

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

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## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING: OCTOBER 2, 2008**

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Steve Kinsey, Chairman, County of Marin  
Jean Bonander, City of Larkspur (4:15 p.m.)  
Jim Irving, Southern Marin Fire District  
Joe Kreins, Novato P.D.  
Anne Montgomery, Southern Marin Cities/Towns (4:15 p.m.)  
Ken Nordhoff, City of San Rafael  
Marc Revere, Novato Fire Protection District

#### **STAFF/NONVOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer  
Richard Chuck, Project Engineer, DPW  
Don MacQuarrie, Marin Police Chief's Association  
David Rzepinski, Marin Transit District  
Suki Sennett, Recording Secretary, ad hoc

**Call to Order:** Chairman Kinsey called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. in Conference Room 410B, Marin County Civic Center, San Rafael, CA.

#### **Agenda Item A: Consent Calendar**

1. Approve Minutes of May 27, 2008 Executive Committee Special Meeting
2. Proposed Radio Frequency Use Agreement between MERA and Golden Gate National Recreation Area
3. Refunding Analysis 1999 Revenue Bonds – Tom Gaffney, Bartle Wells Associates
4. Proposed Local Government Services (LGS) Agreement for Administrative Associate Professional Services
5. Proposed Contract between MERA, Marin General Services Authority, and Marin Telecommunications Agency and Gladwell Governmental Services, Inc., for Records Management Services
6. Proposed License Agreement between MERA and KWMR for Use of MERA Bolinas Facilities

At Revere's request, Item A-2 was pulled for discussion purposes.

*M/S/P Nordhoff/Irving to accept Consent Calendar Items #1-6, minus Item #2.*

AYES: ALL

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried.

Discussion ensued regarding the impact of permitting additional users on capacity as set forth in Item #2. Mansourian stated that the GGNRA is an existing MERA user for mutual aid purposes and that federal agencies are seeking to confirm these relationships with agreements. It was agreed that these issues should be referred to the Operations Committee for review and recommendation.

*M/S/P Revere/Irving to approve Item #2, Proposed Radio Frequency Use Agreement between MERA and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.*

AYES: ALL

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried.

**B. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)**

1. Forbes Hill Reservoir County Facilities Abatement Project (Verbal)

Cassingham reported she had stepped in as Project Manager, given County DPW's lack of capacity at this time. Abatement of the County's facilities is required by MERA's site lease with MMWD. The timeline for abatement is longer than MMWD's letter had indicated and costs are unknown. There is no urgency to abate, given the timeline needed to relocate the reservoir elsewhere on the site. Kinsey said it was advantageous to get MMWD to incorporate the work in their overall project for potential cost savings. During Cassingham's site meeting with MMWD's representatives, it was noted that MERA had not requested a waiver of market rent (\$36,000 plus CPI) to maintain the current \$1-per-year rent. Cassingham has since requested same.

2. Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations Report: "Emergency Communications at Marin Schools – Continued Discussion"

Discussion ensued whether it was feasible for the schools to become a MERA member at this time, given capacity issues. There was agreement that Kinsey and Cassingham should remain in communication with Marin schools and report back on their plan status. Kinsey said he would confer with Cassingham on the matter.

3. MERA Budget: FY 2007-2008 – Contract Services Variance – Frequencies Consultant – CSI

Executive Officer requested authorization to pay \$55,020 to frequency consultant CSI from the FY 07-08 budget since their billings exceeded year-end projections by

\$31,020. Funds were available from the FY '07-'08 operating balance. Staff was directed to pay and place this matter on Consent Calendar at the next meeting in the form of a Budget Adjustment Resolution.

**C. Operations Reports (Mansourian)**

1. Proposed Emergency Repairs to Tower Access Road – Mt. Barnabe Site

Kinsey requested the Executive Committee's support to absorb additional costs associated with slide repairs. Verizon had agreed to pay a total of \$40,600 for the cost of the Slide 1 repair and half of the cost of the Slide 2 repairs, leaving a balance of \$15,700.00 that would be MERA's responsibility. The payment will be made from the FY '08-'09 budget.

*M/S/P Kreins/Bonander to approve additional costs in the amount of \$15,700.00 for slide repairs to Tower Access Road, Mt. Barnabe site.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

2. Additional Radios for Existing Members – Discussion and Request for Direction

Discussion ensued regarding past practice for purchasing additional radios. Nordhoff will look at his files for past protocols and policies. The issue of "radio creep" was discussed. It was agreed that it was up to the Operations Committee to provide policy advice to the Executive Committee based on usage of existing and additional radios.

3. Coverage Report – Discussion and Request for Direction

Mansourian announced that 1,800 plus employees had been trained, all over the county, with the exception of hospitals. Chuck addressed additional coverage costs for three activations: Tomales, Tiburon, and North Novato. Bonander recommended referring coverage costs to a financial subcommittee of the Executive Committee that would include Nordhoff, Gaffney and other past participants.

4. System User Priority/VHF Overlay – Discussion and Request for Direction

Irving said the fire chiefs had approved a solution regarding the County DPW's problem with accessing the system during events. Fire would move onto a VHF overlay system in emergency events. The County DPW needs priority in emergencies such as severe storms. It would add 50 DPW user/radios. Kreins was concerned with a potential negative effect on law enforcement during day-to-day operations. Discussion ensued. There was agreement that 50 additional DPW radios were necessary, and to go forward with a trial period. The solution was "interim," to be tested during this winter's severe storms. Southern Marin Fire would provide Cassingham with a written description of the interim priority policy that would be made available to all MERA members. Procedures would be evaluated at the end of the storm season (spring), while retaining the ability to revisit them at any time by calling a special meeting. Also, the

Committee agreed to appoint a Capacity Committee consisting of the Police Chiefs of San Rafael and Novato, the Sheriff, Southern Marin and County Fire Districts, and smaller MERA members to evaluate and monitor system capacity options.

**D. Status/Work Statistics Reports (Chuck)**


Chuck reviewed MERA System activities for July-August 2008. He referred the Committee to the Zone Preference programming issues in his staff report. The Operations Committee had agreed to be on "E" systems preference in order to decrease "busies."

**E. Regular Executive Committee Meeting Dates/Times**

The Chair noted that the Joint Powers Agreement creating MERA requires the Executive Committee to hold at least one meeting each quarter. Members indicated that Mondays and Wednesdays were preferable. The Chair requested the Executive Officer to poll the Committee for a regular date/time and to follow up on Alternates appointments. These must be official appointments by member agencies, preferably using a standard resolution format to be provided by Cassingham.

**F. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6 p.m. by affirmation.



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Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer

APPROVED DECEMBER 10, 2008