

**G.B. 12/9/20 Agenda Item A-1**

**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

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**GOVERNING BOARD**

**Minutes of October 28, 2020 Regular Meeting**

**DRAFT: 12/2/20**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The teleconferenced regular meeting was called to order by Vice-President Cusimano on October 28, 2020, at 3:31p.m. Cusimano reviewed the teleconferencing protocol, noting roll call votes on all action items. Barrera called roll.

**Governing Board Members & Alternates Present:**

Town of Corte Madera	Todd Cusimano
City of Mill Valley	Jacqueline Graf (Alternate)
City of Novato	Amy Peele
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney
Town of San Anselmo	Doug Kelly
City of San Rafael	Bob Sinnott (Alternate)
County of Marin	Dan Eilerman (Alternate)
Bolinas Fire Protection District	George Krakauer
Inverness Public Utility District	Jim Fox
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Mark Pomi, Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin Community College District	Martin Langeveld (Alternate)
Marin Municipal Water District	Don Wick (Alternate)
Marin Transit	Amy Van Doren
Marinwood Community Services District	Eric Dreikosen (Alternate)
Novato Fire Protection District	Steve Metcho, L. J. Silverman (Alternate)
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Cathryn Hilliard
Stinson Beach Fire Protection District	Kenny Stevens

**Governing Board Member Agencies Absent:**

City of Belvedere  
Town of Fairfax  
City of Larkspur  
City of Sausalito  
Ross Valley Fire Department  
Town of Tiburon  
Tiburon Fire Protection District  
Central Marin Police Authority

**Staff Present:**

MERA Executive Officer	Maureen Cassingham
MERA General Counsel	Trisha Ortiz
MERA Deputy Executive Officer – Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
MERA Administrative Assistant – Next Gen Project	Maura Griffin
MERA Acting Operations Officer Recording Secretary	Betsy Swenerton Lorena Barrera

**Guests Present:**

County of Marin DPW	Pat Echols
County of Marin DPW	Mark Bleeker
City of Sausalito	Lt. Stacie Gregory
Federal Engineering	David Mortimer
AECOM	Jonathan Sprague
AECOM	James McKenzie

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 23, 2020, Governing Board Regular Meeting
- 2) Report No. 101 on Strategic Plan Implementation

*M/S/P Kelly/Wick to approve Consent Calendar Items 1 and 2 as presented. Roll call vote followed.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried.

B. Executive Officer's Report – (Cassingham)

- 1) Report No. 75 on Next Gen System and Approval of Initial Bid Package and Notice Inviting Bids – (Jeffries)

Jeffries reported that the Project Team and Implementation Team continue to meet. He said they are still working on cost estimates, with some very rough

numbers still being finetuned. They will continue to work on the estimates, hoping to present them at the December meeting.

Jeffries said they have gone through the sites and identified Civic Center, EOF, and Mt. Barnabe as sites that can be pushed out right away following today's customer design review discussion. He said once they are advertised and the bids come back, they will be presented to the Board for approval.

Referring to the Site Overview in the staff report, Jeffries noted that some of the PG&E sites currently in yellow are quite close to completion of contracts, design, and leases, and he anticipates providing updates in the December meeting package.

Jeffries reported that the Assistance to Firefighters Grant has been received and they are looking at mobile installations, which they hope to start in February 2021. They are still working with AT&T regarding sharing a power trench at Tomales to reduce costs and the amount of digging required. He shared the Project Summary Table showing tasks completed, in process, upcoming, and expected within the next six months, as detailed in the staff report.

Jeffries shared the Project Initiation bid package developed by AECOM. To provide some background, Jeffries explained that MERA has the responsibility to get the sites ready for Motorola and then Motorola will come in with the equipment to make the sites operable. For some of the existing sites, some upgrades, reinforcing, and adjustments are necessary. For the green sites, MERA is also doing all of the site construction including the foundations, towers, building, etc., to get them ready.

Cusimano invited questions from the Board.

In response to Hilliard, Jeffries said the Project sites construction budget was \$150,000 to \$165,000.

