

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

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**OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Draft: 12/19/12**

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4, 2012**

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Sinnott at 2:17 p.m. on December 4, 2012 in Conference Room 401 at the Marin Civic Center, San Rafael, CA.

Committee Members Present:

City of Larkspur	Robert Sinnott
City of Novato	Jim Berg
City of San Rafael	Diana Bishop
Marin County Sheriff	Robert Doyle
City of Sausalito	Jennifer Tejada

Committee Members Absent:

Twin Cities Police Authority	Todd Cusimano
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Staff Present:

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA Operations Officer	Craig Tackabery

Guests Present:

Indie Politics/Price Campaign Solutions	Dan Mullen, Terry Price
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B. Approval of Minutes from October 31, 2012 Meeting

*M/S/P Doyle/Berg to approve the minutes from the October 31, 2012 meeting as presented.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried.

C. Review of January 16 Governing and Executive Boards' Workshop –  
Agenda, Proposed Video, Presenter Briefings and Information Handouts

- Discuss Tour of San Rafael Corporate Center – Tamalpais Room

Mullen said they are working on the video production with Jeri Stewart along with revising the PowerPoint presentation from the MERA Orientation for use at the Workshop. Cassingham presented a draft agenda for the Workshop, which will be followed by Governing Board direction of Outreach Plan implementation by the Executive Board. Her staff report on the adoption of the Plan will list the direction to the Executive Board including initiating grant writing services, proceeding with a financing plan, approving contract staffing for the project and more. She said the venue for the Workshop, which will be preceded by a 2:00p.m. Executive Board meeting to address their regular business, is the San Rafael Corporate Center. The Workshop will commence at 2:30 p.m.

Mullen suggested adding to the Workshop agenda discussion of what the Plan is intended to do. Price suggested also adding “Next Steps”. Mullen proposed that Q&A be allowed throughout the Workshop versus at the end. Price said we are looking for engagement with attendees. Cassingham noted that while the target audience is the Governing and Executive Boards and their invited elected and appointed officials, she emphasized that this is a public meeting. Price said the meeting goes from informational, to recruitment, to action, and that those transitions need to be managed.

Cassingham said she will develop her draft staff report on Governing Board action items for review by General Counsel, Consultants and the Subcommittee. Price suggested scheduling a recess after the Workshop before action is taken on the Plan.

Mullen discussed the video as humanizing the need for the New System while the PowerPoint would provide relevant facts. Doyle urged the video content be focused on the day-to-day value of the System versus the catastrophic use. Tejada suggested avoidance of fear-based messaging. She said flooding or earthquakes could be included since they are believable events. Mullen said medical emergencies could also be included as day-to-day events. Price said the public must sense real urgency in order to support a New System. The present system works fine if not overtaxed, so major events need to be factored in to motivate. The aging of the current system needs to be factored in as affecting response. Doyle said what should motivate is when a call is received, it is responded to. Bishop asked about the focus on interoperability among all agencies in time of need or general day-to-day operations.

Price said polling after the Workshop will identify public perceptions and see what issues move them. It will identify the messaging that will resonate. Messaging then needs to communicate why the system needs to be replaced and that it will soon be obsolete to the point of failure. Our measure needs to be the most important measure on the November 2014 ballot and that it cannot be put off. The Workshop is the internal kick-off followed by polling and presentations to the Member governing bodies. Mullen said the approach

is to make MERA relevant to everyday lives plus communicate that the clock is ticking. He assured the Subcommittee will sign-off on everything, including polling. Cassingham said MERA's General Counsel must be part of the sign-off process before proceeding. Berg said elected officials would benefit by having poll information as soon as possible. Price reiterated the need for Governing Board approval of the Outreach Plan before proceeding with polling.

Mullen said in conveying MERA's message, we must convey urgency, not emergency, and educate on the need to act sooner on a purposeful plan. Price added what needs to be conveyed is that we have a major problem on the horizon that must be brought to voters' attention. Doyle and Tejada raised concerns about being too dramatic and the need to generate concern versus fear. Price suggested including a reference in the video that addresses at what point we are in danger of system failure.

