sites, including the VA Hospital, Sutro, Nob Hill, Clay and Ellis high-rise and Deems Street in the Presidio. They overlaid these sites with Wolfback and Muir Beach. Wolfback and Muir Beach provide much better coverage for the Southern Peninsula and Muir Beach areas, respectively.

Hymel asked which Committees or Executive Board would be reviewing the Contract before the Governing Board. Jeffries confirmed the next step, as it was with the FE contracts, is the Governing Board. He said the Motorola proposal was provided to the Ops Group, Project Oversight Committee and Negotiating Team, which was tasked to negotiate a final proposal and contract. FE has been providing consulting services throughout the process to date.

Cassingham said a companion document to the final proposal and contract is the comprehensive long-term Next Gen Project Budget, which has been discussed at recent Committee and Board meetings. Staff is working on a draft for Finance Committee review prior to submission to the Governing Board on February 22.

2) Request for Additional Radios – Marin Municipal Water District

Echols presented the District’s request for 6 additional portable radios due to the adding of staff to the Sky Oaks Watershed area. Cell phone coverage is not an option in the area. The request was vetted through the Operations Work Group per MERA policy. The Group unanimously supported the request pending the payment of related costs and obtaining the required training. Doyle confirmed that radios would likely be used throughout the District’s entire watershed.

*M/S/P Doyle/Pearce to approve the request from MMWD for 6 portable radios with a requirement for APX one-band operational, second upgradable or APX Dual-band, both bands operational radios.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

3) Status/Work Statistics Reports – (Chuck)

Echols distributed copies of System Maintenance, December 2016 Usage and 2016 Usage reports. Chuck noted there were nearly 3.5M calls in 2016 with almost 10,000 hours air time with only :04:21 busy times. This is very acceptable performance based on System design. He added that Law System usage percentage in 2016 was 71.4%. Fire usage is 18.2% with all Public Works agencies together at 9.3% and Non-Member Users at 1.2%. These usage percentages have been consistent over the years. In response to Jeffries, he confirmed CHP usage would show up under S.O. time.

Chuck confirmed for Norton that a typical call is 3 transmissions – one from Dispatch, one from the field unit and one dispatch confirmation of the field unit. Chuck said January 8, the first day of the storm, the biggest user was Public Works, followed by Fire Dispatch. Public Works that day had 14% of System usage. There were 16,000 calls with 49 hours of air time activity and 1 minute and 16 seconds of busies. More busies were due to Public Works’ lower priority than Public Safety. Jeffries said almost half of the total 2016 busies occurred in December. Overall, Chuck said he was very pleased with the way the System operated in 2016.

Echols said power was out at two sites during the storm, but the generators kicked in so there was no interruption in service. Chuck said the generator at Big Rock went out again today, but generators can back up for 10 days.

4) Other Information Items

None.

E. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

None.

F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maureen Cassingham  
Executive Officer and Secretary

**NEXT:**

MERA Executive Board Meeting  
**Wednesday, March 8, 2017 – 3:30 p.m.**