

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945  
PHONE: (415) 878-2690 FAX: (415) 878-2660  
WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG

**DRAFT: 7/16/18**

## **GOVERNING BOARD**

### **Minutes of June 27, 2018 Regular Meeting**

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

The meeting was called to order by President Pearce on June 27, 2018 at 3:30 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	Dan Reese (Alternate)
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
Town of San Anselmo	Doug Kelly
City of San Rafael	Robert Sinnott (Alternate)
County of Marin	Dan Eilerman (Alternate)
City of Sausalito	Bill Fraass (Alternate)
Bolinas Fire Protection District	Anita Tyrrell-Brown
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)
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 Belvedere  
Town of Tiburon  
Marin Community College District  
Marin Municipal Water District  
Ross Valley Fire Department

**Staff Present:**

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

**Guests Present:**

Federal Engineering Project Manager	David Mortimer
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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 May 9, 2018 Governing Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Report No. 69 on Strategic Plan Implementation.
- 3) Proposed Revisions to MERA Organization Documents

*M/S/P Drew/Kelly 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. 42 on Next Gen System Project – (Jeffries)

Jeffries reported that meetings continue with Motorola. He added that an informational meeting had been conducted with Mill Valley staff on May 10 regarding the Next Gen Project. The Desktop Console Survey has been completed. Some details need to be confirmed before an order for Next Gen. It was a good process to go through to confirm actual radio counts and desk sets.

Jeffries reported Early Order #2 has been placed with Motorola for dual-bands and confirmed member payments for any upgrades. A delivery date from

Motorola is pending. An NGP newsletter was issued in mid-June. He attached to his report an I.J. article on the Project dated June 9 and a June 18 editorial on it as well. He deferred to Klock's report on the Project's CEQA process later on the Agenda.

2) Proposed MERA Succession Plan

Cassingham summarized the Plan, which is predominantly focused on planning for Executive Officer transition. She reported she has been working with the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee on this since October 2016. It has been a forward-thinking effort to look ahead at potential staff transitions. It is intended to be a proactive blueprint going forward with the needs of MERA in mind.

Cassingham said this futuristic view is critical to this unique organization, which is contractually staffed. The intention is to be prepared as possible for planned and unplanned transitions. When she first joined MERA, it was in a maintenance mode without sufficient foundationally documented underpinnings or strategic planning in place. Now we are implementing Next Gen, which, once completed, will take us back to a maintenance mode. Transition planning will be guided by what is going on at the time with MERA.

Cassingham referenced the Executive Officer staffing options on Page 2 of her report, including the use of current contract staff, retired or retiring Board or Committee members, other RGS contractors in like organizations or contracting for all administrative services from a member agency. She also noted recommended succession preparation activities which include cross-training, shadowing, maintenance of well-documented files, and a tickler for time-sensitive task reminders. She added there is ongoing exposure of the Deputy Executive Officer and Administrative Assistant to general administrative tasks to increase awareness of MERA day-to-day operations.

Cassingham concluded her report by listing some suggested E.O. qualifications. She will continue to work closely with the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee in terms of planned transitions and encouraged the Governing Board to add their thoughts to the planning process. Member agencies should be assured that MERA governance is looking ahead at its options and preparing for same.

Hilliard suggested adding the word "regional" to the first E.O. qualification in her report. Cassingham will amend her report accordingly. She asked for ongoing input on the Plan. Van Doren said this is an excellent document and inquired about the Work Plan Committee Members. Cassingham confirmed that Pearce, Hymel and Chief Gray are on the Committee and have been for several years now.

Pearce acknowledged the importance of institutional knowledge and mentioned recent transitions on the Operations side with Shelly Nelson's retirement followed by Pat Echols' retirement and the loss of experience with these transitions. He encouraged Board members to reach out to him or Cassingham with any other ideas about succession planning.

- 3) Other Information Items  
None.

C. Public Hearings

- 1) Proposed Resolution Confirming MERA FY17-18 Capital Project Budgets and Expenditures from Reserves

Fund 70032 (New Project Financing)  
Fund 70036 (Replacement)  
Fund 70038 (Next Gen Project)  
Fund 70039 (2016 Bonds)

Pearce opened the Public Hearing and asked for the staff report. Cassingham said the Proposed Resolution memorializes in one document all Executive and Governing Board approved capital and related expenditures that have occurred during the current fiscal year. She recapped the beginning Fund balances for each Fund as of July 1, 2017, and projected Fund balances as of June 30, 2018. She reviewed Replacement Fund revenue sources, which include a post-audit Operating Fund transfer, 2010 Bonds reserve transfer and interest income. The Governing Board has previously earmarked the 2010 Bonds reserve of \$2M+ for the purchase of Next Gen Non-Safety radios.

Cassingham said the Emergency Fund established by the Board with a required minimum balance of \$500,000 has had nominal growth due to low interest income. The Next Gen System Project Fund was created by the Board to receive initial Measure A Parcel Taxes before our Bonds were sold and to receive future Parcel Taxes net of Bond Principal and Interest payments and Utility Parcel Tax payments. Fund expenditures cover non-capital Next Gen expenses including Trustee fees, audit costs, tax collection and administration costs, legal fees and RGS and NFPD staff support. The Projected FY17-18 Fund balance is \$4,559,260.

Cassingham reviewed the 2016 Bonds Fund July 1, 2017, Fund balance of \$32,944,613 with estimated interest income of \$450,000. Expenditures from the Fund in the amount of \$1,060,000 included DPW Implementation Agreement costs, Federal Engineering Project Management, CEQA consultants and a Motorola Change Order.