Price said the Workshop video will be revised with polling information for local leader presentation to their governing bodies along with supplemental PowerPoint information on costs, financing and timelines. Berg asked who would be doing the public safety and other presentations. Doyle suggested combining Public Safety and DPW presentations. Mullen encouraged incorporation of rank and file comments in addition to the DPW experience. Doyle noted this could be members of the Operations Group which combines technology with a user's perspective. Tejada suggested combining police and fire in the Public Safety presentation. It was suggested that Gaffney present the financing plan.

Tackabery said content must clarify everyone's thinking about how 911 and MERA work. Bishop commented that Orientation explanations were too technical. Tackabery said members want to know how the public safety communications system functions from start to finish. Cassingham said Novato Councilmember MacLeamy suggested diagrams be developed to visually convey this information. Price said the video could follow this visual template. Berg said the technology options need to be better explained based on feedback from his elected officials and City Manager from the Orientation, since it appears that the "Cadillac system" was selected by public safety. Price said only one option will be presented at the Workshop along with the reasons for its selection by the experts. Berg said we need to explain why we can't do this for less. Tackabery added we need to state the reasons why we need and have to move to the recommended system. Tejada said the potential for overlapping bonds also needs to be addressed with the financing plan.

Price said Kinsey will be invaluable in providing MERA's history and how it works, followed by fire and police from the Ops Group explaining and being the system's face. Bishop suggested showing an officer keying into the system to save lives. Tejada said focusing on public safety response in the larger population centers like Novato and San Rafael would help more people identify with the need.

Tackabery will rework the Orientation PPT to be less technical and hone in on the need for system replacement. Doyle said it needs to address system aging and obsolescence.

Bishop added that the FCC is also forcing replacement and that we are asking for public support because we need a new system versus want it. Price said Nelson would be a good presenter of this information with a less technical script. Tackabery said he did not know how or if DPW would present this information. Doyle questioned how much of this technical information was really needed. Cassingham suggested we begin working with presenters as soon as possible given the Holidays and eminence of the Workshop. Price said they may ask Kinsey to also narrate the video. Tackabery said DPW volunteered Jeri Kay to work with Price and Mullen on the video production which should help coordination with the videographer.

D. Pollster Selection, Proposed Polling Activities and Timeline

Price reviewed their draft Pollster RFP, reiterating that this is not a lowest/formal-bid process since these are professional services. They want Outreach to be involved in the selection. The budget will be presented to qualified firms along with the scope of work. Mullen said this is a qualitative assessment process to identify the firm with the most on-point experience for our needs. He briefly reviewed the background of each listed firm. Price said the firms will be asked to conduct and provide costs for a baseline survey in February with crosstabs followed by brushfire survey closer to the election. Price said the pollster becomes another consultant on our team. They develop the poll with our input, conduct it and summarize and present the results in a PPT. They will also review messaging in a total effort to achieve success by adding refining elements along the way. The \$30,000 budget may need to be enhanced with the addition of the brushfire poll. Price said the poll results will be presented to member governing bodies in May 2013.

*M/S/P Tejada/Doyle to accept the Pollster RFP with the following additions from Tackabery: (1) clarification of how the public will be contacted, e.g., cell phone or landline, and (2) that the pollster be required to work with this Subcommittee on poll objectives and a subset group of same to review the final wording of the questions.*

AYES: All

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

E. Report on November 29 Member Orientation

Sinnott said we have received comments on this earlier in the meeting. Tackabery said a question was asked why all the dispatch centers aren't located together. This may come up at the Workshop. Tejada said it doesn't change the number of users. Doyle said decisions on dispatch are local and centralization would not be a savings to MERA, just to the dispatching jurisdictions. Bishop said this would beg the next question as to why there isn't one police force. It was agreed this is a local decision based on the needs of each community.

F. Other Information Items

Bishop inquired about the estimated cost per parcel for the replacement system. Cassingham said the range is \$37 to \$45 per parcel. Finalization will require a parcel study. Mullen said the ultimate cost of the System will affect this along with length of the financing and any proposed exemptions from the parcel tax. Berg added that we will be asked about a depreciation plan for the new system. Cassingham said this will be agendaized for the Finance Committee. Price asked for photos and videos that could be used at the Workshop. Cassingham will check with NFPD regarding their action photos. Cassingham asked about scheduling a Workshop dry-run, possibly with this Subcommittee.

G. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30pm - Tuesday January 8, 2013 at a location TBD.

H. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

None.

I. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.