

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
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## **GOVERNING AND EXECUTIVE BOARDS**

### **Minutes of January 16, 2013 Special Joint Meeting**

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Hymel on January 16, 2013 at 2:37 p.m. in the San Rafael Corporate Center-Tamalpais Room-750 Lindero Street, San Rafael, CA 94901.

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

City of Belvedere	Tricia Seyler (Alternate)
Town of Corte Madera	Roger Sprehn (Alternate)
Town of Fairfax	Chris Morin
City of Larkspur	Robert Sinnott
City of Mill Valley	Angel Bernal, Ken Dunkel (Alternate)
City of Novato	Jeanne MacLeamy
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney
Town of San Anselmo	Lori Lopin, Kay Coleman (Alternate)
City of San Rafael	Diana Bishop
County of Marin	Matthew Hymel, Steve Kinsey (Alternate)
City of Sausalito	Jennifer Tejada
Bolinas Fire Protection District	Anita Tyrrell-Brown
Inverness Public Utility District	James Fox, Scott McMorro (Alternate)
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Paul Smith, Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin County Transit District	David Rzepinski, Amy Van Doren (Alternate)
Marin Municipal Water District	Bill Hogan
Marinwood Community Services District	Tom Horne (Alternate)
Novato Fire Protection District	Brad Beedle, Tomas Kaselionis (Alternate)
Ross Valley Fire Service	Roger Meagor (Alternate)
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Jim Irving, Cathryn Hilliard (Alternate)
Stinson Beach Fire District	Kenny Stevens
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce
Central Marin Police Authority	Todd Cusimano, James Shirk (Alternate)

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

Town of Tiburon  
Marin Community College District

**Executive Board Members Present:**

County of Marin  
Marin County Sheriff  
City of Novato  
Fire Services  
Police Departments  
Ross Valley Cities/Towns  
Southern Marin Cities/Towns  
Special Districts

Matthew Hymel  
Robert Doyle  
Jim Berg  
Richard Pearce  
Todd Cusimano  
Debra Stutsman  
Jim McCann  
Bill Hogan

**Executive Board Members Absent:**

City of San Rafael

Chris Gray

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer  
General Counsel  
County DPW/MERA Operations Officer  
Communications Services Mgr. (DPW)  
County Communications Engineer  
Recording Secretary

Maureen Cassingham  
Jim Karpiak  
Craig Tackabery  
Shelly Nelson  
Richard Chuck  
Gretchen Felciano

**Guests Present:**

Stuart Baker  
Cathy Capriola  
Barbara Heller  
Jim Lyndon  
Steve Kinsey  
Jason Weber  
David Kimball  
Tom Roach  
Ken Massucco  
Dan Mullen  
Terry Price

**Representing:**

City of Fairfax Police Department  
City of Novato  
City of San Rafael  
City of San Rafael Fire Department  
Workshop Presenter  
Marin County Fire Department  
Bolinas Fire Protection District  
Marinwood Community Services District  
Novato Fire Protection District  
Indie Politics  
Price Campaign Solutions

I. Workshop on MERA Next Generation System

A. Introductions

Hymel welcomed all in attendance, noting the Workshop would be followed by actions by the Governing Board on the Next Generation System. Cassingham introduced Outreach Subcommittee Chair Cusimano and Outreach Consultants Price and Mullen.

Hymel then introduced Supervisor Kinsey, Marin County Board of Supervisors - District 4 and County MERA Governing Board Alternate.

B. Presentation Opening

Kinsey introduced elected officials in attendance. He provided a summary of the condition of radio communications in the County before MERA and a brief history of MERA and its current operations. He also reviewed the Workshop's goals.

C. DPW Presentation on Current and Next Generation System Technology

Tackabery discussed the 25 member agencies and other emergency responders and their respective fire, medical, law enforcement and mutual aid regional response operations using the current MERA system.

Nelson reviewed how emergency calls are handled and broke down system usage in 2012. She talked about the current system showing signs of age, that it cannot last forever, and regulatory deadlines on the horizon affecting its replacement. She reviewed current system use, age and coverage and capacity challenges. Nelson presented the regulatory deadlines ahead and how the Next Generation System will address these requirements.

D. Finance Committee Presentations on Project Financing

Gaffney reviewed the MERA Finance Committee's work to date on how to finance the Next Generation System. He presented a breakdown of system capital and bond issuance costs estimated at \$54.6M. He discussed funding options including grants, low interest loans and member agency contributions. He focused on major funding options of property or parcel taxes which would require voter approval.

Gaffney closed with the next steps on financing including further review of the parcel and property tax options, development of grant applications, polling for public acceptance and continued Committee work on a financing plan for presentation to the Governing Board.

E. MERA Video Presentation

Kinsey introduced the video on public safety first responder use of the current system and need for replacement in the future.

F. Presentation Closing

Kinsey concluded the Workshop with a call for member help and support with MERA's outreach efforts with their respective agencies and jurisdictions. He touched on the various ways MERA will assist members including polling results, informational

handouts, public presentations, staff and scheduling support, website resources and more. He presented a schedule of key dates in 2013 and 2014 for critical tasks to generate local agency and public support for the Next Generation System Project. Kinsey summarized that this Project will only succeed with the help and support of everyone in attendance.

During and after the Workshop, presenters were asked questions on the following topics:

- Benefits of the New System;
- Current and future coverage issues;
- How the current system works with 911;
- Vendor support and compliance with future FCC requirements;
- New equipment useful life and responsiveness to new requirements;
- Need for additional antenna sites;
- Anticipated environmental and neighbor challenges;
- Current system interface with the new system;
- New system O&M costs;
- Timeline for Executive and Governing Boards' action on the Project;
- Next Gen System planning expenses to date and through 2014;
- The challenges of voter acceptance of additional taxes.

II. Consider and Provide Direction on Next Generation System

A. Adopt the MERA Outreach Executive Summary and Plan (11-7-12) as Presented or Revised with Direction to Executive Board to Implement

Cassingham presented her staff report on this and Item B and she and Hymel responded to questions regarding the recommended actions.

*M/S/P Gaffney/Pearce to adopt the MERA Outreach Executive Summary and Plan as presented with direction to the Executive Board to implement.*

AYES: Seyler, Sprehn, Morin, Sinnott, Bernal, MacLeamy, Gaffney, Lopin, Hymel, Tejada, Tyrrell-Brown, Fox, Smith, Rzepinski, Hogan, Horne, Beedle, Meagor, Irving, Stevens, Pearce and Cusimano

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

B. Adopt the Proposed Resolution of the MERA Governing Board Declaring the Official Intent to Reimburse Expenditures from the Proceeds of Tax Exempt Securities as Recommended by the MERA Finance Committee

*M/S/P Gaffney/Irving to adopt the Resolution of the MERA Governing Board Declaring the Official Intent to Reimburse Expenditures from the Proceeds of Tax Exempt Securities.*

AYES: Seyler, Sprehn, Morin, Sinnott, Bernal, MacLeamy, Gaffney, Lopin, Hymel, Tejada, Tyrrell-Brown, Smith, Rzepinski, Hogan, Horne, Beedle, Meagor, Irving, Pearce and Cusimano

NAYS: Fox and Stevens

Motion carried.

Stevens and Fox expressed concerns about current System operations and coverage and reservations about committing to the Next Generation Technology System.

III. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

None.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.