



**MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**  
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**Measure A Citizens Oversight Committee  
Minutes of Dec 21, 2022 Regular Meeting**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The teleconferenced regular meeting was called to order by Chair Herrerias at 4:00 p.m. on Dec 21, 2022; Lorena Barrera called roll.

Committee Members:

District #1	Elizabeth Greenberg	Present
District #2	Vacant	N/A
District #3	Mordechai Winter	Present
District #4	Larry Luckham	Present
District #5	Paul Herrerias	Present

Staff Present:

MERA Executive Officer	Heather Plamondon
Deputy Executive Officer, Next Gen Project	Dave Jeffries
Recording Secretary	Lorena Barrera

A. Minutes of Sep 21, 2022 Citizens Oversight Committee

The committee reviewed the minutes of the Sep 21, 2022 meeting. Member Herrerias asked to review item E updates on member terms, and it was concluded that the members in question had expressed a willingness to stay on and serve until the end of the project, which would land past the end of their term dates. Also asked about the incumbent for district #2 and whether they would continue to serve at these meetings – it was concluded that they did not intend to stay on the committee, and that a replacement would need to be found.

**MOTION:** M/S/C (Greenberg/Luckham) to approve the minutes of Sep 21, 2022.

**Roll call vote** Ayes: All, Noes: None, Abstain: Winters

B. Update on Status of Next Gen System Project and Budget – Jeffries

Dave Jeffries gave his update on the project as included in the packet. He first notes that there will be more clear updates to the project schedule coming in January, after scheduling with FIDATO and Motorola takes place. Following along the packet, he then gave updates on completed, ongoing, and upcoming bid packages, noting that Microwave installation will take place across all sites at the same time later in the project. Member Herrerias inquired about the effect that having only a single combined bid may have had on the cost estimate for bid package #4. Jeffries assured the board that after re-estimating the costs due to moving parts of the bid package forward to mitigate supply chain delays, Fidato's estimate came in within the accepted

10% range of the MERA engineers' estimate. Jeffries continues noting that all leases, including the renegotiation on a lease of a site that changed ownership, have been completed as of GB meeting 12/14/22. Moving on to the connectivity report, Jeffries explains that new network connections will need to be established to bring all parties in to the core of the system. Also notes the Wi-Fi programming that will connect to sites across the county, allowing for changes and updates to be made wirelessly without manual adjustment at every site and for subscriber radios. Marin IT was approached to create a design for the new system – currently working on finalizing the design and initial purchase of equipment for the 3 testing locations. Finished by reviewing the project summary table included in the packet, noting tasks completed, and short/long term scheduled tasks.

Heather Plamondon also gave updates on the Project and Budget, beginning with briefly explaining the recent history of contract negotiations with AECOM for Member Winter, who had not been present last time this was discussed. In summary, the funds allocated to the AECOM contract for construction management had been nearly 100% used up by the time that 50% of the work was completed. MERA was presented with a 2-million-dollar contract extension to continue the current work, but the Governing Board could not agree on approving it. A separate task order #4 has been agreed upon with AECOM for certain work to continue, but all remaining work for task order #2 with them has been suspended. A new vendor by the name of Nandina Inc. will take over the construction management for the remaining 9 sites. They have strong experience in construction management, most notably working with Motorola on a 50+ site radio system in the Los Angeles County area. Plamondon continues by discussing the construction budget, focusing on the fact that construction costs have greatly increased since the time the estimates were first made back in 2017. Because of this, MERA will need to explore ways of refinancing upcoming payments, and/or increasing/finding new sources of revenue. She continued by explaining how much of the upcoming costs stem from the fact that many of the remaining sites are also the most expensive ones to work on, due to the infrastructure that will need to be laid out and the difficulty of the work. Heather noted that one of the sites alone has an estimated cost of \$4.4 million, which prompted member Herrerias to inquire as to how these sites were chosen. Dave Jeffries explained the methodology of selecting the site locations, see [40min, 40sec](#) of the recording for his detailed explanation. Member Greenberg asked if there was an estimate for approximately how much the expected increase in construction costs will be, to which Heather Plamondon gave a figure of 35%. Member Herrerias asked if any of the sites are “optional”, and at what point do we decide if something is too expensive and needs to be dropped. Jeffries and Plamondon both gave similar answers, explaining that the decisions about what the sites would be and whether or not they were necessary were made back in 2016-2017, and to change them now would be a very time consuming and expensive endeavor. In addition, the way the Next Gen System is design requires all the allotted sites to be active as it is more than just a number of radios, but a network of sites that communicate with one another – this is especially important considering the topography of Marin County.

C. Report on Status of Measure A, Through October 2022 - Plamondon

Heather Plamondon gave a report on the status of Measure A, as included in the packet. She began with a review of Measure A Balance sheets through October 31<sup>st</sup>. She addressed a question that Member Herrerias asked at the last meeting about the discrepancy in the fixed assets figure vs. the total amount spent. This is because Measure A spending is not only on fixed assets, but on some staff costs and overhead that are directly attributable to the Next Gen Project. She also stated that going forward starting January 2023, she would be making an attempt to move as many costs as possible off of Measure A spending into the operating budget, in order to get a better handle on what Measure A costs should/will be.

D. Review of Funds 70038 and 70039 – Next Gen Project Revenues and Expenditures.

The review of funds 70038 and 70039 was included in item C.

E. Other Information Items

Heather Plamondon explained the situation that caused the delay of the annual audit. She explains the timing issue of the retirement of the outgoing Finance Director lining up with the onboarding of the new audit firm, the combination causing an approximately 2 week delay, though she notes there does not appear to be any findings that cause concern in the preliminary drafts.

F. Open Time for Items Not on Agenda

Member Winter gave an introduction of himself to the committee, as well as a brief overview of his experience in public service, and his motivation for being here. He also asked about some background of the other committee members, to which they gave their own introduction.

G. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Recording can be accessed on the Agendas and Minutes Page at: <http://www.meraonline.org>