

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

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

## **GOVERNING BOARD**

### **Minutes of September 28, 2016 Regular Meeting**

**DRAFT: 10/13/16**

#### **Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by President Pearce on September 28, 2016 at 3:31 p.m. at the Novato Fire Protection District's Administration Office, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945. Self-introductions followed.

#### **Governing Board Members & Alternates Present:**

Town of Fairfax	David Cron (Alternate)
City of Larkspur	Scott Shurtz
City of Mill Valley	Angel Bernal
City of Novato	Pam Drew
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney
Town of San Anselmo	Doug Kelly
City of San Rafael	Bob Sinnott (Alternate)
County of Marin	Matthew Hymel
City of Sausalito	Bill Fraass (Alternate)
Town of Tiburon	David Hutton (Alternate)
Bolinas Fire Protection District	Anita Tyrrell-Brown
Inverness Public Utility District	Jim Fox
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Mark Pomi, Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin Community College District	Martin Langeveld
Marin Transit	Amy Van Doren
Novato Fire Protection District	Steve Metcho, L.J. Silverman (Alternate)
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Stephen Willis, Chris Tubbs (Alternate)
Stinson Beach Fire District	Kenny Stevens
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce
Central Marin Police Authority	Michael Norton, Hamid Khalili (Alternate), Theo Mainaris (Alternate)

#### **Governing Board Member Agencies Absent:**

City of Belvedere  
Town of Corte Madera  
Marin Municipal Water District  
Marinwood Community Services District  
Ross Valley Fire Department

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA General Counsel	Trisha Ortiz
MERA Deputy Executive Officer – Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Operations Officer	Pat Echols
Recording Secretary	Lauren Pallas

**Guests Present:**

Marin Municipal Water District	Don Wick
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A. Consent Calendar

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved with one motion unless a Member of the Governing Board or the public requests that a separate action be taken on a specific item:

1. Minutes of August 24, 2016 Governing Board Regular Meeting.
2. Report No. 46 on Strategic Plan Implementation
3. Update on Rebuild and Hosting of MERA Website – mereaonline.org

Cassingham requested Item 3 be pulled from the Consent Calendar to provide additional information.

M/S/P Kelly/Gaffney to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-2 as presented.

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion carried.

Cassingham reported that while it appears meraonline.org will go live on its new host by the new October 31 deadline, we will know whether that date can be met when the site is tested in mid-October. If there are major issues, more time may be needed from the County and MERA may need assistance.

M/S/P Hymel/Metcho to approve Consent Calendar Item 3 as updated.

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

1. Proposed Resolution of the Governing Board of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Approving Substitution of Trustee in Connection with the Authority's 2010 Bonds and Authorizing and Directing Certain Actions with Respect Thereto.

Cassingham said the background on this matter is based on nearly 10 years' experience in working with the current Trustee on the 1999 Revenue and 2010 Refunding Revenue Bonds. She said MERA would be better served in substituting US Bank as Trustee for BNY Mellon. Substitution requires this Board Resolution followed by a 30-day notice of same. Areas of change are member debt service collection and EMMA postings of the audits or CAFRs from MERA, the County and Cities of Novato and San Rafael. The Resolution authorizes the President and Executive Officer to execute documents on a advice from Bond and General Counsels.

*M/S/P Gaffney/Kelly to approve Resolution No. 2016-16 of the Governing Board of the Marin Radio Authority Approving Substitution of Trustee in Connection with the Authority's 2010 Bonds and Authorizing and Directing Certain Actions with Respect Thereto.*

In response to Pearce, Cassingham said this change will be beneficial to MERA's needs as it is so small, it has no employees and limited staff to address these tasks.

AYES: All

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

Motion carried.

2. Report No. 21 from Next Gen Project Oversight Committee – NGPOC (Jeffries)

Jeffries summarized his report noting MERA received a single proposal from Motorola in response to its Vendor RFP. It was shared for initial review with the NGPOC, Operational Issues Workgroup (Ops), DPW and MERA staff and Federal Engineering (FE) to generate clarifying questions for response. A Site Visit team was sent to the Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority to discuss their experiences with their Motorola project. He noted theirs was a phased project and this was a Motorola reference. A second Site Visit was conducted at the City of El Paso at the recommendation of Federal Engineering. This is a City/County radio system about which the Team learned where things went well and not so well.

Jeffries said the Ops Group conducted phone reference checks with the East Bay Regional Communications System Authority, Prince Georges County, Maryland and Pierce County, Washington. Chuck had his staff reference check Motorola subcontractors by Day Wireless and Red Cloud for installation and warranty maintenance. All this information was shared with the Selection Subcommittee and Negotiating Team.