Hearing no other questions, Cusimano invited public comment. Hearing none, Cusimano brought the item back to the Board for discussion or action.

James MacKenzie from AECOM said the general estimate indicated is an early one and the numbers might go up 10% to 15%.

Cusimano asked if the increased estimate figure remains in the current budget. Jeffries said they are still going through the numbers for the overall Project Budget, which at this point is incredibly rough. He said EOF, Civic Center, and Mt. Barnabe are some of the quicker, easier, less expensive sites. He said Coyote Peak is causing the greatest challenge trying to figure out site specifics and the access road. He said they will not have more precise figures until AECOM

provides estimates.

*M/S/P Van Doren/Gaffney to approve the Initial Bid Package with the cost adjustment as proposed and Authorize Notice Inviting Bids. Roll call vote followed.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried.

- 2) Proposed Extension of Next Gen Project Federal Engineering Services Agreement  
Jeffries explained that Federal Engineering's existing Contract is expiring at the end of this calendar year. He noted that the actual fixed price for the two-year period is actually \$784,320 and not \$794,320 as indicated in the staff report but is reflected correctly in the Contract. This proposed agreement will extend FE's services for two additional years. He said David Mortimer is essentially a full-time employee working with Motorola and managing the Contract. He said Mortimer has been instrumental in moving forward with the Project and helping AECOM get up to speed. If Mortimer should for some reason leave the Project, MERA has the option to approve replacement or terminate the agreement and reassess how to move forward.

Cusimano invited questions from the Board.

Gaffney said the Project schedule appears to go out to 2024 although this Contract only goes to 2022. He asked if FE services would still be needed after 10/30/2022. Jeffries said it was too far out to extend a third year and that the situation will be reassessed in two years. He said the Project Schedule extends into only the first couple of months of 2024, at which point the Project will be winding down and may no longer require a full-time position. Gaffney asked why it is a fixed price instead of billed hourly. Gaffney said Mortimer has moved here and lives here and is assigned to this Project full time. If he has some quiet time, MERA has the option to have him perform other duties to make sure it remains a full-time position. He added that the fixed price is not a change and is how it has always been.

Cusimano invited public comment. Hearing none, he brought the item back to the Board for discussion or action.

*M/S/P Pomi/Eilerman to approve the Proposed Extension of the Next Gen Project Federal Engineering Services Agreement as presented. Roll call vote followed.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried.

3) Proposed Agreement for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Interface Costs – (Jeffries)

Jeffries explained this proposed agreement is an expected cost for the planned interface between the Fire Station Alerting Server and the Sheriff's CAD Server, as detailed in the staff report. The proposed agreement with Hexagon Safety and Infrastructure is to develop the interface at a cost of \$55,082.75, which will be charged against Budget Summary Line #3 (Site Acquisition/Construction/CEQA).

Cusimano invited questions from the Board. Hearing none, Cusimano invited public comment. Hearing none, Cusimano brought the item back to the Board for discussion or action.

*M/S/P Kelly/Sinnott moved to approve the Proposed Agreement for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Interface Costs as presented. Roll call vote followed.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

4) Proposed Motorola Customer Design Documents – (Jeffries)

Jeffries said the Customer Design Review has been a very lengthy process, which included hundreds of pages of technical documents. Staff has provided the Board with some of the key documents to review and approve.

Jeffries pointed out the waived items, items on hold for final approval and items completed with comments, as detailed in the staff report. With regard to Mach Alert (CDR-03, Item #016), the Fire Station Alerting System, he explained that when the Motorola Contract was signed, Fire Station Alerting was identified as something that wasn't ready yet for inclusion and would be one of the first change orders. Because this was in a change order, it will have its own customer design review process. The cost to Motorola as part of the customer design review process is not part of what is being presented for approval today.

