

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

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

EC Meeting of 9-14-11: **Agenda Item A-1**  
(Draft of 6-10-11)

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2011, REGULAR MEETING**

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Revere on May 11, 2011, at 3:30 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection District's Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA.

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

County of Marin	Matthew Hymel
County of Marin Sheriff	Robert Doyle
City of Novato	Joe Kreins
Novato Fire Protection District	Marc Revere
Fire Districts: At-Large	Jim Irving
Southern Marin Cities/Towns	Jim McCann

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Ross Valley Agencies	Michael Rock
City of San Rafael	Chris Gray

#### **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 Communications Engineer	Richard Chuck
Recording Secretary	Denise Wade

#### **Guests:**

John Maher  
Martin Langeveld  
Spencer Robert

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 March 9, 2011, Executive Committee Regular Meeting
2. Proposed Agreement for FY10-11 Audit Services – Maher Accountancy
3. Proposed Second Amendment to Office and Staff Services Agreement between MERA and Novato Fire Protection District
4. Proposed MERA Website Maintenance Policy and Procedures
5. Proposed Resolution of the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Adopting a Revised Conflict of Interest Code
6. Report on 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds Reserve Requirement
7. Confirmation of Bi-monthly Regular Executive Committee Meeting Dates: FY11-12

Revere introduced John Maher who was present to answer any questions regarding Item A-2. There were no questions.

*M/S/P Doyle/Kreins to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-7 as presented.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

1. Proposed FY11-12 MERA Operating Budget and Fee Schedule for Non-member Users

Cassingham stated the requested action was to recommend Board approval of the proposed FY 11-12 Operating Budget as presented and further review of the Non-member Fee Schedule by the Finance and Executive Committees. She said the proposed budget and exhibits were reviewed by the Finance Committee on April 6 and there were no changes or comments. The Finance Committee requested that the preliminary agency contributions for FY 11-12 be provided to the member agencies. There has been one slight change to the budget since the Committees' review due to a projected increase in insurance costs received thereafter. The

proposed Operating Budget is basically flat in comparison to prior year, thus member contributions will be nearly the same. The total budget is \$3,525 more than FY10-11, primarily due to the insurance line item.

Cassingham stated MMWD plans to assess MERA a market-rate rent, or a significant portion thereof, for the Forbes Hill site commencing March 12, 2012. The original lease beginning in March 2001 states the fair market is \$36,000, annually compounded by CPI increases from 2001. Each year MERA has requested a waiver of the fair market rent which has been granted. MERA was put on notice that the waiver is scheduled to end on March 12, 2012. She said she will work with Stanley Graham, MMWD Real Property Agent, and District Administration on this matter given the budgetary impact of going from zero rent to market-rate rent. There is time to work with them before the Executive Committee's mid-year budget review since no increase in site rent for Forbes is included in this budget. Cassingham said MERA has approved two no-cost subleases of this site with the Ross Valley and Las Galinas Sanitary Districts, which may need to be revisited if MERA has to pay market rent. Hymel inquired about the amount of the market rent. Cassingham said the base rent of \$36,000 per year is established in the lease, plus CPI adjustments each year. Doyle inquired about whether we do things for the District. He asked what prompted this increase. Cassingham said she had appeared before an MMWD Board Subcommittee last year regarding this rent increase and had requested an ongoing rent waiver given MERA's relationship with the District and that member agencies should not be assessing each other. Doyle said we are partners and should not be charging each other. Revere asked about the background for a rent increase. Hymel said the District was also proceeding with water rate increases. Cassingham said she, along with MERA's President, should meet with the District as soon as possible to discuss this matter.