Jeffries said Motorola responded to the clarifying questions on August 12. The Selection Subcommittee met on September 13 to evaluate and score the proposal. Scoring between 50-74% was defined as “good.” The Motorola proposal received a score of 61%. The Subcommittee recommended proceeding with negotiations with several issues needing to be addressed. The NGPOC met on September 14 and recommended commencement of negotiations to the Executive Board, which approved same on September 14. The first negotiating session was held on September 21. He noted Echols would discuss the session under Agenda Item C-1. He concluded with the reminder that the proposal is under administrative review and is confidential.

Van Doren asked where the site visit agencies were with their projects’ implementation. Jeffries said Silicon Valley is in their 6<sup>th</sup> stage and their progress is tied to the raising of resources to implement each stage. Early emphasis was to implement around Levi Stadium for Super Bowl. Same questions were posed for each phase . . . what went well and what didn’t go well and system upgrade agreements. El Paso began as a city project and their timeline was affected by demolition of their City Hall by a date certain. The County then decided to join them. Their system is a hybrid VHF/700 MHz on 2 different bands to be synched up with the County. El Paso staff said if problems arose with Motorola staff, they requested replacement. They had no issues with the quality of the operation, but the focus was on building what they wanted.

Van Doren asked if these projects were completed. Jeffries said Silicon Valley is nearly two-thirds done with two of the three in stages of their project. The third has not been started. With El Paso, the City is up and running and the County is still trouble-shooting some matters. They noted, even with new radios, to make sure they are properly tuned and adequately programmed. Features needed to be set up exactly per requirements. She asked to what degree will these reference checks assist in project performance versus its management. Jeffries said benefits from the checks is to assure what is requested is fully addressed noting related pitfalls of not doing so. He added that it will be important to make clear to the member agencies what is provided in the Project’s radio package and what is not to manage user expectations.

Tubbs asked if King County, Washington had been contacted regarding their PSERN Project. Jeffries confirmed MERA had not received their feedback and will follow up. Pearce noted MERA is being well served by MERA and County staff and Federal Engineering throughout this process and it has been a remarkable effort. He said we need to make sure the contract is really tight to assure the best project.

C. Update on Motorola Negotiations (Echols)

Echols provided a verbal report noting last Wednesday's meeting between DPW and MERA staff and Federal Engineering and Motorola was a very long one. Many issues were raised since the parties were so far apart based on Motorola's initial proposal. There were many omissions. Also, clarity of coverage maps was not adequate in comparison with the existing coverage for areas in question.

Echols noted issues to be addressed by Motorola in 2 weeks from today are: more refined coverage maps with overlays to compare with existing to allow zoom-in on specific areas, system capacity requirement calculations, microwave system lower tower heights in particular Sonoma Mountain and Corta cell tower heights which may not be feasible, and a solution for fire station alerting plus a knox box alert system proposal. There was significant discussion on volunteer paging which is a critical issue for West Marin. Motorola had offered the existing 700/800 band system using APX 100 dumb-down radios which are much bulkier than traditional pagers. They were pressed to provide a cost for a third-party pager that would work with Next Gen.

Echols said DPW identified specs for at least one vendor to address volunteer paging. Motorola is to provide pricing for this. Motorola will provide equipment solutions for volunteers to try in the field. Another option would be to go with a VHF system. However, MERA would have to obtain a VHF frequency along with FCC approval, which might be daunting to accomplish. We are awaiting a proposal for a new 700/800 in two weeks. Pearce suggested a VHF frequency from DOE which Echols will check on.

Echols said voice logging was discussed for which a proposal will be provided for a digital NICE system. Smaller topics included site development which Motorola assumed the hiring of another party to do the construction drawings. Echols said it was clarified that only the construction would be bid out. Motorola expressed interest in bidding in accord with the Public Contract Code. They expressed this arrangement was not normal for them as they consider construction drawings proprietary. Echols will explore this further.

Echols noted Motorola's agreement to a subscriber equipment faire. He referenced their advanced delivery of radios proposal which MERA is not interested in. Jeffries said we were keen on the discount but not 2016 delivery. He added that if Motorola was interested in a 2016 contract, the actions and schedule to achieve it in time for Board of Supervisors approval on December 6 require accelerated effort from Motorola to develop an acceptable final proposal and contract.