Jeffries described a challenge that occurred with CDR-50, the Jail Distributed Audio System that will go into the heavy building to allow the radio system to work underground. For some unknown reason, when the vendor came to review the site, that part of the jail was not included. He said while they do have a design, it does not cover the entire jail so Motorola is working to get the vendor back to finish that visit and the design. He said although this item is relatively inexpensive, it needs to be addressed so that the jail has complete coverage. This issue should be resolved in the next two or three months. Jeffries said items that are recommended for acceptance are included under "Completed with

Comments.” He said Motorola has reviewed this list and agreed they are accurately described, which locks them in to how they have agreed to deal with these items. He said, for example, CDR-10, the Microwave Path Analysis, describes an issue with a license process to renew. He said Motorola for some time has wanted MERA to assume this because the Project has gone longer than they had originally planned. This matter has been resolved. This also makes clear that MERA will work with Motorola to make sure the paths are clear for initial installation but after that it will become a maintenance issue for some of the sites. Jeffries pointed out that in CDR-14, some of the unresolved issues will be cleaned up in the final construction documents.

Jeffries noted that Payment Milestone #2 is significant. He then described each of the attachments included in the staff report: Customer Design Review Summary, Project Schedule, Radio System Description, Microwave System Description, Site Layout Drawings, Shelter Floor Plans, and Completion of Design Review documents.

Jeffries said that after an intense process, the Project Schedule was finalized on Monday, October 26, 2020, for distribution. He pointed out that he was only sharing the Summary, as the actual Project Schedule has 1,200 lines of data. The Final System Acceptance is scheduled for March 2024. Other important dates are the Final System Cutover scheduled for September 2023, when everyone should be on the new System.

Jeffries said one of the challenges for existing sites is that some sites required three drawings (the existing floor plan, the transition floor plan, and the final), although only the finals are included in the CDR packet.

Jeffries said completion of Customer Design Review documents provided by Motorola for the milestone payment will also be the approval to start moving forward with the Project’s next phase. This will include Motorola’s build of the Fixed Network Equipment (FNE) and the microwave equipment. He said there will be a series of testing procedures to make sure it is working as anticipated, which is scheduled for February. In May, Motorola should have all of the FNE build completed and there will be a testing phase at the Illinois site. He said after testing, Motorola will ship to MERA. He said the gap is now less than two months between when Motorola ships the equipment and when it is needed for installation whereas the gap for Gen 1 was approximately two years.

Cusimano invited questions from the Board.

Hilliard confirmed that the Board is approving \$1,715,362. She asked if this matter had been presented to the Operations Committee and if they had made any recommendations. Jeffries said the Operations Committee has very little if anything to do with the Customer Design Review process. He explained that

AECOM has independently reviewed the CDR documents and developed a list of issues to address, Mortimer from FE has also conducted his review, along with DPW staff. He added the Ops Committee is advisory as line users. Hilliard thanked Jeffries for the thorough explanation.

Van Doren asked where things were with MPLS, if there are any contingencies. Jeffries said there was a change order to add MPLS to the System. Microwave System Description (Item B-4d) has been updated and modified to reflect the addition of MPLS. She expressed appreciation for the efforts to develop the updated Schedule for Project completion.

Cusimano invited public comment. Hearing none, he brought the item back to the Board for discussion or action.

*M/S/P Hilliard/Silverman moved to approve the Proposed Motorola Customer Design Documents as presented. Roll call vote followed.*

AYES: All  
NAYS: None  
ABSTENTIONS: None  
Motion carried

5) Discussion of November MERA Governing Board Meeting Date

Cassingham said this year the fourth Wednesday falls the day prior to Thanksgiving and suggested foregoing a regular MERA Governing Board Meeting in November in favor of the regular meeting on December 9. The Board agreed.

6) Other Information Items

None.

C. Operations Reports – (Swenerton)

1) Report on Current MERA System Major Maintenance and Repair Evaluation

Swenerton congratulated the Next Gen Team for reaching the incredible milestone of CDR approval. She presented the health check report on the Gen 1 MERA System, as detailed in the staff report. She said the DPW staff recommends that a third-party engineer be engaged to conduct an independent analysis, now that it is known the Next Gen system is approximately three years out. The engineer would work with Motorola to assess the trunked radio system and develop an updated list of recommended critical spares to have on hand. She said it is sometimes a challenge to find spares, but they have been working with FE, Motorola, and other local agencies that are retiring similar radio systems. For the microwave system, Aviat has recently been re-engaged with a three-year

extended warranty, a good tool to keep the microwave system up and running.

