

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
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**DRAFT: 6/7/18**

## **GOVERNING BOARD**

### **Minutes of May 9, 2018 Regular Meeting**

#### **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by President Pearce on May 9, 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:**

Town of Corte Madera	Todd Cusimano
Town of Fairfax	David Cron (Alternate)
City of Larkspur	Scott Shurtz
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
Town of Tiburon	Michael Cronin
Inverness Public Utility District	Jim Fox
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Mark Pomi, Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin Transit	Amy Van Doren
Marinwood Community Services District	Tom Roach
Novato Fire Protection District	Steve Metcho, L. J. Silverman (Alternate)
Stinson Beach Fire Protection District	Kenny Stevens
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce
Central Marin Police Authority	Hamid Khalili (Alternate)

#### **Governing Board Member Agencies Absent:**

City of Belvedere  
Town of San Anselmo  
City of Sausalito  
Bollinas Fire Protection District  
Marin Community College District

Marin Municipal Water District  
Ross Valley Fire Department  
Southern Marin Fire Protection 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/ Recording Secretary	Alex Anderson
MERA Operations Officer	Ernest Klock
Marin County DPW Communications Engineering Services Manager	Richard Chuck

**Guests Present:**

Marin Municipal Water District	Crystal Yezman
Federal Engineering Project Manager	David Mortimer
JRA Associates	John Roberto

A. Election of Officers for MERA Governing Board (President and Vice President)

Cassingham presented the Executive Board's nominations of Pearce for President and Cusimano for Vice President.

*M/S/P Hymel/Roach to elect Pearce and Cusimano as MERA Governing Board President and Vice President, respectively.*

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 Governing Board or the public requests that separate action be taken on a specific item:

- 1) Minutes from April 25, 2018 Governing Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Report No. 68 on Strategic Plan Implementation.
- 3) Proposed Resolution Confirming Biennial Review of the  
MERA Conflict of Interest Code
- 4) Confirmation of Regular Governing Board Meeting Dates: FY18-19

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

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

C. Executive Officer's Report – (Cassingham)

1) Report No. 41 on Next Gen System Project – (Jeffries)

Jeffries said since the Governing Board last met, there are few new things to report. Activity has been reduced while Motorola is updating its design documents. The second dual band radio order of 180 radios is being submitted to Motorola and member agencies will be invoiced for any upgrades. He deferred to Klock's reporting on CEQA later in the agenda.

2) Proposed FY18-19 Emergency Communications System Maintenance Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin

Cassingham said the Executive Board, on May 2, recommended Governing Board approval of the Proposed Agreement. The current three-year agreement sunsets on June 30. Cost of the maintenance portion of the Agreement is \$481,266, which includes a 2.7% CPI. The proposed FY18-19 budget for parts, materials and factory repairs is \$99,428, including a 2.7% CPI. The Maintenance Agreement covers the same areas of service which includes preventive and corrective maintenance, programming and extra work as needed.

*M/S/P Roach/Gaffney to approve the Proposed FY18-19 Emergency Communications System Maintenance Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin as presented.*

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

3) Proposed FY18-19 Technical Services Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin

Cassingham presented the Executive Board May 2 recommendation of Governing Board approval of the Proposed Agreement. Services provided include training, technical services and administrative services. She noted the training line item had been reduced from \$32,000 to \$15,000, which accounts for most of the variance in cost from prior year. The total proposed cost is \$245,673.

*M/S/P Cusimano/Pomi to approve the Proposed FY18-19 Technical Services Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin as presented.*

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

4) Proposed FY18-19 Communication Engineering Services Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin

Cassingham said the Executive Board, on May 2, recommended Governing Board approval of the Agreement, which provides for a 0.1 time base of the Communications Engineer Services Manager for oversight of 0.9 FTE of 3 Senior Communications Technicians services. Annual cost of these services is \$220,106, which includes a 2.7% CPI.

*M/S/P Shurtz/Stevens to approve the Proposed FY18-19 Communication Engineering Services Agreement between MERA and the County of Marin as presented.*

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

5) Other Information Items

None.

D. Public Hearings

Pearce opened the Public Hearings.

