

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

c/o Novato Fire Protection District
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EXECUTIVE BOARD

Minutes of July 11, 2018 Regular Meeting

DRAFT: 8/8/18

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Cusimano on July 11, 2018 at 3:32 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection District Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945.

Board Members Present:

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

Board Member Absent:

City of San Rafael
Southern Marin Cities/Towns
Special Districts

Staff Present:

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA Deputy Executive Officer - Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Operations Officer	Ernest Klock
Communications Engineering Services Manager (DPW)	Richard Chuck
Recording Secretary	Jeanne Villa

Guests:

Federal Engineering	David Mortimer
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Recognition of Richard Chuck's Service to MERA

Cusimano acknowledged and thanked Chuck for his 20+ years of service to MERA in support of the current System and implementation of the Next Gen System. Chuck confirmed his last day is August 4, 2018, and that it has been an enjoyable, fun experience. Cusimano said he will be missed and wished him well. Pearce expressed concern over the number of transitions and loss of experience and institutional knowledge. Chuck said Radio Shop personnel had considerable institutional knowledge of the current System, which should provide seamless support to MERA. Pearce said he hoped we could reach out to him as needed.

A. 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 a separate action be taken on a specific item.

- 1) Minutes from May 2, 2018 Executive Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Engagement of Maher Accountancy – FY2017-18 Measure A Parcel Tax
Independent Compliance Audit
- 3) Report No. 70 on Strategic Plan Implementation
- 4) Report on Final Costs and Revised Tenth Amendment to Office and
Staff Services Agreement between MERA and Novato Fire Protection District
- 5) Bi-Monthly Report on Reserve Funds Balance

M/S/P Pearce/Doyle to approve the Consent Calendar Items 1-5 as presented.

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

B. Executive Officer's Report – (Cassingham)

- 1) Report No. 43 on Next Gen System Project – (Jeffries)

Jeffries noted the Project calls with Motorola, stating the number of calls has slowed due to exchanges over change orders. The CEQA process has also contributed to the slowdown. Staff met with the Marin Managers' Association and Mill Valley City staff, followed by a Mill Valley City Council presentation, since the last Executive Board meeting.

Jeffries said Early Order #2 for dual bands was completed, placed and upgrades paid for. The inventory of all control stations has been completed as a basis for ordering. The draft order will be shared with the involved agencies for confirmation. The count is dramatically different from the original. Three Senior Parcel Tax Exemption Media Advisories were issued and applications were due on June 1.

Jeffries said the latest Project Newsletter was distributed on June 14. An IJ news article on the Project and CEQA appeared on June 9, followed by an IJ editorial on the Project on June 18. Regarding Project change orders, a package will be presented to the Project Oversight Committee in September after Ops Group review in August. A proposed microwave system user policy and procedure, along with interoperability recommendations, will be presented to the Governing Board in August, with change order recommendations presented to them in September. The change orders will pertain to MERA infrastructure, early order of mobiles and online reprogramming of them. The intent is to bring on reprogramming before cutover.

Pearce asked about the level of activity with the Senior Exemptions. Cassingham said she couldn't report on the actual number of applications this year, but activity has leveled out. Jeffries said this is an annual application process which is affected by income eligibility for which the threshold changes each year. Cassingham said she has personally had three inquiries this year but NBS also fields inquiries. Cusimano asked how the Mill Valley Council meeting went. Jeffries deferred to Klock's CEQA report later in the Agenda. Cassingham added that outreach to existing site lessors had begun with descriptions of the overall Next Gen Project and site-specific impacts. She will be scheduling face-to-face meetings or conference calls. Those initial contacts should be completed by the end of the week.

2) Update on Biannual MERA Executive Board Member Appointments

Cassingham distributed an updated Agenda Item B-2 Report, noting that 3 remained to be confirmed after the latest notification of the City of Novato's appointment. Executive Board member Roach has nearly completed his outreach to the Special Districts, with the likely appointment of Don Wicks from MMWD. She has reached out to Hymel's office to facilitate the County's appointment and to Gray for the City of San Rafael's appointment.

3) Other Information Items

Cassingham distributed the Proposed MERA Succession Plan that was presented to the Governing Board on June 27. She has been working with the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee since October 2016 to present transition options for the Executive Officer position. Governing Board Member Hilliard had one change to the Plan, which adds "regional" government experience under Executive Officer qualifications.

Cassingham said she will continue to solicit input to this Plan as a living document and requested Executive Board thoughts on its content. She referred to the current E.O. model, which reflects responsibilities for current and Next Gen

system administration that will morph back into an administrative maintenance mode when the Project is completed. She added that the Plan included transition options, succession preparation activities including regular records management consultant visits and creation of a tickler list of critical tasks/details and timelines. Pearce commented that we need to be thinking ahead to plan for successions, especially at this critical time.

C. Operations Reports – (Klock)

1) CEQA Update – Next Gen Project

Klock reported CEQA was going well, noting the Public Scoping period closed on June 18 and a full sprint has commenced to develop the draft SEIR. All studies need to be completed, including biological and RF. The consultants are working on a daily basis and he is coordinating with Cassingham on site impact information for lease negotiations. A public informational meeting was held at Mill Valley, which went well with considerable support from the Vice Mayor for the Project. He has received a few more emails and comments from Skyview residents in San Rafael, which Jeffries effectively responded to with no further inquiry.

Klock said an informational presentation was still being planned for Skyview about the microwave relay site proposed for their area. The team is also working on a presentation to the Muir Beach community. We are working with Chief Gove to capture residents' comments and questions. Meetings are expected in the next month. Comments have been received from GGNRA, noting they think this an important safety project, but they would like more information on impacts on their lands.

Klock said there are still issues in getting ahold of the Tribes, including the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, which is a key CEQA element. They are pushing forward to get on their calendars to address any concerns. A paper trail is being created to document our efforts. They have a known list of sacred sites that are not in the Sonoma State database, which is why consultation with the Tribes individually is an important next step. Any tower site conflicts with sacred sites might prove nominal or require slight relocation. In response to Cusimano, Klock said the Skyview site, which is located above the Sheriff's Office, is needed to get clear line of sight to Big Rock. It will be a 30-foot tower next to the water tank there.

2) Request for Additional Radios: NorCal Ambulance – Marin County EMS

Cusimano noted this matter has been rescheduled to the September 12 meeting.

3) MERA System Operations Update: May and June, 2018 – (Chuck)

Chuck reported that all required Weekly and Quarterly Preventative tasks were completed. Staff participated in Next Gen Project discussions and provided support for FE. They switched the East Simulcast controller to the West for maintenance. They also reset the Air Traffic Controller due to reporting issues. The microwave transmitter was replaced at the Civic Center, along with the Data Broadcast Boxes on the East Primary and West Backup controllers. The GPS output module and batteries were replaced at Mt. Burdell and Big Rock, respectively.

Chuck reported on May and June 2018 System usage. May had 639 hours of call time with no busies and June had 756 hours of call time with 9 seconds of busies. He added that June was the first time Central Marin Police Authority had the most radio calls, passing the Sheriff's Office. It was noted that simulcasting had started with Southern Marin, which may have affected this. Year-to-date usage had over 4163 call hours with 21 seconds of busies.

Pearce expressed his appreciation for the scheduling of the August Ops meeting. It is important to keep its members busy working on Next Gen and current System's punch lists. Jeffries said the Group's input will be needed with radio layout. Their input will also be needed with change orders.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Cassingham reported that due to the lack of actionable agenda items, the July 25 Governing Board meeting will be cancelled, with the Notice going out early in the week of July 16.

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Maureen Cassingham
MERA Executive Officer
and Secretary