



MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY
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Measure A Citizens Oversight Committee
Minutes of June 21, 2023 Regular Meeting

Call to Order and Introductions

The teleconferenced regular meeting was called to order by Chair Herrerias at 4:00 p.m. on June 21, 2023; Lorena Barrera called roll.

Committee Members:

Table with 3 columns: District #, Name, Status. Rows include District #1 (Elizabeth Greenberg, Present), District #2 (Vacant, N/A), District #3 (Marty Winters, Absent), District #4 (Larry Luckham, Present), District #5 (Pau Herrerias, Present).

Staff Present:

Table with 2 columns: Role, Name. Rows include MERA Executive Officer (Heather Plamondon), Recording Secretary (Lorena Barrera).

A. Minutes of Dec 21, 2022 Citizens Oversight Committee

The committee reviewed the minutes of the December 21, 2022 meeting. (3/15/23 Meeting cancelled). They expressed that they wish to continue receiving the minutes within 30 days of meetings for review.

MOTION: M/S/C (Greenberg/Luckham) to approve the minutes of Dec 21, 2022.

Roll call vote Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: Winters (Absent)

B. Update on Status of Next Gen System Project and Budget – Discussion

Heather Plamondon gave the Next Gen System Report, as included in the packet, on behalf of Dave Jeffries this meeting. She begins with the mention of the new program manager with Motorola, and that construction has begun in earnest on all 9 sites. Notes small changes and upcoming updates to the project schedule to maintain realistic expectations. The team is continuing to work on mitigating supply chain delays to help speed up procurement of parts ordered. She continues going over the packet touching on various items including upcoming end-user training, working with the new program manager with Motorola, the Motorola radio testing site, and the expectation of public inquiry following the setup of new towers.

C. Measure A Budget Review, Fund 70038 and 70039 Expenses vs %Complete

Heather Plamondon shared her screen with the committee to display the breakdown of the Motorola contract and how payments are tracked over time. She went on to explain each section of the breakdown, including the price of the system, subscribers, and subsequent change orders. She notes that though the project is not proceeding according to original time estimates, it remains largely in-budget when taking into consideration the change orders and the state of the economy over the past few years. Heather explains that the Finance Committee will be meeting soon to discuss how to seek a supplemental line of credit to maintain payments in the upcoming years. She also notes that the Finance Committee agreed to an additional \$200,000 to be collected from member agencies to offset costs as well. The group expressed that these costs would eventually come back to taxpayers, and notes the political difficulty involved. The group inquired as to the possibility of grants, to which Heather explained that grants available have already been pursued and exhausted (regarding firefighter radios) and that other opportunities will be considered if available. Additional grants are difficult to come by due to limitations on fund matching and areas serviced.

D. Report on Arbitrage Rebate Calculation, June 2023

Heather explains MERA's relationship with the Willdan Group, and how they offer investor analysis to determine if there is profit being made off investments from borrowed funds. As of now there is no concern regarding MERA's investments.

E. Presentation of FY 22 Annual Audit for MERA and Measure A (Holdover from 3-15-23)

Heather provided the audits for the Authority itself and for Measure A specifically, noting that there are no standout legal findings or concerns in either report. Included in the packet are the slides that the auditor presented to the governing board, as well as accompanying reports. The committee inquired as to why MERA switched auditing firms, to which Heather explains that: 1) the prior firm had exceeded capacity and could no longer accept MERA's work and 2) it is best practice to change auditors every 2-5 years.

F. Presentation of NBS FY22 Final Levy Summary Report – Measure A Parcel Tax

Heather provided an abridged version of the Final Levy Summary report on the Measure A Parcel Tax to the committee for review. Heather explains that the team is working towards moving MERA administrative staff completely off Measure A funding and reallocating them within the operations budget, noting that the need for this staff will continue past the completion of the Next Gen project, whereas Measure A funds will not.

G. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Member Luckham inquired about the possibility of conducting a study or report on the development and proceedings of this Next Generation project to highlight what went well and what went poorly, with the aim of providing guidance to whoever might be leading projects of similar scope and scale in the future. Heather explains that Dave Jeffries has been working on a management plan since the start of the project that largely aligns with the goal of this inquiry. Among other things, it highlights what went well with certain aspects of the project and what to avoid in the future. The group continues to discuss the benefits of such a report, highlighting some missteps that were made during the conception of the project and how the knowledge we have now would have greatly benefited those who drafted plans from the beginning.

H. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Recording can be accessed on the Agendas and Minutes Page at: <http://www.meraonline.org>

Respectfully submitted by:

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Heather Plamondon  
MERA Executive Officer