1) Proposed FY18-19 MERA Operating Budget and Zero-Rate Fee Schedule for Non-Member System Users

Cassingham presented the Executive Board's recommended approval of the FY18-19 Operating Budget and Continued Zero-Rate Fee for Non-Member Users. The Executive Board reviewed the Budget line items on March 14 and May 2. The Preliminary Budget has not changed from when it was distributed after the March 14 meeting. The proposed Budget total for FY18-19 is \$1,932,154, which represents a 0.4% increase over prior year.

Cassingham said the Executive Board supported her recommendation to continue the Non-Member Users Zero-Rate Fee Schedule. The Letters of Agreement with the Non-Member System Users include a six-month advance notice of any fee changes, which is reviewed by the Executive Board at its November meeting.

Cassingham reported that the Proposed Budget line item variances reflect CPI adjustments, built-in site lease rent escalators and utility rate increases. Gaffney inquired whether any of the County Operating Budget Agreements overlap with Next Gen Project services. He asked if MERA was paying twice for these services. Cassingham said there is a separate Next Gen Implementation Agreement for County Project services. Gaffney asked if it included staff already covered under the Operating Agreements. Cassingham said timesheets for County staff working on Next Gen accompany those invoices. Pearce said Cassingham monitors these billings very closely.

*M/S/P Cusimano/Van Doren to approve the Proposed FY18-19 Operating Budget and Zero-Rate Fee Schedule for Non-Member System Users as presented.*

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

Pearce noted the Member Agency Contributions for FY18-19 were attached to the staff report.

2) Proposed FY18-19 MERA New Project Financing Note and Revenue Bonds Budgets

Cassingham presented the Executive Board recommendation of the 2007 Note and 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds Budgets. Member agencies will be invoiced by MERA for their Operating Budget and Note contributions after June 1 for payment after July 1. U.S. Bank will invoice members after June 1, for which payment is due by August 1.

Cassingham said the FY18-19 Note annual payment of \$225,000 was originally established by the Governing Board to remain unchanged through its term. The 2010 Bonds Annual Debt Service payment is \$2,125,600 for FY18-19, over which the Board has no discretion. Attached to her staff report are the member allocations.

*M/S/P Gaffney/Cusimano to approve the Proposed FY18-19 New Project Financing Note and Revenue Bonds Budgets as presented.*

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

3) Proposed Resolution Adopting the FY18-19 Operating, New Project Financing Note and 2010 Revenue Bonds Budgets

Cassingham presented the Resolution which formally adopts the 3 Budgets previously approved. Pearce closed the Public Hearings.

*M/S/P Roach/Gaffney to approve Resolution No. 2018-04 Adopting the Proposed FY18-19 Operating, New Project Financing Note and 2010 Revenue Bonds Budgets.*

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

E. Operating Reports – (Klock)

1) DPW CEQA Update – Next Gen Project

- Summary Project Description (PD)
- Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Klock said he believes we are very close to being ready to begin CEQA with the issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and advertising the draft Project Description (PD). We are prepared to make the milestone dates in the staff report. He asked for input on the draft NOP and PD. Klock briefly summarized the PD, noting it provides that MERA is the lead agency, CEQA background and Next Gen Project Description and site locations.

Klock highlighted the Next Gen Project objectives which the Governing Board will lean on when it goes to approve the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). They include voter approval of Measure A to fund the new system, system modification with 700 MHz to meet Federal requirements by 2023 and coverage improvement to reduce response times. A significant amount of time was invested in developing the vendor RFP, negotiating the contract with Motorola and achieving a design to provide the coverage and system reliability MERA has required. He also noted the Project will integrate the new EOF into the system and will maintain compliance with all land use, permitting and CEQA requirements.

Klock noted the Summary of Project Sites, which includes both existing and proposed, and a table for all MERA sites and locations for CEQA evaluation, including those to be decommissioned and a map of the Next Gen System's constellation of sites. The draft NOP also includes the Notice of Scoping Meeting.

Klock emphasized that these draft documents are subject to final staff tweaks and legal review. Also, location of the scoping meeting has yet to be determined. He believes the most central venue is the Board of Supervisors hearing room and he is working on reserving it. He asked for Governing Board comments on the draft documents.

