



June 22, 2022

Governing Board Communication

Agenda Item C-3

TO: MERA Governing Board

FROM: Dave Jeffries, Deputy Executive Officer for the Next Gen System

SUBJECT: Approve Connectivity Support Agreement

Recommended Action:

Consider approval of an agreement with Marin IT to support MERA connectivity with member agencies for \$12,400 from unallocated funds.

Background:

As part of the MERA Next Gen Project, three distinct connectivity efforts are being pursued to connect MERA to MERA member agencies:

1) Dispatch Centers – Currently, the MERA member agencies maintain T1 lines to connect their dispatch centers to the MERA system. This need to connect will continue to be the case in Next Gen, however the T1 lines currently used will need to be replaced with more modern leased lines. This applies to Fairfax Police, Novato Police, San Rafael Police and Marin County Fire at Woodacre. Marin Sheriff's Dispatch is co-located in the same building as the Next Gen core equipment and is connected differently.

2) Fire Station Alerting – Currently the Gen I Fire Station Alerting signals are only transmitted over the MERA radio system. Current requirements drove a modernized design for Next Gen in which the signals are primarily delivered thru leased lines and relying on the MERA radio system as a backup should there be a failure with the leased lines. The Next Gen project currently anticipates supporting 35 fire stations and 3 siren locations.

3) Radio Re-Programming – This is a new feature with the Next Gen System. This allows end user equipment (portables and mobiles) to receive programming updates over a wi-fi signal rather than having radio technicians drive to user sites or having users drive the radios to the radio shop. As many locations already have internet connections and wi-fi hotspots, this feature should be relatively simple for the end user facilities but will require some additional infrastructure on MERA's behalf to complete the implementation. Currently, we estimate 50 or more sites, depending on agency decisions.

Next Steps:

1) Agreement with Marin IT – While these measures were originally considered when the County was leading the project and had internal access to IT support, MERA has negotiated an agreement with Marin IT to assist MERA with developing the network topology and connectivity options as well as prepare an initial equipment list based on the final design. Marin IT is a local firm with experience working with County and other local networks.

The proposed agreement (attached) is for \$12,400.00, it is anticipated that there will be an additional \$3,500 agreement to provide phone support for all of the MERA agencies during implementation of the network features. The MERA Governing Board is asked to consider approval of the attached agreement with Marin IT for \$12,400.00.

2) Dispatch Centers – Based on our current design, there are no additional MERA implementation costs anticipated. Member agency costs are limited to upgrading their current T1 connections to support the Next Gen project. These connections would need to be in place no later than 02/2024, based on the Project Schedule.

Following implementation, it is anticipated that there would be an annual maintenance and administration cost of approximately \$2,500 that would become part of MERA's operations and maintenance, with manufacturer support (Motorola) covered by our existing agreements.

3) Fire Station Alerting - Based on our current design, there are no additional MERA implementation costs anticipated. Member agency costs are limited to providing dedicated lease lines to support the Fire Station Alerting. These connections would need to be in place no later than 06/2023, based on the Project Schedule.

Following implementation, it is anticipated that there would be an annual maintenance and administration cost of approximately \$2,500 that would become part of MERA's operations and maintenance efforts, with manufacturer support (Motorola) covered by our existing agreements.

4) Radio Re-Programming – As mentioned above, this is a new feature and requires additional infrastructure to maintain cyber-security. Based on our draft design, we anticipate additional hardware costs of approximately \$65,000, with an additional \$6,500 in installation and configuration costs.

Member agencies would need to provide and maintain internet connections at all facilities providing wi-fi programming as well as the wi-fi hotspots that currently exist or add additional hotspots depending on their needs.

For agencies using MIDAS or Marin County IST, these connections can be brought up at any time. For agencies using any other connection, we anticipate being ready to connect them by 09/2022. Of the three connectivity projects, this one is optional for MERA Member Agencies. However, the agencies that opt out would need to make arrangements directly with the Marin County DPW Communications Division to coordinate updates and potential costs for those updates. We recommend that fire agencies that are now using the radios purchased with the AFG grant to make these connections as soon as possible. For all other agencies, we encourage them to have these connections in place at least 60 days prior to the start of the final cutover process.

Following implementation, it is anticipated that there would be an annual maintenance and administration cost of approximately \$2,500 that would become part of MERA's operations and maintenance, with manufacturer support estimated at approximately \$60,000 every three years.

5) Dispatch and Fire Station Alerting Member Notifications – Technical details for Fire Station Alerting and Dispatch connectivity were previously provided to the affected agencies.

Attachments:

C-3A) Marin IT Quote #2022-002619 v1, dated 05/31/2022