

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945  
PHONE: (415) 878-2690 FAX: (415) 878-2660

**Agenda Item A-1**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2011, REGULAR MEETING**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Revere on January 12, 2011, at 3:33 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection District's Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA. Cassingham advised that with the change in Steve Kinsey's appointment as the County's Alternate, Vice President Revere becomes Chair of the Executive Committee and Board until the annual election of Officers in May. Doyle inquired whether this Committee selected its Chair and Vice Chair. Cassingham clarified that the Bylaws state that the Board President is the Committee's Chair. In the President's absence, the Vice President is Chair.

**Committee Members (or Alternates) Present:**

County of Marin	Matthew Hymel
County of Marin Sheriff	Robert Doyle
City of San Rafael	Chris Gray
City of Novato	Joe Kreins
Novato Fire Protection District	Marc Revere
Fire Districts: At-Large	Jim Irving
Ross Valley Agencies	Michael Rock
Southern Marin Cities/Towns	Jim McCann

**Nonvoting Members Present:**

Marin County Police Chiefs' Association	John Rohrbacher
Marin County Fire Chiefs' Association	Richard Pearce
Marin County Public Works Association	Nader Mansourian

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
County Public Works Director	Farhad Mansourian
County Communication Engineer	Richard Chuck
Recording Secretary	Denise Wade

**A. Consent Calendar**

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved with one motion unless a member of the Committee or the public requests that a separate action be taken on a specific item.

- 1) Minutes from November 10, 2010, Executive Committee Regular Meeting

- 2) Proposed Amended and Restated Shared Use Agreement Between the County of Marin and the Marin Emergency Radio Authority for Radio Frequencies

Cassingham proposed, on advice of General Counsel, revision of the minutes of November 10, 2010, under "Call to Order" to include "Presentation of the minutes for this meeting reflect the original order of the agenda". Cassingham also requested authorization of the Executive Officer to execute the Shared Use Agreement.

*M/S/P Doyle/Gray to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-2 with the proposed changes by Cassingham.*

AYES: Doyle, Gray, Hymel, Irving, Kreins, Revere and Rock  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: McCann  
Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

- 1) FY10-11 Operating Budget Mid-year Review and Proposed Line Item Revisions

Cassingham summarized the proposed mid-year budget line item revisions to MERA's FY10-11 Operating Budget which are within the Board-approved total budget of \$1,496,105. The Finance Committee has reviewed the changes prior to today's meeting with no comments or questions. These revisions are based on six months experience to date. She noted the \$9,000 increase in Contract Services reflects the continuance of the Executive Officer's average 15 hours per week compensation through the fiscal year. Site Maintenance was decreased by \$3,000 based on prior year's actual. Insurance was increased by \$2,000 due to Business Interruption coverage and property valuation adjustments. Auditing Services increased by \$1,000 due to the complexity of the Bond Refunding on the audit. Legal Services was decreased by \$5,000 based on projected work through the remainder of the fiscal year. General Contingencies reflects a \$4,500 decrease to offset the differences in the other line-item adjustments.

*M/S/P Hymel/Gray to approve the Resolution of the Executive Committee Adopting the Proposed Midyear FY10-11 Operating Budget with the line item revisions noted, which are within the Board-approved total budget.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

- 2) Update on MERA Strategic Plan Implementation and CBG Communications, Inc., Facilitation Proposal for Governance Work Group

Cassingham reported that with the Board's adoption of MERA's Strategic Plan on December 8, 2010, the Sustainability Subcommittee, Governance Work Group and Outreach Subcommittee were created to begin Plan implementation. She said prior to and since that meeting, Board members Gaffney (Ross), Rodericks (Belvedere) and

Rzepinski (Marin Transit) have volunteered for Sustainability. Board Alternates McMorro (Inverness), Odetto (San Rafael), and Plant (Tiburon Fire), Executive Committee Member Rock (Ross Valley Agencies), and Board Member Rodericks have volunteered for Governance. Board Members Cusimano (Twin Cities) and Kreins (Novato) and Board Alternate Sinnott (Larkspur) have volunteered for Outreach. She stated each of these groups could benefit from more volunteers and she appealed for assistance in recruiting more members.

Pearce said he will replace Plant on Governance. At Hymel's request, Cassingham provided a brief summary of the Governance Work Group's charge. Revere noted that there has been considerable discussion about equal votes versus weighted votes, Board size and more, which has to be resolved going forward. Hymel volunteered for Governance and Doyle offered to serve on Outreach.

Cassingham said MERA would welcome the participation and expertise of other interested elected or appointed officials on these Subcommittees and Group. Revere asked if any one of these groups would benefit more than the others with additional members. Cassingham said they could all benefit but Governance has a balanced representation at this time of larger and smaller member agencies.

*M/S/P Hymel/Irving to confirm the volunteers as presented, replace Plant with Pearce on Governance, add Hymel to Governance and Doyle to Outreach.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

Cassingham summarized CBG Communications, Inc., Governance Work Group Facilitation Proposal and requested the Executive Committee's approval of same as presented, noting the tight timeline to complete their work. She stressed the need for maximum objectivity in facilitating the Group's work and familiarity with MERA's operations. As with prior services from CBG associated with strategic planning, funds are available in the Replacement Fund.