Cusimano said he is thinking about the member agencies affected by the new sites, like Mill Valley and others. He asked if the CEQA process allows for alternate sites' comments and analyses. He knows there have been meetings with Mill Valley. He wants to make sure MERA is informing agencies affected by the new sites on how they were selected and why they are necessary. He recognized that potential alternate sites could change the entire system configuration. He stressed the importance of advising member agencies of site selection criteria.

Cusimano mentioned the next meeting with Mill Valley, which is tomorrow, and asked for meetings with other affected agencies. Klock said staff has met with San Rafael and they have not requested follow-up information. He is happy to follow up with affected agencies and noted that CEQA is just the start of those communications. He added that many sites were evaluated with the current System's EIR, noting the extensive number of alternatives evaluated for Tiburon. He said alternative sites for Mill Valley and San Rafael have already been documented and expects to continue these conversations.

Cusimano said he sees a weak link in member communications between Board members and their agencies. Many decisions have been made over the months and years during the many meetings we have had, which may not have flowed equally back to member managers. He cited the MERA MMA presentation to the managers in May. Half of the room was surprised by the updates. Our focus should be on those agencies affected by the new sites since not all the information is being passed on. Board members needing information about Regional Planning Committee (RPC) required system design changes should reach out to MERA staff to get up to date.

Gaffney asked if alternatives should be looked at now before any controversies arise as opposed to changing in CEQA. In response, Roberto offered perspective and chronological order. He said staff over time has developed a budget to meet all the Project's objectives. Once staff is assured we have a Project that will work, they take it through an environmental analysis. Along with this, there is public outreach to get input on the Project. We are asking for input environmentally, while the Board will get input politically on agency site concerns from a

community standpoint. Outreach is for a Project that works and some alternatives will be developed in response for further evaluation in the EIR process. Alternatives will be evaluated on how they achieve Project objectives and relate to the environment.

Roberto added that staff will reach out to those jurisdictions with existing and new sites, like Mill Valley, Tiburon, Novato and San Rafael to discuss the Project and why the use of these sites. If they suggest other sites, they may be included in the EIR. The NOP is set to be issued May 16. Certain publication information must be provided to the State along with some 340 mailings which will include the Summary Project Description and NOP. A MERA Project website will be established by the County to post the NOP, Summary Project Description and the original System EIR, which is being updated by the SEIR. MERA's own website will feature a link to the County's MERA Project information.

In summary, Roberto said the decision to proceed with the NOP and PD is not a decision to proceed with the Project. It is to proceed to evaluate the Project environmentally, to do outreach, seek community input and that of the Coastal Commission, GGNRA and other agencies, which will take place over the preparation of the draft SEIR. After the 30-day comment period, work will commence on the draft. There will be a comment period on the draft. Staff will prepare a written response to the comments for Board presentation.

Roberto discussed the upcoming Scoping Meeting. Staff and consultants will run this meeting. This will not be a Governing Board meeting. Pearce said this is a big step forward for the Project.

*M/S/P Van Doren/Gaffney to accept the DPW CEQA Update on the Next Gen Project.*

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

2) MERA System Operations Update – April (Chuck)

Chuck summarized the regular preventive maintenance tasks for the month, along with providing support for the Next Gen Project and Federal Engineering. DPW worked on squelch settings, replaced UPS batteries at the Prime Site and power rectifier at Mt. Burdell and placed power monitoring equipment at Mt. Tam, the EOF and San Pedro for the Next Gen Project. DPW also worked with the site manager at Mt. Tam to redirect AC ductwork away from MERA equipment and direct landscape trimming at the Civic Center microwave path.



Chuck noted the April data of 704 hours air time with 8 seconds of busy, which is higher than usual due to Preventive Maintenance. Annual year-to-date is 2,766 air time hours with 12 seconds of busies.

3) Other Information Items

None.

F. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Jeffries distributed Anderson's May 2018 Next Gen Project Update to be shared with member agencies. Pearce asked for Governing Board members to take copies with them.

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m. in memory of Retired Fire Chief Tom Forster, Skywalker Ranch. He will be remembered as a tremendous public servant and friend.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Maureen Cassingham  
MERA Executive Officer  
and Secretary