

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945

PHONE: (415) 878-2690

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 8, 2009

TO: MERA Executive Committee

FROM: Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM B-3: RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD – APPOINTMENT OF AD HOC STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Recommended Action: Recommend to the Board the appointment of an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee to work on a MERA strategic plan.

Background: On February 11, 2009, and March 11, 2009, the Executive Committee and Board approved, as part of the 2009 Executive Officer Work Plan, the development of MERA's Strategic Plan during the second half of CY 2009. The project was described in the Work Plan as follows:

“The Operations and Executive Officers will prepare a draft strategic plan as the first step in MERA's strategic planning process for member agency vetting and Board adoption. The draft will be developed with the assistance of a Board or Executive Committee appointed Ad Hoc Committee convened specifically for this purpose. The Ad Hoc Committee will seek input from the Police and Fire Chiefs' Associations, the Operational Issues Work Group, technical consultants and other staff during this period. Periodic iterations of the draft will be submitted to the MERA member agencies for their information and comments to assure the plan reflects their goals for the system. The plan will address the future of the system, its half-life status, user needs and expectations, state of other similar emergency communications systems, emerging technology and identify resources to enhance and/or replace it when necessary.”

The timing of this effort coincides with MERA's need to define itself as a project and determine if/how the system can address user requests given current economic conditions, topographical and other environmental challenges in serving member areas, technological changes and, other public agency initiatives.

As with the reconstitution and appointment of the MERA Finance Committee, limiting the number of members of the proposed Strategic Planning Committee to four (4) would facilitate convening meetings and permit greater nimbleness in its work. As for facilitating the work to be done, this could be accomplished by a MERA Board member,

MERA Executive Committee

AGENDA ITEM B-3

July 8, 2009

Page 2

staff or by a professional communications consultant like MTA has engaged for its strategic planning efforts (CBG Communications, Inc.). No funds have specifically been included in MERA's operating budget for professional facilitation; however, the \$20,000 contingency line item could be tapped for a consultant if the Committee recommends this would benefit the outcome and timing of this project.

The Executive Committee's input and guidance regarding this very important Work Plan project is appreciated.