Cassingham said, in further scrutinizing MERA's Bylaws, the Executive Officer is required to develop a fee schedule for the use of the radio system by non-members for Board review and approval as part of the annual budgeting process. Heretofore, MERA has, by past practice and policy, approved non-member system-use requests on a case-by-case basis at no charge. Mansourian developed a list of MERA Mobile and Portable Radios as of February 16, 2011. Fourteen non-members, including some private agencies, are using the system via 136 mobile or portable radios. Since this is the first time she has brought this matter to the Committee's attention, Cassingham is recommending the non-member fee schedule be referred to the Finance Committee and back to the Executive Committee for further review and action. She said formal review is a Bylaws requirement whether a fee is assessed or not and the Board needs to adopt same. Pearce asked if the list included San Antonio Fire. Revere confirmed that they are right on the border and that private ambulance companies are included along with CHP and GGNRA Fire.

*M/S/P Irving/Kreins to recommend Board approval of the proposed FY11-12 MERA Operating Budget as presented and further review of the Non-member Fee Schedule by the Finance and Executive Committees.*

AYES: All

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

2. Proposed FY 11-12 MERA Other Budgets and Reserves

Cassingham summarized the 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds 2011-12 Debt Service Budget and the 2011-12 Budget for the 2007 Citizen Bank Loan Note. There is no discretion in these budgets. The Note is a flat payment for the repayment term. Regarding the Debt Service Budget, last year's 13% reduction in member payments was due to bond refunding, and the FY11-12 Debt Service level is restored to its regular funding schedule. The schedule for each member's future debt service payments for the life of the bonds will be included in the Trustees' invoices to be sent after June 1. Cassingham distributed and briefly recapped the MERA Reserve Funds Chart. There are \$1.8M in reserves including the remaining balance in the New Project Financing Fund, nearly \$1M in the Replacement Fund, and \$500,000 in the Emergency Fund. The Chart notes deposits and expenditures from the funds with the lion's share associated with strategic planning related expenses. The deposit to the Replacement Fund of \$54,835 reflects the overage from the latest calculation of the Reserve Requirement by the Trustee. An additional \$25,000 will be deposited as current reserve investments mature and future reserve recalculations are made.

*M/S/P Hymel/Irving to recommend Board approval of the proposed FY11-12 Budgets for the MERA 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds Debt Service and the New Project Financing 2007 Bank Note, use of Reserves as presented in the MERA Reserves Funds Chart and adoption of the budgets.*

AYES: All

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

3. Nomination of Officers for MERA Board (President and Vice President)

Cassingham said this is the time of year when nominations are made by the Committee to the Board for President and Vice President. With Steve Kinsey's change of status to County Alternate, Vice President Revere has been serving as Chair of the Executive Committee and Board until the annual election by the Board on May 18. Doyle confirmed that both nominations can take place at the same time.

*M/S/P Doyle/Kreins to nominate Marc Revere for President and Matthew Hymel for Vice President of the MERA Board.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None Motion carried.

4. Report #2 on Strategic Plan Implementation

Cassingham said that her staff report provides an update on everything that has been happening regarding implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Governance Work Group, Outreach Subcommittee and the merged Sustainability Subcommittee with the Finance Committee are all meeting. Outreach has been enhanced with Sausalito Police Chief Jennifer Tejada's participation. Governance will meet again on June 15. They have been working on a vision statement, core values and principles of governance including Board size, composition and voting and funding formulas. Their recommendations will go to the Executive Committee and Board by the end of the year. In between, joint meetings between the groups will be scheduled as their work products evolve. Outreach has contracted with Indie Politics - Dan Mullen and Terry Price - who have worked on successful ballot measures and candidate campaigns over the years throughout Marin County. They will be assisting in developing improved internal communications between Board members and their governing bodies, and us as a team, and eventually community messaging to improve citizen awareness of MERA. Their contract is not to exceed \$10,000. Phase II of their work will be presented to Outreach on June 28. She said, given their depth of knowledge of the County and should we get to the point where some next gen system funding would come by the ballot, their recent successes with the Twin Cities Police Authority and City of Sausalito could be extremely helpful to MERA. The Finance Committee is proceeding with the development of a combined short-term and long-term project funding plan. Matthew Hymel is the Chair and Tom Gaffney as Vice Chair, have volunteered to develop a draft funding matrix for all our pending and future projects including possible sources of revenues for them. Gaffney has served as MERA's volunteer financial advisor through the issuance of the 1999 Revenue Bonds and the 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds and has extensive experience with a variety of other funding mechanisms that might be needed for the next gen system. Revere inquired when Governance might report to the Executive Committee. Cassingham said an update will be provided at the July 13 meeting.