Swenerton said that, DPW wanted to revisit their original recommendation for addressing potential network card and equipment failures in the microwave system. There was concern that, although it may be preferable to replace a lot of the equipment to insure operability for the next three years, doing a lot of intrusive work could potentially create more issues for the microwave system. Communications staff re-thought the process and subsequently recommended the less invasive approach of purchasing spares to have on hand in the event they are needed. The list of equipment, quantities, and costs are included in the staff report, and the total amount, \$110,000, which is less than what the Governing Board approved in September.

In response to Cusimano's question, Swenerton said this is just informational at this point. She said in their current System Contract, they have spending authority up to \$50,000 for technical services and with the Motorola contract and the annual cost for Aviat they may be close to that. They would like to get a cost estimate for a third-party analysis and present it to the MERA Governing Board for approval because it may exceed their allowance for technical services.

Cusimano invited questions from the Board.

Pomi said one of the important selling points of the greater allocation was that the firmware, software and hardware were all basically the same. He said that is why the Governing Board approved Option 2, to really harden the System. He asked if they were comfortable not having that firmware, software and hardware all the same in the suggested less-invasive approach. Swenerton said in a perfect world it would be great to have continuity with the same firmware, software and hardware from a networking standpoint. However, from a reality standpoint, the Radio Shop technicians expressed concern that a lot of invasive work to replace hardware that has not even failed yet comes with the risk of accidentally causing a failure.

2) Update on Proposed Sonoma-Bay Hill Microwave Link Relinquishment

Swenerton said there was some confusion at the last meeting regarding the proposed FCC licensing. MERA needs to retain the license from Sonoma to Big Rock and it is not tied in with the license from Sonoma to Bay Hill. She said it has since been learned that Sonoma County has actually already obtained an FCC license for the link that they need from Bay Hill to Sonoma. MERA needs to cancel its own license for that one link between Sonoma and Bay Hill and Sonoma is proposing to take it over. She said Sonoma has been in the process of upgrading all of their microwave links throughout their system and this is the last link to be updated. They have reported that all of their equipment has been purchased and once MERA and Sonoma can finalize an agreement for MERA's

continued use of Sonoma's link, MERA can work with their staff to schedule the cutover for that equipment and the microwave link. Cassingham added that she and MERA General Counsel will review the proposed agreement on Friday and will keep her updated regarding the content and any recommended revisions.

- 3) MERA Operations System Update – September  
Swenerton reported that the Communications Division continued its efforts with FE in support of Next-Gen Project. They replaced a failed network card and a faulty modem card at Mt. Barnabe. There was a failed T1 line at Mill Valley City Hall which caused some problems with communication with the MERA site there, but AT&T repaired it and restored.
- 4) Other Information Items – Aviat Networks  
Swenerton reported they were able to execute the extended warranty agreement with Aviat Networks, the current microwave system vendor. It is a three-year warranty from August 1, 2020 through July 31, 2023, for an annual cost of \$9,690 and a total cost of approximately \$30,000.

Cusimano expressed appreciation to Swenerton for all of her work and said she is doing a great job.

D. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Mortimer, on behalf of Federal Engineering, thanked the Board and MERA staff for the confidence they've shown by extending their contract for a full two years and it is very much appreciated. He said he looks forward to continuing working together to complete the project as quickly as possible and deliver this new System to MERA and the users. Cusimano said Mortimer is a chief part of the team and MERA is lucky to have his help.

Echols announced that they have finished their recruitment for their Communications Division Manager position and have hired Andrew LeBlanc and will introduce him at the next meeting.

Cusimano suggested considering Zoom calls for the next meetings. Some other Board members agreed.

E. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Maureen Cassingham  
MERA Executive Officer  
and Secretary