

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

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DATE: August 13, 2014

TO: MERA Executive Board

FROM: Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM **A-3**: PROPOSED DUTIES, TERMS, MEMBERSHIP
QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION PROCESS –
CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Recommended Action: Discuss and provide direction to an Ad Hoc Subcommittee and staff to assist in the development of a Resolution establishing the Proposed Duties, Terms, Membership Qualifications and Application Process for the Citizens Oversight Committee.

Background: Section 9 “Citizens Oversight Committee” of the MERA Parcel Tax Ordinance, to be submitted to the voters on November 4, 2014, reads as follows:

“By no later than June 30, 2015, the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority shall establish a committee to review the expenditures of revenues collected pursuant to this Ordinance. The committee shall consist of at least five members appointed by the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority. The committee members shall be residents and taxpayers in the County of Marin. The terms of the committee members and their specific duties shall be established by resolution of the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority.

Preparatory work on the Citizens Oversight Committee (COC) is beginning now to advance its formation, including providing opportunity for public input on its organization and operation. The COC, when formed, will meet to review all Next Gen Project expenditures to ensure accountability. Committee composition would reflect MERA and public input.

Discussion and input are requested on the following suggestions for Subcommittee and staff follow-up:

- A) Duties: Committee primary duties could be (1) to review annual expenditures to ensure conformance with the Tax Ordinance; (2) to review an annual Independent Compliance

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Audit; and (3) to prepare an annual report to the MERA Governing Board made available to the public describing how the funds were spent.

- B) Qualifications: In addition to the County of Marin residency and taxpayer qualifications noted above, membership could be restricted to those who are neither elected officials nor employees from any agency or organization that oversees or benefits from parcel tax expenditures. Some members might have experience with financial management and reporting, public agency administration and any other disciplines beneficial to the work of the Committee.
- C) Number of Members and Term Length: At least five (5) members are required by the Ordinance; however, seven (7), nine (9), eleven (11) or more could be appointed. Initial term length could be one (1) and two (2) years with all subsequent terms being two (2) years.
- D) Time/Day of Meetings: Meetings would be at least annual, open to the public and conducted in compliance with the Brown Act, California's open meeting law. Meetings would be publicized and posted in advance. Location of the meetings would be at the Marin Civic Center, San Rafael, California for centrality/access purposes.
- E) Membership Application: Applications could be made available online and accepted 60 days before the formation date of the COC at MERA headquarters, c/o Novato Fire Protection District, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945.
- F) Reimbursement for Expenses/Per Diem: None. All members would serve without compensation.
- G) Other COC Qualifications and Requirements: Any other oversight or operational requirements suggested by MERA Executive and Governing Boards.