

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 22, 2010
TO: MERA Board of Directors
FROM: Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: **AGENDA ITEM A-1:** PROPOSED ADOPTION OF AD HOC STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED DRAFT - MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Recommended Action: Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, that the Board adopt the Recommended Draft - Marin Emergency Radio Authority Strategic Plan, as presented, with consideration of Recommendation No. 6 from the Finance Committee, and the proposed prioritization of steps to begin its implementation (Adoption of Mission Statement, Appointment of Governance Work Group and Approval of Board Self-Assessment, Appointment of Sustainability Subcommittee and Approval of Operations Officer's formation of Police and Fire Chiefs' Work Group to Develop a Technology and System Replacement Plan).

Background: Attached is the Recommended Draft of the MERA Strategic Plan for your review and comment. MERA's strategic planning process has proceeded effectively since the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee (Doyle, Pearce and Rodericks) was appointed by the Executive Committee and commenced meeting in December 2009. MERA's EOF Subcommittee (Gray, Irving and Kreins) participated in Meeting No. 3 to give input on that project's priority and cost options. Meeting No. 4 was scheduled for June 16. Prior to that meeting, the draft strategic plan was distributed for Committee review and discussion. The June 16 meeting was convened without an Ad Hoc Committee quorum which necessitated Meeting No. 5 on July 15, 2010, wherein the draft plan was unanimously recommended. The Finance Committee was asked to comment on the fiscal implications of the recommended plan and a summary of their comments and questions is as follows:

- 1) The draft plan is comprehensive and appears to have captured all the issues facing MERA.
- 2) The costs and timelines for making the seven strategic directions reality, including convening five new MERA work groups or subcommittees needed to do so, seem somewhat daunting.

- 3) To clarify, the Plan calls for future equipment replacement costs to be funded from a variety of sources.
- 4) The System Technology Replacement Plan capital requirement costs are estimated at \$62,300,000+. This total includes \$30,000 - \$50,000 for outside consulting (Year 1), new EOF interface at \$500,000+ to \$5M (beginning in Year 1) capacity and coverage projects at \$7M+ (beginning in Year 1), \$250,000 for new frequencies (Year 1) and \$50M+ for system replacement (beginning in Year 7).
- 5) The FTE staff cited as needed to implement the strategic plan for two to three years after its adoption could be one full-time staff member or two part-time staff members. This position(s) would be above and beyond the current functions performed by the Executive Officer on a 15-hour-per-week basis. The amount of additional staff time would depend on the extent and timing of plan implementation as determined by the Board.
- 6) Marin Transit requests the reference to the District on Pages 39 and 40 of the plan be removed in light of their recent switch to Mobile Data Terminals on paratransit vehicles, which has reduced District use of the MERA system by 50%.

The Executive Committee reviewed the draft document on September 8 and unanimously approved Board adoption of the Plan with the following recommendations:

- The Strategic Plan should be updated every three years versus the suggested five years due to changing technology and the economy.
- Prioritized implementation of the seven strategic directions should be approved by the Board on September 22, 2010, given imminent deadlines for a technology and system replacement plan and funding requirements for same.
- Steps to be taken at this meeting to begin the prioritized implementation include:
 - 1) Adoption of the MERA Mission Statement as presented.
 - 2) Appointment of a Governance Working Group with some membership overlap with the Sustainability Subcommittee and approval of a Board self-assessment in a (1) self-administered questionnaire developed by the Executive Officer and approved and tabulated by the Executive Committee or (2) a self-assessment developed, facilitated and tabulated by a consultant.
 - 3) Appointment of a Sustainability Subcommittee, which could be the current MERA Finance Committee (Gaffney, Nordhoff, Kreins, Rzepinski) to possibly include Executive Committee representatives of the Ross Valley Agencies (Rock), Marin County Fire Chiefs' Association (Pearce), Novato Fire Protection

District (Revere) and the County Finance Director (See page 49 of Plan for background on possible Subcommittee charge).

- 4) Approval of the Operations Officer's formation of a Police and Fire Chiefs' Work Group to develop a Technology and System Replacement Plan and related costs.
- 5) Undertake public education and outreach, expanding partnerships, (which helps with sustainability efforts) and strengthening bonds, in the next three to six months after the above efforts are underway.

Executive Officer staff support would be provided for implementation of 1, 2 and 3 above within the current allocation of the average 15 hours per week schedule, subject to periodic review by the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee.

Tom Robinson, President of CBG Communications, Inc. and facilitator of the development of MERA's draft Strategic Plan and his Senior Engineer, Dick Nielsen, will present the Plan to the Board, related Executive Committee recommendations and discussion of same on September 22.

ATTACHMENT: Recommended Draft Strategic Plan – Marin Emergency Radio Authority