Kreins inquired about Outreach's current and future use of meraonline.org and suggested that the domain name be shortened to mera.org or something similar. He asked Cassingham to research what is entailed to explore our options and make this change including the necessary approval process. She will report back on this matter at the next Executive Committee meeting on July 13.

*M/S/P Kreins/Doyle to receive and file the MERA Strategic Plan Implementation Update.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None

Motion carried.

5. Other Information Items

Cassingham provided an update on the status of the MCCMC Joint Powers Authority Oversight Committee Report on MERA based on her January 20, 2011 presentation to them. A draft report was provided for her comments. The JPAOC is scheduled to take action on the report on May 19 and present it to the MCCMC at their next meeting. The JPAOC requested that presentations on MERA to the MCCMC be held off until they submit their report. Cassingham will agendize the JPAOC report for the July 13 Executive Committee meeting. Doyle asked for background on this group because he has had some communications with them about County OES, NEMS and MERA. He noted MERA already has oversight. Hymel said the groups' charge is to have elected officials oversee some JPAs in the County. He asked what their report findings concluded. Cassingham said she has not seen the final document. Doyle asked why the oversight process was continuing. Hymel said disbanding had been discussed but a new member had been appointed.

Cassingham reported on the April 27 New Member Orientation. She thanked Mansourian for his excellent PowerPoint on MERA's history, challenges, current operations and pending projects. Ten representatives from eight member agencies attended. Cassingham presented administrative information using meraonline.org as a backdrop. The session lasted about an hour and a half including questions. Attendees, some of who were new to MERA and others seeking a refresher, were very complimentary about the content and appreciative of the time and effort. Three member representatives who expressed interest in the session but were unable to attend will be provided the same orientation materials as the attendees. Cassingham will meet with them individually as needed. She has already met with Chief Lemay from the College of Marin for a briefing. She suggested that these orientations be provided twice a year. Revere said he attended the session and found that he really learned a lot from Mansourian's presentation. It was very well done from a historical perspective up through our next gen phase. McCann noted he was unable to attend and asked for the materials to help him catch up on MERA. Cassingham will send out the hard copies and Wade will forward the PowerPoint to the attendees and anyone else who requests them.

C. Operations Report (Mansourian)

1. Overall Operational Update

In Mansourian's absence, due to a USAR drill in San Jose, Chuck reported no new update on Tomales or Southern Marin.

2. Status/Work Statistics Reports

Chuck distributed information on the system from the last month. The usage percentages are the same. Totals vary a little bit from month to month. The Transit District is using MDTs; however, they are still above 5% over the last six months. He provided Rzepinski information on the biggest Transit users since he had expected his MERA usage would decline. Chuck is also checking on whether the West Marin Stage can be separated from Whistlestop, so their programming can be tailored to their respective service areas.

3. Other Information Items

None.

Revere asked if Cassingham had a recommendation on the Non-member System Users fees. She will schedule this matter for Finance Committee review and agendaize it for the July 13 Executive Committee meeting. Both the fees and policy will be considered at that time.

D. Open Time for Items NOT on Agenda (*limited to two minutes per speaker*)

Pearce inquired about the MERA Martha Property Project and the EIR process. Hymel said the draft EIR is out and likely to come to the Board in July.

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

**NEXT: REGULAR MEETING of MERA Executive Committee  
Wednesday – July 13, 2011 – 3:30 p.m.**