

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

c/o Novato Fire Protection District
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DRAFT: 5/4/18

GOVERNING BOARD

Minutes of April 25, 2018 Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by President Pearce on April 25, 2018 at 3:31 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection District Administration Office; Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945.

Self-introductions followed.

Governing Board Members & Alternates Present:

City of Belvedere	Trisha Seyler (Alternate)
Town of Corte Madera	Dan Reese (Alternate)
Town of Fairfax	David Cron (Alternate)
City of Mill Valley	Jacqueline Graf-Reis
City of Novato	Pam Drew
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney
City of San Rafael	Robert Sinnott (Alternate)
County of Marin	Matthew Hymel
City of Sausalito	Bill Fraass (Alternate)
Bolinas Fire Protection District	Anita Tyrrell-Brown
Inverness Public Utility District	Jim Fox
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin Community College District	Martin Langeveld
Marinwood Community Services District	Tom Roach
Novato Fire Protection District	Steve Metcho, L. J. Silverman (Alternate)
Ross Valley Fire Department	Tim Grasser
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Cathryn Hilliard
Stinson Beach Fire Protection District	Kenny Stevens
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce
Central Marin Police Authority	Michael Norton

Governing Board Member Agencies Absent:

City of Larkspur
Town of San Anselmo
Town of Tiburon
Marin Transit
Marin Municipal Water District

Staff Present:

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA General Counsel	Trisha Ortiz
MERA Deputy Executive Officer – Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Administrative Assistant	Alex Anderson
MERA Operations Officer	Ernest Klock
Marin County DPW Communications Engineering Services Manager	Richard Chuck
Recording Secretary	Jeanne Villa

Guests Present:

Town of Tiburon	David Hutton
Federal Engineering Project Manager	David Mortimer
Motorola Solutions, Inc.	Rodney Hughes
Motorola Solutions, Inc.	Kent Martin
JRA Associates	John Roberto

A. Consent Calendar

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

- 1) Minutes from February 28, 2018 Governing Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Report No. 66 on Strategic Plan Implementation.
- 3) Report on Completion of Non-Member MERA System Users Letters of Agreement (LOA)

M/S/P Silverman/Drew to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-3 as presented.

AYES: All
NAYS: None
ABSTENTIONS: None
Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report – (Cassingham)

- 1) Report No. 39 on Next Gen System Project – (Jeffries)

Jeffries noted the large number of meetings and calls with Motorola, MERA and DPW staff. Customer design and document review is underway. Several hundred pages of documents are involved, including narratives and detailed technical drawings. Work on Fire Station Alerting is status quo.

Jeffries noted the letter from Motorola confirming their support of the Legacy System. He introduced Martin and Hughes and invited them to address any Board questions. Pearce said his reading of the letter falls short of what Applewhite promised the Board and puts MERA on its own. Martin said Motorola, based on the current System inventory provided by DPW, has analyzed what they can provide in terms of spare parts. He noted much of the equipment is still repairable. Key components like controller boards and power supplies can be repaired and are available through Motorola. Alternate resources are also available through other entities that are going through migrations like MERA.

Martin said some of these agencies, like San Bernardino and Sacramento Counties, are also stockpiling spares, but as their new systems come on line, they are willing to help support other safety systems. Motorola is willing to provide a safety net with another layer of support, which the letter sets forth.

Pearce reiterated the delayed installation of the new system is pushing the current system to the bitter end, which is concerning. Either current support is more robust or we need to find ways to shorten the timeline for Next Gen installation.

Martin said Motorola has also offered its tech support in the letter by phone or contract, which is not usually offered. This offer is available through the next year or possibly another year beyond that. Pearce asked if Motorola could see any other opportunities, as we enter into the CEQA period, to accelerate production of the new system without impacting CEQA compliance. Martin said this is being looked at. He added, in response to Pearce, that the cutover plan was being reviewed as part of design review to assure efficiency and the least disruption.

Martin said there has been considerable discussion on how to accelerate installation, but this is affected by what MERA is allowed to do under CEQA. He is interested in finding out what is allowed to expedite the Project. Jeffries reported on Project Oversight Committee is CEQA briefing and consideration of three radio ordering options, several of which could affect the Project timeline by reducing it up to 8 months. One option had radios being taken this summer. The Committee determined to pass on that option at this point. Another option would be, once the cutover date is determined after CEQA, to acquire the mobile radios early enough to permit their installation prior to cutover. The existing schedule provides for installation at cutover. He noted we are still talking with Motorola about the Sonoma Mt. microwave, which is not resolved yet.

