



**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**  
 c/o Town of Corte Madera  
 240 Tamal Vista Drive, Suite 110 – Corte Madera, CA 94925  
 PHONE: (415) 927-5050  
[WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG)  
**Governing Board**  
**Minutes of October 25, 2023 Regular Meeting**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The teleconferenced regular meeting was called to order by President Pearce on October 25, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. Lorena Barrera called roll.

**Governing Board Members**

Agency	Representative	Present	Absent	Late Arrival
Town of Corte Madera	R.J. Suokko (Alternate)			X
Town of Fairfax	William Cade (Alternate #2)	X		
City of Larkspur	Shannon O'Hare			X
City of Mill Valley	Rick Navarro (Alternate)	X		
City of Novato	Susan Wernick		X	
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney	X		
City of San Rafael	Robert Sinnott (Alternate #2)	X		
County of Marin	Dan Eilerman		X	
City of Sausalito	Brian Mather (Alternate #2)	X		
Bolinas Fire Protection District	George Krakauer		X	
Inverness Public Utility District	Shelley Redding	X		
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Mark Pomi & Ron Naso (Alternate)	X		
Marin Water District	Don Wick (Alternate)	X		
Novato Fire Protection District	L. J. Silverman and Michael Hadfield (Alternate)	X		
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Cathryn Hilliard	X		
Stinson Beach Fire Protection District	Jessi Peri	X		
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce	X		
Central Marin Police Authority	Hamid Khalili (Alternate)	X		
Town of San Anselmo	Steve Burdo		X	
City of Belvedere	Jason Wu		X	
Town of Tiburon	Jarrold Yee	X		
Marin Community College District	Greg Nelson		X	
Marin Transit	Mohamed Osman (Alternate)	X		
Marinwood Community Services District	Eric Dreikosen	X		
Ross Valley Fire Department	Tim Grasser		X	

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer (Virtual)	Heather Plamondon
MERA General Counsel (Virtual)	Trisha Ortiz
MERA Deputy Executive Officer (Virtual)	Dave Jeffries
MERA Operations Officer	Todd Williams
Administrative Assistant (Virtual)	Maura Griffin
Recording Secretary	Lorena Barrera

**Guests Present:** Federal Engineering David Mortimer

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 a separate action be taken on a specific item.

1. Approve Minutes from September 27, 2023 Governing Board Regular Meeting
2. MERA September Operations Budget Report

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Hilliard/Pomi) to approve Consent Calendar **Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: None (Suokko and O’Hare not present for vote due to late arrival)

B. Executive Officer’s Report

1. Receive Report #114 on the Next Gen System (Jeffries – Report)

Dave Jeffries gave his report as included in the meeting packet. Notes the project schedule is unchanged at this point, will likely have updates for December meeting. Gave updates on the status of completed and ongoing bid packages, including construction/supply updates for each of the sites being worked on. Notes Nokia Microwave Network installation to begin in about 2 weeks for sites that have completed construction. Also notes next large payment to expect should come from final radio delivery in the next few months.

2. Review and Provide Direction: MERA IP Network (Jeffries – Action)

Item B2 was addressed after Item B5. Dave Jeffries gave this presentation on Connectivity, beginning with an explanation and overview of how the system works. He continued by going over the various cost centers and cost considerations involved and available options for funding. Jeffries concluded with recommendations for staff direction and opened for questions and discussion.

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Pomi/Hilliard) to approve Item B2 MERA IP Network as recommended by staff **Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: None

3. Review and Approve Motorola Contract Change Order #22 for the Motorola Warranty Update (Plamondon-Action)

Heather Plamondon reviewed the no cost change order to extend the expiring warranty for subscriber radios ordered under the existing contract that are already in the field (around 1200 units) for 1 additional year, beginning at the completion of this project or transition to/beneficial use of the Next Gen System.

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Pomi/Hilliard) to approve Item B3 Change Order #22 for the Motorola Warranty Update **Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: None

4. Review and Approve Access to MERA Reserve Funds to Pay County of Marin Expenses from past Fiscal Year Reconciliation (Plamondon-Action)

Heather Plamondon reviewed Item B4 and explained that it is an approval to pay an outstanding expense from the prior Fiscal Year that was likely missed due to administrative staff changes and the associated transition period for the County of Marin Radio Shop and MERA itself.

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Wick/Silverman) to approve Item B4 Access to MERA Reserve Funds to Pay County of Marin Expenses from past Fiscal Year Reconciliation **Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: None

5. Review and Approve MERA to Engage Sperry Capital Inc. for Financial Advisor Services for the Additional Financial Needs for the Next Gen Project, and Approve Necessary Budget (Plamondon-Action)

Item B5 was addressed before Item B2 at this meeting. Heather Plamondon introduced Jim Gibbs from Sperry Capital and recapped the prior Finance Committee meeting, mainly the presentation from Mr. Gibbs and the discussion around acquiring these financial advisor services and the additional financing needs for the Next Gen Project. Tom Gaffney also spoke to the details and urgency of the upcoming financial requirements for the Project. Jim Gibbs then proceeded to give his presentation to the Governing Board.

- Noted higher interest rates/volatility compared to 2016 bond sale.
- Gave recommendations for selling bonds/structuring new bonds regarding maturity and avoiding high interest rates.
- Recommends negotiated sale over a competitive bid sale process.
- Provided a step-by-step guide for the new bond sale.
- Concluded by answering any questions from the Board.

The Board then discussed the merits of the proposal and noted the good work that the Finance Committee had done in research and analysis thus far.

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Gaffney/Silverman) to approve Item B5 to Engage Sperry Capital Inc. for Financial Advisor Services for the Additional Financial Needs for the Next Gen Project, and Approve Necessary Budget **Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: None

#### C. Operations Reports (Williams)

1. Receive MERA System Operations Update – September (Williams – Discussion)

Todd Williams gave his report on the operations of the Current Gen System for MERA, briefly noting good performance and concluding with system metrics for the month of September and the year-to-date.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda - none

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 PM

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

Respectfully submitted by:

---

Heather Plamondon  
MERA Executive Officer