



Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority

**APPROVED REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Authority  
Board of Directors**

**Thursday, March 25, 2021  
Teleconference/Zoom Online Meeting**

1. Call to Order

➤ Chair Wasserman called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm

2. Roll Call

Chair Mike Wasserman Santa Clara County Supervisor	Representing the County of Santa Clara	<b>P / A</b>
Vice Chair Laurie Smith Santa Clara County Sheriff	Representing the County of Santa Clara	<b>P / A</b>
Otto Lee Santa Clara County Supervisor	Alternate – Representing the County of Santa Clara	<b>P / A</b>
Jonathan Weinberg City of Los Altos Council Member	Representing the Northwest Cities of Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos	<b>P / A</b>  Arrived at 4:20 pm
Lydia Kou City of Palo Alto Council Member	Alternate – Representing the Northwest Cities of Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos	<b>P / A</b>
Jon Willey City of Cupertino Council Member	Representing SW Cities of Campbell, Cupertino, Monte Sereno, Saratoga, and Los Gatos	<b>P / A</b>
Kitty Moore City of Cupertino Council Member	Alternate - Representing SW Cities of Campbell, Cupertino, Monte Sereno, Saratoga, and Los Gatos	<b>P / A</b>

Lisa Matichak City of Mountain View Council Member	Santa Clara City's Association Selection	<b>P / A</b>
Matthew Hudes Town of Los Gatos Council Member	Alternate - Santa Clara City's Association Selection	<b>P / A</b>
Pam Foley City of San Jose Council Member	Representing the City of San Jose	<b>P / A</b>
Chappie Jones City of San Jose Vice Mayor	Representing the City of San Jose	<b>P / A</b>
Sylvia Arenas City of San Jose Council Member	Alternate - Representing the City of San Jose	<b>P / A</b>
Raul Peralez City of San Jose Council Member	Alternate - Representing the City of San Jose	<b>P / A</b>
Peter Leroe-Munoz City of Gilroy Council Member	Representing the South County Cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill	<b>P / A</b>
Rich Constantine City of Morgan Hill Mayor	Representing VTA	<b>P / A</b>
Richard Bertalan VTA, Chief Information Technology Officer	Representing VTA	<b>P / A</b>
Russ Melton City of Sunnyvale Council Member	Representing the Central Cities of Milpitas, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale	<b>P / A</b>
Karen Hardy City of Santa Clara Vice Mayor	Alternate - Representing the Central Cities of Milpitas, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale	<b>P / A</b>

➤ **11 Directors Present. There is a quorum for the meeting.**

3. Oath of Office for New Board Members

➤ **Vice Chair Smith administered the Oath of Office to Alternate Director Kou, Council Member from the City of Palo Alto representing the Northwest Cities of Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos.**

4. Public Comment

At this time, the public is permitted to address the Committee on items within the Committee's subject matter jurisdiction that do not appear on the agenda. Please limit comments to a maximum of three (3) minutes. If you wish to comment on an item that is on the agenda, please wait until the item is read for consideration.

- Carl Taylor, representing the Uvas Volunteer Fire Department in South County: Here to listen to the item on the agenda discussing volunteer fire departments and how they fit into this radio scheme, and here to educate himself how his tax dollars are being spent.

5. Action on Consent Calendar

a. Approval of the Minutes of the January 28, 2020 Board Meeting

- Motion to approve: Director Leroe-Munoz, Second: Director Foley. 11 Aye, 0 No. Motion carries.

6. Executive Director's Report

a. Update on the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation's (IRS-CI) request to join the SVRIA

- The IRS-CI is going to be coming on the SVRCS as a mutual aid partner, much like the FBI, the Coast Guard, the U.S. Marshals, CHP, CalFire. It's a better solution for them given their broad area that they cover. We had to work out a few of the technical things behind the scenes to make sure that our recorders logged all of their radio transmissions. The security features are the same. SVRIA and the IRS-CI are circulating the MOU that allows them to use the interoperability talk groups and we should have resolution with them and bring them onto the system.
- The only time that they would use the radio system is when they're working or training with our members or participants. A positive outcome that I'm pleased to report to you.

b. Update on California Department of Justice (CA-DOJ) Encryption Mandate for Law Enforcement

