

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**  
c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945

**GOVERNING BOARD**

**Minutes of October 26, 2016 Regular Meeting**

**DRAFT: 12/7/16**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Cusimano on October 26, 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 Corte Madera	Todd Cusimano
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	Dan Eilerman (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
Marinwood Community Services District	Thomas Roach
Novato Fire Protection District	Steve Metcho
	L.J. Silverman (Alternate)
Ross Valley Fire Department	Mark Mills
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Stephen Willis
Stinson Beach Fire District	Kenny Stevens
Central Marin Police Authority	Theo Mainaris (Alternate)

**Governing Board Member Agencies Absent:**

City of Belvedere  
City of Sausalito  
Marin Municipal Water District  
Marin Transit  
Tiburon Fire Protection District

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
Acting MERA General Counsel	Toussaint Bailey
MERA Deputy Executive Officer – Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Operations Officer	Pat Echols
Recording Secretary	Jeanne Villa

**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 separate action be taken on a specific item:

1. Minutes from September 28, 2016, Governing Board Regular Meeting
2. Report No. 47 on Strategic Plan Implementation
3. Update on Rebuild and Hosting of MERA Website – meraonline.org
4. Final Report on Marin County Civil Grand Jury Web Transparency Audit
5. Update on Non-Member MERA System User Letters of Agreement (LOAs)

*M/S/P Roach/Mills to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-5 as presented.*

AYES: ALL

NAYS: NONE

ABSTENTIONS: NONE

Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

1. Report No. 22 from Next Gen Project Oversight Committee (NGPOC) - Jeffries

Jeffries updated the Governing Board on where we are with Motorola negotiations. In response to the first session, Motorola provided information relative to our questions. Jeffries deferred to Echols to recap the second negotiation session under his report. More discussion between Motorola and the Negotiating Team took place today and will be followed by a call tomorrow.

Jeffries reminded the Board that Motorola's proposal continues to be under administrative review and is confidential. Any requests for information should be referred to Cassingham or him. One request has been handled to date. He said the final proposal and proposed contract will be publicly posted prior to Governing Board action on November 16 or December 14, subject to change based on the progress of negotiations.

2. Other Information Items

None.

C. Operations Reports (Echols)

1. Update on Motorola Negotiations (Verbal)

Echols summarized the October 20 presentation and subsequent negotiation session. There were 23 attendees for the presentation, predominantly law and fire representatives who were there for coverage, fire station alerting and volunteer paging information. During the coverage portion, Motorola provided more detailed coverage maps with mobile, portable and in-building coverage overlays. Overall, the take-away was the in-building coverage with the proposed new System is for 18db penetration in heavy reinforced concrete buildings like hospitals, which was better in some areas and less than what we have now in others. In part, this is due to Motorola not using some existing sites such as Dollar Hill, Forbes Hill and Mill Valley.

Echols said there will be ongoing conversations about what the remedies may look like to improve in-building coverage. Adding sites back in will have financial impacts, possibly \$1M per site, which will require Governing Board decisions. There may also be some other technical alternatives to improve in-building coverage. Until we better understand all the proposed costs in relation to the Project Budget, staff recommendations cannot be presented.

Echols said the microwave design was discussed and some of the originally proposed taller towers have been reduced in height. Alternative sites in the northeastern corridor were reviewed near Mt. Burdell, which would avoid a tall tower at Sonoma Mountain. They will be looking at other paths from Big Rock to Tomales which may eliminate the need for Sonoma Mountain. More work, however, needs to be done on these options.

Echols noted the Mach Alert fire station alerting option. There was a conference call this afternoon with DCR Engineering which included the County Dispatch Manager who had many great questions. She asked about how Mach Alert would interface with the CAD system currently used by Dispatch. This is looking like a positive solution. There will be follow-up with DCR clients using the Mach Alert system.

They will conference call or Skype with Toronto and arrange a possible site visit to Medford, Oregon, to see the system in action, along with face-to-face interaction with the users.

Echols said they reviewed Motorola's volunteer paging solution. Their original proposal was for a dumbed-down slightly smaller version of the APX 1000 radio which would be bulkier than the pagers currently being utilized. A smaller pager produced by Unication is now being considered. A conference call with one of their clients in Michigan will be scheduled to see how the system is functioning and review any issues they have encountered. He added that another negotiations conference call with Motorola is scheduled tomorrow. Echols said updated pricing from Motorola is under development and is expected to be in hand prior to the call.