Echols said other issues include knox box controls, the cutover process, SUA and Motorola warranty services. Their pricing assumptions were based on Motorola providing these services versus the County Radio Shop for front line response to outages and radio repairs. Motorola would be back-up. Given the significant pricing of these services from Motorola a line-by-line review of tasks ensued to identify who will provide what. In response to Pearce, Echols said Motorola seemed responsive. They denied that

their proposal was substandard because of sole bidder status and desire to defer some design until after a contract is executed.

Jeffries said Motorola was advised of prior meeting Governing Board discussion of starting the RFP process over again given the receipt of one incomplete proposal. A spirited discussion followed. He added that the Board seemed amenable to the delay this would cause if it resulted in the best Project. Gaffney asked if they know about our Project budget. Jeffries said they do given their attendance at MERA meetings and access to our website documents. Echols said the original bid was low but adding on the options MERA wants will get close to our budget.

Echols noted while warranty cost may come down since the County will be providing front line service, adding volunteer paging will not be significant in that we are estimating only 150 pagers. The SUA, however, is one of the bigger ticket items which will affect the Project budget. Jeffries said whether we consider single band or dual band radios could have a significant budgetary impact. Echols said Motorola made certain assumptions about the sites. They will not be doing site construction or building towers. For example, Motorola assumed significant infrastructure work at Tomales. Echols said power is available there and a cell tower is there now. Motorola cost estimators may not have been the staff that visited the sites.

Kelly said the warranty service can be a significant cost item but with the County acting as a primary, local provider, this could result in considerable savings based on quick turnaround with repairs. Jeffries distinguished the bi-annual System upgrades from regular repairs. With Gen 1, Motorola rented a warehouse in Marin for the installation which saved time and cost. He added a great deal was learned from our Gen 1 experiences and is also being learned from site visits and reference checks that will be invaluable in our negotiations. Kelly asked about how long Motorola will commit to supporting Next Gen radios. He noted there is a stop-making timeline versus stop-supporting timeline.

Jeffries said Motorola offers several models of radios but the question is when did they go into service. Adding 7-8 years to this date will give us an idea about when they will go out of service. In response to Kelly, Jeffries said Motorola will not tell you when they will take a radio out of production. They will give you a timeline for support beyond production. He added this will become a significant issue when we are ready to purchase radios.

Kelly asked if the Board has a position about putting all the radios on GPS. This feature is critical to first responder safety. Jeffries said many of the models have GPS but the question is where does that data go after it is captured. Who is building and doing the interface on the other end? Kelly asked for more discussion on this going forward. Jeffries added MERA has nothing to do with CAD systems but this should be reviewed.

In response to Gaffney, Echols confirmed Motorola is to respond 2 weeks from today. He said their responsiveness will be the proof of the pudding. This will determine whether we are moving forward or whether we consider a different course of action. In response to Gaffney, Echols confirmed the Motorola negotiating team as 6-7 members. Jeffries said the goal of the first meeting was to make clear to Motorola what MERA is looking for. Once the gaps are filled, we can start moving forward with a presentation by Motorola. Some Ops Group members need to participate, especially with regard to coverage issues, fire station alerting and volunteer paging. DPW and MERA staff need to be present as well. He added that we need to be mindful of addressing public meeting noticing requirements if there is a possibility of Board or Committee quorums.

Echols, in response to Kelly regarding any coverage updates like Martha, said Motorola has not proposed Martha. Their proposed system reduces the number of sites from 13 to 12. Jeffries said Motorola is proposing to reduce the number of cells from 5 to 2. He said there needs to be more discussion about in-building coverage. They are proposing some new sites while eliminating some existing. Jeffries said while we have seen their new coverage maps, the detail is lacking. Echols said Motorola's solution for providing more coverage in West Marin is Wolfback Ridge and tower top amplifiers. The amplifiers allow them to reduce the number of sites. Elevation of the amplifier has a downside in that they could be damaged in stormy weather versus being protected in a building.

Naso asked if they were aware of issues in the Tiburon area and Southern Marin. Jeffries said Motorola has had Gen I experience with these areas. They may have identified that Martha has it challenges from the development side, so they are considering San Francisco options. He added that Motorola was provided existing site information and new sites background without limiting them from coming up with better locations. Likewise, Motorola has been asked to address possible in-building signal loss due to siting, which is critical to first responders.

2. Status/Work Statistics Reports (Chuck)

In Chuck's absence, Echols reported on August 2016 System Usage and System Usage Year-to-Date noting 10 seconds of busies in August and 51 seconds of busies for 2016 to date.

3. Other Information Items

None.

D. Open Time for Items Not On Agenda

None.

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maureen Cassingham  
Executive Officer and Secretary

**NEXT:**

MERA Governing Board Meeting  
**Wednesday    October 26, 2016    3:30pm**