

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

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DATE: April 2, 2014
TO: MERA Governing Board
FROM: Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM **B**: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MERA EXECUTIVE BOARD AND PROJECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE- SECOND PUBLIC OPINION POLL RESULTS AND REVISED MERA OUTREACH PLAN AND BUDGET

Recommended Action: Upon recommendation of the MERA Executive Board and Project Oversight Committee, approve the Revised MERA Outreach Plan and Budget including an additional \$197,750 in Plan expenditures based on Second Public Opinion Poll results.

Background: In December 2009, the MERA Board of Directors embarked on a Strategic Planning process to guide the future of MERA, which included the development of 7 strategic directions for the Authority. The centerpiece of the Plan was the System replacement directive. The Strategic Plan was unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors in December 2010.

Plan implementation became the responsibility of the Governance Workgroup, Outreach, Finance, Project Oversight Committees, Operations and System Technology Workgroup and Executive and Governing Boards who worked tirelessly since early 2011 to date: 11 Strategic Plan development meetings, 56 implementation meetings, 29 Round One Member Agency and Association presentations and thousands of hours of member volunteers and staff work have brought us to this point in our collective stewardship of the Authority. As fiduciaries, we are committed to providing ongoing reliable, effective emergency communications to ensure the safety of the citizens and visitors of Marin. MERA has invested \$800,000+ from Reserves in fulfillment of this commitment.

Finally, all this effort was further validated by MERA Governing Board action last December with its approval of:

- 1) The use of Government Code 53978 to permit the County BOS, on MERA's behalf, to place a parcel tax measures on the November 2014 ballot to finance construction of the Next Gen System;

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- 2) The revised Project Financing Plan utilizing parcel tax revenues to pay for the police/fire services system costs and MERA Reserves for non-police/fire system costs;
- 3) The Next Gen System budget as presented in the System Feasibility Study;
- 4) The MERA Next Gen System Implementation Feasibility Study en toto, which determined that a 700 MHz P25 Phase 2 system be the basis for the Next Gen System proposed to be funded on the November 2014 ballot; and,
- 5) The Outreach Plan dated December 11, 2013 leading up to the November election.

On March 7, 2014 the Project Oversight Committee, based on Second Poll results, unanimously recommended the attached Revised Outreach Plan and Budget to the Executive Board, without Poll #3. The Executive Board, on March 12, likewise unanimously recommended the Revised Plan and Budget to the Governing Board, including an additional expenditure of \$197,750 for outreach.

Key areas of extensive discussion by the Executive Board were:

- 1) Agreement on the need for system replacement beginning in 2015 to assure continuous reliability and greater coverage for emergency response and first responder safety and that postponing the system replacement beyond this start date may put the future of the System at risk after 2018;
- 2) Agreement that the MERA Governing Board, as primary fiduciaries, is obligated and committed to timely system replacement as supported by the Governing Board's adoption of the MERA 700 MHz Feasibility Study on December 11, 2013;
- 3) Acceptance that MERA Member Agencies are responsible for traditionally funding replacement of the aging System by Member contributions or a parcel tax;
- 4) Confirmation of MERA Reserves to fund additional Outreach expenses; and,

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- 5) Continuation of Round Two Member presentations for resolutions of support, including an update to the County Board of Supervisors and Workshop for Marin Managers and Finance Directors, concurrent with extensive public education outreach.

ATTACHMENT:

- B-1) Proposed Revisions to the Outreach Plan and Budget – March 7, 2014
(presented at Executive Board Meeting – 3/12/14)