Echols invited Jeffries and Chuck to add to his summary. Jeffries said the 18db factor is the same that San Francisco uses with its high-rises. The standard we're using is very similar. He added that Gen I has 3.0 Delivered Audio Quality and Next Gen will provide a higher quality of 3.4. Comparing in-building with DAQ will help us assess whether there will be upgrades or downgrades. Echols said audio quality issues were discussed at the January Coverage Workshop. Federal Engineering ran some scenarios depicting 3.4 to 3.0 DAQ, noting the reduction did not mean you couldn't talk to someone in the 3.0 areas but no guarantee you could talk at the same quality.

Echols added attenuation levels for in-building coverage for residential is around level 8db. Chuck said we have 18db with the present system. Jeffries said the mobile maps are very solid throughout the County. Portable maps are also very solid but the in-building piece needs more work. Dollar Hill, Forbes and Mill Valley remain factors with in-building.

Naso thanked Echols and Jeffries for their work on this. He said Motorola still needs to be reminded about current dead spots and the need to resolve them. Jeffries said the RFP included coverage areas to be addressed. However, given the County's topography and many rural areas, he said what is being proposed presents general coverage improvement with the exception of in-building. Echols said 100% coverage would require 66 sites and we have 13 now. 100% coverage is a matter of economics and we are doing all we can to improve coverage and stay within budget.

Jeffries said participants at the October 20 Motorola provided great perspectives. MERA reached out to the Police and Fire Chiefs' Associations which each sent 3 representatives. West County sent 3 Chiefs. A lot of input was provided on the coverage maps. He noted Gen I provided 97% reliability; however, some thought we would have 100% coverage throughout the County. We need to manage expectations with Next Gen. Final coverage maps need to be understandable for everyone. Where deep canyons affect coverage, training will need to come in to play to maximize the use of conventional channels to help.

Gaffney asked of Motorola submitted their proposal in a way that resulted in add-ons. Jeffries said much of the proposal addressed what MERA wanted but there were glaring holes such as no fire station alerting and no volunteer paging. Gaffney added, that Motorola eliminated 3 towers. Jeffries said that was fine as long as coverage was there. He stated to Motorola that the proposal was incomplete, scored 61 out of 100 points, and emphasized that some Board members asked about starting the process over which got their attention. At this point, the gaps are getting addressed and the relationship seems solid. Echols added Motorola knew they were the only proposer and may not have been sufficiently motivated to submit a complete proposal. He noted, however, great progress has been made. We have come a long way on volunteer paging and station alerting with more work needed on coverage to get to final costs for the System and System Upgrade Agreement (SUA).

Echols said what needs to be tempered now is timing of the final proposal and contract. It is unlikely we will be able to sign a contract by the end of this calendar year given the current pace of negotiations. We are working as hard as we can to comment and respond. Jeffries said Motorola wanted a contract by end of year for business reasons. Due to the time Motorola has taken to develop a complete proposal, meeting the Governing Board and Board of Supervisors schedules in November and December was unlikely.

Cusimano asked how our West and Southern Marin members feel about coverage and whether they are optimistic about improvements. Also, he asked about their feelings about paging solutions under discussion. Fox said they were guardedly optimistic. Tyrell-Brown said she was optimistic, recognizing the need to support the work being done on the Project to date. She said the paging system is really West Marin's station alerting system which they can't function without. Stevens added that coverage improvement is dependent on how negotiations go with Muir Beach along with other sites under consideration. He said there needs to be outreach to Muir Beach sooner than later, both to Chief Wynn as well as the District. Jeffries noted we are at the point of having such conversations.

Jeffries said, regarding volunteer paging, the technical solution does not require additional MERA infrastructure. The solution involves only the receiving units. He noted that other members, not just West Marin, have shown interest in the paging solution. This will require more discussion about what is a MERA expense and what is a member agency expense.

In response to Gaffney, Jeffries said the next negotiating session is October 27. We are getting closer to presenting Proposal costs to the Finance Committee and getting the Attorneys involved in reviewing contract terms and conditions. Base Project costs, along with essential add-on costs, are closer to being finalized, along with

System Upgrade Agreement and additional site costs. He noted we also need to identify which costs are clearly MERA's and which are member costs.

Cassingham, in response to Cusimano, noted the need for the November 16 Governing Board meeting is in question and will be discussed next week. It will be cancelled if there is insufficient business.

2. Other Information Items

None.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

None.

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maureen Cassingham  
Executive Officer and Secretary