Silverman asked about the FSA vendor. Jeffries said DCR had been selected. Silverman said there was concern about compatibility with Motorola. Jeffries said Motorola is part of the solution and is working with DCR and Sheriff's Office CAD System vendor, Hexagon. The timeline for implementation is not as long as the Project Schedule, but they are in conversation. FSA will have a separate

customer design review process. It relies on having the system backbone in place before cutover.

Gaffney asked about the Motorola letter reference to “commercially reasonable efforts”. Martin responded that Motorola will do everything it possibly can to support the current System, short of creating a new production line for an old part. They will do anything they can to effect repairs where possible. Klock asked for Motorola’s help in obtaining third party equipment, which is an important avenue to locating parts not available anymore. He referred to Motorola’s wide network of systems and expertise. Critical parts susceptible to failure could be identified, located, harvested and acquired with Motorola’s help. This offer would be much more meaningful than referring MERA to contact and work with San Bernardino directly. Martin said they could facilitate but MERA and San Bernardino would need an agreement between the parties.

Martin said MERA’s parts list has been shared with San Bernardino County. He asked if DPW could conduct an annual PM check of the System to identify possible parts failures. Klock said this is being done. Martin said Motorola could accompany the DPW Technicians. Klock said what is needed from Motorola is identification of components susceptible to failure. Martin said Motorola could assist MERA in working with San Bernardino. He also noted there are companies that harvest, refurbish and resell parts as another resource.

Jeffries summarized Early Radio Order #1, which includes 33 radios that have been delivered and are being installed. The second round of orders closed on April 23, which included ±180 radios. There appear to be only 5 upgrades which require separate invoicing. Discussion of mobiles ordering will continue with the final mobiles likely being ordered at cutover. Anderson is working on the physical control station inventory, which should be completed in the next two weeks. Variations have been encountered, which prior inventories did not catch.

Jeffries reviewed the latest Project Schedule, which is subject to change based on CDR review. It does not include the possible eight-month reduction that might be achieved with radio installation options. CEQA completion is a major timeline driver. Work is continuing on talkgroup templates. He, Chuck and Mortimer met with Bay RICS on regional interoperability expectations. This would facilitate our mutual aid communications when our units leave the County and when other agencies come here.

Regarding Media Advisories on Low-Income Senior Parcel Tax Exemption Applications, Jeffries said the last of the 3 releases is scheduled for May 7 with applications due on June 1. More information is available on the website and hard copies were provided to Board members at the last meeting.

2) Other Information Items

Cassingham reminded the Board about their upcoming May 9 meeting wherein action is scheduled on FY18-19 Budgets and major service agreements with the County. Packet distribution will be on Friday, May 4, following the May 2 Executive Board meeting.

Regarding the 2016 Special Parcel Tax Bonds, MERA was contacted by Fitch Rating Agency as part of their periodic issuer review. Staff was able to provide them with all the required information to assist them in confirming our AA- rating and stable outlook. Cassingham thanked Gaffney for his participation. A press release has been issued by Fitch with their findings.

Cassingham reported on the thank you from KWMR for the Board's forgiveness of its tower site fees, which makes a big difference with their finances. She said KWMR has been added to our Next Gen Project newsletter list, which will be periodically incorporated into their broadcasts.

Pearce reminded the members to take the one-page monthly Project Update back to their agencies to share with their elected and appointed officials. He stressed the importance of keeping everyone informed about the Project.

C. Operations Reports – (Klock)

1) DPW CEQA Update-Next Gen Project

Klock noted we are on the eve of kicking off CEQA. He noted Roberto would discuss MERA's role as the lead agency after he summarized his report. He discussed the next steps in developing a summary Project Description for use in public notices and ads for the CEQA process followed by preparation of a more detailed Project Description for the draft SEIR after the close of the public scoping period which is scheduled for mid-June 2018.

Klock asked for a vetting of the venue for the CEQA scoping meeting, along with input for a June Governing Board Wednesday meeting date during the evenings to accommodate public attendance. Cassingham suggested the public venues of the San Rafael Community Center or Novato City Council Chambers. Klock said the venue must be publicly accessible. The County has an approved list of venues for these purposes. Centrality is importance since this is a County-wide project. He said in addition to Novato, that Mill Valley City Hall might be considered.

Klock asked for a day of week and date preference for this meeting. Pearce said many agencies meet on Tuesdays and Wednesday evenings. Klock asked about Thursdays, noting these meetings are usually 1 to 2 hours in duration, possibly 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. or 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Hymel confirmed a quorum is needed with

Klock encouraging every agency be represented. Pearce supported the San Rafael Community Center. Klock said he would poll and confirm the date on May 9.