*M/S/P Gray/Kreins to approve the CBG Communications, Inc., Governance Work Group Facilitation Proposal and Cost Estimate in the amount of \$24,150 to assist the Group over the course of six meetings to complete their charge plus address any related Board Self-Assessment follow-on activities and authorize the Executive Officer to execute an agreement for same.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

3) Appointment of Executive Officer Work Plan Committee Member

Cassingham noted the vacancy on the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee created with the resignation of Board Member Nordhoff. She said the Committee meets at least semiannually to review the Executive Officer's performance and Work Plan progress.

*M/S/P Doyle/Irving to appoint Matthew Hymel to the Executive Officer Work Plan Committee.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

4) Other Information Items

Cassingham announced that Denise Wade would soon be distributing the FPPC Form 700s for completion by MERA Board Members, Alternates and Executive Committee Members. She asked for timely turnaround to meet the County's deadline.

Cassingham also distributed the revised "MERA Executive Committee Members and Alternates List" dated January 11, 2011.

C. Operations Report (Mansourian)

1) Request for Additional Radios – Marin County Probation Department

Mansourian summarized the Probation Department's request for ten additional radios to support their increasing field activities with law enforcement. While he has already authorized these radios for officer safety reasons, he is requesting formal Committee approval of same per the Board approved process. The additional expense of the ten radios will be borne by County Probation. Gray asked if these were portable radios and Chuck confirmed they were.

Doyle noted that Probation Officers are now doing much more field work, so there is a greater issue with officer safety.

*M/S/P Irving/Gray to approve the request from the Marin County Probation Department for ten additional radios.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

2) Request for Funding of Proposed Tomales Site Coverage Project

Mansourian summarized actions undertaken by him and his staff to date. Operations identified some time ago the coverage problems in West Marin for County Fire, Sheriff, DPW and others. The Board initially authorized this project but it was subsequently determined there were not enough funds available. The Board then authorized a feasibility study of the site, environmental and permitting issues, and community reaction to the project. He reported there are no environmental or permitting issues and the community supports the project. What remains is the issue of funding. He said it is estimated that the project will cost \$1.5M for the tower, support building and microwave from Bay Hill. No new frequency is needed. Detailed environmental review would be undertaken when the project is funded.

Mansourian noted that possibly the Finance Committee can find funding. He said based on recent communications issues in responding to a fire near Tomales, the need for the project is there and immediate.

Mansourian stated that much progress has been made on resolving all prior coverage issues other than Tomales and Southern Marin.

Revere noted that as we proceed with strategic planning, current system upgrades will be prioritized. He asked if this site would work with a “next-generation” replacement system. Mansourian said an additional 13 to 20 or 26 sites might be needed in the future for a 700 MHz system and assumes this one will fit in. Revere also asked at what point do we stop investing in the current system.

Pearce noted the importance of the Martha site and Tiburon Council support for it. He said we need to take advantage of this one-time window of opportunity to obtain the site as part of the development process. There are also issues with co-locating the tower and the water tank there.

Mansourian asked Cassingham about how to go about funding this project. She suggested working with the Sustainability Subcommittee. Cassingham noted MERA has a total reserve of \$1.8M+ at this time and did not recommend commitment of nearly all available resources to one project. Mansourian stated the Tomales work is now done until it is funded as a project.

3) Report on Additional Frequencies Installation Project

Mansourian reported at the December 8 Board meeting that this project is complete and is operational. Two frequencies were added to the East, one to the West and one at Sonoma.

4) Updates on Other Coverage Analysis

Mansourian reported that we are still waiting to hear from Southern Marin. Pearce asked if Mansourian was in the loop regarding the Tiburon Site. He replied he was not. Pearce said the County District Supervisor would be working on this during the coming week. Pearce said we cannot miss this opportunity since once it is gone, it is gone.

5) Status/Work Statistics Reports (Chuck)

No reports.

6) Other Information Items

Mansourian reported that as part of the strategic planning process, four options were identified by a grant funded consultant’s study to address the future of the current system which has eight (8) years left. The options included staying with the current

system with some upgrades, going to a 700 MHz system or hybrids of these two options.

An RFP was issued and Harris and Motorola responded. These proposals identified cost of the options and means of financing. Mansourian intends to bring top managers from Police, Fire and DPW together to look at the options and proposals to give guidance on which of these options and proposals make the most sense. He is meeting with Fire Chiefs on January 19 and will be reporting to Police Chiefs and DPWs in February.

Mansourian requested at least two hours at the Executive Committee's March 9 meeting to provide a briefing on the feedback received and availability of Homeland Security grant funds to address MERA's future system needs. He is looking for Committee blessing and approval of grant applications on MERA's behalf before the end of March since significant funds are becoming available now. No commitment of any MERA funds is required since this is subject to receiving grants, so Board approval is not needed at this time.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

None to report.

F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

**NEXT:REGULAR MEETING of MERA Executive Committee**

**Wednesday – March 9, 2011 – 3:00 p.m.**

Novato Fire Protection District

**SPECIAL NOTE:** As agreed upon, meeting will begin at **3:00pm** at the request of Farhad Mansourian.