*M/S/P Kelly/Hilliard to approve the Proposed Resolution No. 2018-06  
Confirming MERA FY17-18 Capital Project Budgets and Expenditures from  
Funds 70032, 70036, 70038 and 70039.*

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

2) Resolution Approving the Proposed MERA FY18-19 Capital Project Budgets and  
Expenditures from Reserves:

Fund 70032 (New Project Financing)  
Fund 70036 (Replacement)  
Fund 70038 (Next Gen Project)  
Fund 70039 (2016 Bonds)

Cassingham presented the Proposed FY18-19 Budgets and Expenditures for each of the Funds, noting the FY18-19 Budget for Fund 70039 will be revisited likely mid-year once the Project Schedule is finalized. She recapped the Funds' July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, projected Fund balances. She highlighted the earmarking of the \$2M+ 2010 Bond Reserve in Fund 70036 for Next Gen Non-Safety radios. Fund 70038 has available funds of \$5,732,360, which reflects the infusion of FY18-19 Parcel Taxes net of Principal and Interest payments by the Trustee. Expenditures are in the same expense categories recited for FY17-18 for an estimated total of \$437,950, leaving a projected Fund balance of \$5,294,410 as of June 30, 2019.

Cassingham reviewed the 2016 Bonds Fund 70039 with projected available funds of \$32,734,613. Estimated FY18-19 expenditures are fairly close in all line items, with the exception of Site Acquisition/Construction costs, which are \$5M. Gaffney inquired about Federal Engineering's (FE) contract costs, which assumed we would be full bore into the Project. He asked if these costs could be reduced. Klock said the FE Project Manager was fully engaged in dealing with the back and forth with Motorola since Project inception. He said Federal had been very instrumental in navigating Project Design and other issues. He thought FE's work might slow down during CEQA but working with Motorola's questions has been very challenging during Project Design.

Gaffney asked about Motorola's second progress payment. Klock responded that they are due another 10% payment upon our acceptance of final design, which is known as the Customer Design Review milestone. Pearce confirmed that the \$200,000 Motorola Change Order in FY17-18 was for Fire Station Alerting. There being no further questions or any public comment, Pearce closed the Public Hearing.

*M/S/P Gaffney/Kelly to approve Resolution No. 2018-07 Approving the Proposed FY18-19 Capital Projects Budgets and Expenditures from Funds 70032, 70036, 70038 and 70039.*

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

D. Operations Reports – (Klock)

1) CEQA Update – Next Gen Project

Klock presented his report noting CEQA is going well. Public comment for the Scoping portion that is focused on assuring we are working on the areas the public wants, closed on June 18. The Public Scoping meeting was held on May 31, wherein a presentation of the Project was given. One member of the public attended, who had been on a Civic Center tour. She was encouraged to comment but declined. She followed up with an email with questions that are being addressed.

Klock said during the Scoping period, there were 4 email comments. One was from the Tribe noting required consultation with them. Another was from Caltrans around making sure we are taking into account Tribal resources during excavation in any right-of-way along with acquisition of required permits. The two other community comments were requests for text notifications on Project activity.

Klock noted a good informational meeting with the Mill Valley City Council. Other meetings are being scheduled with the Tribes and residents surrounding the proposed Skyview site. There was also another good meeting with Tomales. CEQA is well underway with special studies on track with the draft SEIR to be out this Fall.

2) MERA System Operations Update – May, 2018 (Chuck)

Chuck reported the May Radio Shop activities, which included completion of weekly and quarterly preventive maintenance, participation in Next Gen discussions and support for FE and reset of an Air Traffic Controller that was not allocating traffic appropriately. He noted they also switched the East Simulcast Controller to the West and repaired the Forbes Hill gate and fence.

Chuck summarized May System Usage of over 225,000 calls, call time of 639+ hours with zero busy seconds. Annual System Usage is over 1.2M calls with 3,400+ call time hours, with 12/100 of a second of busies.

3) Other Information Items

Pearce noted his concerns about the number of OPS meeting cancellations, especially with the July 4th OPS cancellation with no follow-up scheduling. He requested that the group be pulled together soon. He stated the need to keep the group engaged, on task and utilized to help with ancillary Project assignments. Klock said these meetings would resume in August.

4)

E. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Van Doren inquired about First Net in relation to the Next Gen Project. Jeffries said he had just been in touch with Cal OES on the First Net Project. She said this sounded like a federally-funded effort to patch emergency communications systems together. Jeffries said, relative to the MERA Project, First Net's focus is on broadband data, which is not what we do. Their next step is likely non-critical voice. He asked the Cal OES Regional representative as to when we would see mission-critical voice. He said, while it is on their list, they cannot assign a draft date yet.

Jeffries said each State is working separately on First Net and added that, given progress to date, it may be pertinent to our Gen 3 System. Van Doren said the premise of First Net sounded too good to be true, which Pearce confirmed it was.

Pearce noted the New Member Orientation, which preceded this meeting and thanked the participants for attending. Jeffries, Cassingham and Anderson did a great presentation. He urged that members take back information from this Governing Board meeting and share it with their elected and appointed officials. Kelly asked if a Next Gen Project presentation had been scheduled for San Anselmo. Klock and Jeffries responded that this is done on agency request and especially those with new sites within their jurisdictions. Jeffries clarified that these presentations are separate from the CEQA process and solely informational.

Jeffries said MERA is working on an All-Hands Next Gen Project informational meeting, timing of which is tied to the development of the draft SEIR. All member agency elected and appointed officials, and any other interested parties, would be invited to this publicly noticed meeting. Kelly added that his practice is to report to the San Anselmo Council on MERA and Next Gen on a regular basis.

Klock said in the event of a potential County employee strike, key personnel are being required to be present to maintain the MERA System.

F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Maureen Cassingham  
MERA Executive Officer  
and Secretary