Roberto introduced himself and noted he had been retained to help MERA process the Environmental Report for the Next Gen System. MERA's role as lead agency requires that any project having a physical impact on the environment must have its impacts evaluated. This Project has been evaluated at the staff level noting there are visual issues to be addressed. The EIR to be prepared requires a Notice of Preparation. MERA, as lead agency, is required to prepare the EIR, assume responsibility for public engagement and inviting comments on the document and for certifying it. A 30-day period is set forth to submit comments in writing or voice comments at a public hearing. Preferably, the hearing should be held within the 30-day comment period, the end of which comments can also be submitted in writing.

Roberto described the preparation of the Project Description which is a very important part of the process. The lead agency can accept the EIR or accept other alternatives presented in the process. The review period is 30 days, during which staff will evaluate alternatives and make recommendations on them. Alternatives can be rejected with findings. A primary concern raised with the original EIR was RF exposure and public response to this 20 years later may be different. This time, there will be a specific analysis of each site for exposures.

Roberto said once a Notice to Proceed is issued, there will be no changes to the Project. Any physical changes may necessitate restarting the process. His role at public meetings is to guide the Governing Board through the decision-making process. The Board is not bound to respond to comments at the scoping meeting. It should take public comments and direct staff to evaluate them. He added the meeting will be publicly advertised and agencies in the County will receive mailings. Under new legislation, Native American groups will be officially contacted and Klock will represent MERA in meetings with them. As lead agency under the law, MERA will have the final authority on this environmental document. Public involvement will drive the timeline for it. WRA Consultants will be preparing the CEQA documents with JRA, and DPW providing administrative oversight.

Roberto discussed recordkeeping responsibilities for the CEQA process. Klock said there will be a website for it as well. Hymel asked, given the existing System, if the RF issue would be the same. Roberto responded that in shared site situations, and what is being generated now, there will be analyses of current and proposed assuming all site occupants will be operating at the same time. Levels can many times be mitigated with shielding.

Gaffney asked if a site was relocated, if that changed the Project necessitating a CEQA restart. Roberto said once an NOP is issued, the Project cannot change. Once certified, any change would have to be assessed for environmental impacts and whether mitigations were needed. Jeffries clarified with Roberto that this would be a Supplemental EIR, not a new one. Therefore, it builds off the current one.

Pearce asked if, as a voter-approved project, this added any weight to the Project. Roberto said he did not believe it did. Tyrell-Brown asked if RF did not exceed FCC requirements, that health issues could not be asserted. Roberto said FCC requirements would not be exceeded beyond site fence lines. Exposure requirements would inform the Governing Board certification. Klock added that the website link would only accept written comments. Roberto added the acceptance of faxed and emailed comments and confirmed no texting or phone calls would be accepted.

Robert said the scoping meeting may be attended by several hundred persons. He would do a brief presentation at the beginning of the meeting. EIR certification by the Governing Board must occur before proceeding with the physical project. The Project must be developed to a point where environmental effects can be evaluated, which is what is being reviewed now with Motorola. Design informs this, but the project cannot be built before certification. Once the environmental effects are known, the Board will make a decision about proceeding with the Project. Overruling Project impacts will be considered along with negative effects.

Hilliard asked about a DIS. Roberto said there are no Federal funds involved. However, there are sites within Coastal Commission purview which gives it some authority, including accepting the EIR. Muir Beach and Stewart Point will need Coastal permits. In response to Gaffney, Klock said the draft summary Project Description will be provided for MERA internal review on May 2 with the final summary Project Description for the Notice of Preparation going to the Governing Board on May 9.

2. MERA System Operations Update – January, February and March 2018-(Chuck)

Chuck reported the existing System is operating well, noting call data for January through March. Chuck noted the quarterly and weekly PM tasks completed during each of these months, plus provision of support for Next Gen, along with equipment repairs and replacements.

In January there were nearly 665 call time hours and 1 second of busy. He cited a February investigation of an illegal carrier on Channel 3 and flash wave alarm at the Civic Center to the Mt. Tam microwave.

In February, there were 679 hours of on the air operation with 1 second of busy.

March activity included resetting of squelch settings at all sites and system operation hours of over 718 with 2 seconds of busy.

Chuck reported year-to-date was 2,062 hours of air time with 4 seconds of busy. Chuck said system repairs are increasing as the System is aging. System performance is still very good.

3. Other Information Items
None.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda
None.

E. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Maureen Cassingham
MERA Executive Officer
and Secretary