- Additional Law Enforcement Agencies have transitioned to encryption on their primary talkgroups
- Plan for the SVRIA Law Interoperability Talkgroups
- Since the Board last met, we've had two additional cities transition to encryption on their law enforcement primary talk groups. The cities are Los Altos and Mountain View. There are only two cities left in the system that are not encrypted, the City of Santa Clara and the City of Milpitas. We are working closely with both of those agencies and I would expect one will be encrypted by the time we get back together for our next meeting in May.
- That leaves just a handful of unencrypted law enforcement talk groups, primarily the interoperability talkgroups. There's a great deal of coordination that has to go into transitioning the interoperability talkgroups because all agencies have access to them. We believe that we will start to encrypt those talkgroups on or about May 1st. It's going to take about 90 days to update all of the radios that would utilize those talkgroups. We are currently working out a backup communication plan and we have other talkgroups that are available. But it's the ones that the law enforcement agencies typically would go to when they're doing mutual aid across county lines where we would really need that interoperability. This includes across city lines but within our county.
- We need to make sure that the plan has been communicated to all agencies including dispatch managers, police chiefs, as well as field personnel.

- We are on schedule with the commitment that we have made to State and Federal DOJ to be encrypted by the end of calendar year 2021.

c. Radio system interference

- There has been some system interference. One was related to a commercial burglary in the San Jose area near the airport. Officers found a jamming device and it was taken into evidence. Law and technical personnel have been able to evaluate it. The jammers are not available in the United States, and likely purchased in foreign countries and then illegally shipped into the USA. The jammers interrupt a range of frequencies, including commercial 5G, which would be a cellphone type frequency as well as frequencies that are in SVRIA's range.
- Technical staff have been able to test the jammer and it disrupts communication in a small radius, approximately 80 to 100 feet. We have communicated this to the dispatch managers and field personnel. If they have a situation where they experience interference, to note the date and the time so we can track the event.
- We're also working on some interference issues related to solar panels and some of the larger solar panel installations. If the solar project is not installed properly, it can create interference as the panels are generating their power. We've partnered with County Communications and invested a small amount of money, about \$15,000 on more advanced testing equipment that can determine if interference is being generated by solar panels.
- If it becomes a larger issue county wide, we are currently working on a plan where we would go back to the planning directors and to make sure that the solar installations are being inspected for a certain type of equipment that keeps the interference from occurring. But right now, it's been a few isolated cases. We had an area in Morgan Hill as well as Cupertino. We also had a solar installer in the Los Altos area approach us and let know about their installation and a concern it may create interference. We tested the installation and there was not any interference in Los Altos as of yet.

d. Update on volunteer fire agencies and the SVRIA

- Since our last meeting, Executive Director Nickel has had three meetings with staff at County Communications. One meeting was to the number of volunteer fire agencies in the county who use the SVRCS. And the second meeting was to understand the best technology available for Mr. Taylor and his organization.
- One example is the Spring Valley Volunteer Fire Agency s in the East part of the county, in the hills above Milpitas and San Jose. They are on the system and have been so for two to three years. They cover 200 square miles of area, and they provide a great deal of mutual aid and backup coverage to the agencies on the Eastern part of the county. They are also under contract with CalFire to provide backup fire station coverage when the CalFire stations are vacant due to large fire commitments.
- The Spring Valley Volunteer Fire Department is an active organization county-wide and so they've been on the system. The Chair of the Working Committee, Heather Plamondon, and County Communications Director. I did reach out to Mr. Taylor I believe last week or the week before. Mr. Taylor did attend the Working Committee meeting and County Communications is working with Mr. Taylor to try to find a best

solution for their radio needs in the area that are also... I know we have a tower there and I wasn't here when that tower was placed. And we don't have great reception in some of his areas and because the Uvas volunteers are dispatched by CalFire, which is still on the VHF frequencies, we think there may be another solution for them that does not bring them into the P25 technology under the SVRIA systems. We are working to try to find the best technology and cost solution for them.

e. SVRIA System Performance Reporting

- The next item to share is the system performance reporting. An example of a high level chart that the Directors can review and see how this system is being utilized. One of the things to keep in mind is that we have the bigger users who are using a bigger chunk of the system and as we get into the budget, we'll talk about how that is allocated for. But as you see the larger users are using the system. We still have capacity on the system.
- The really interesting number to draw to your attention is the number of times that somebody has pushed to talk, and that's 1.9 million time per month. It's a testament to the capacity and reliability of the system that 24/7/365, we're doing almost two million transactions a month where somebody in the field or in a dispatch center is keying up a microphone to speak.

Chair Wasserman: Just so I'm clear, that's 65,000 a day?

Director Nickel: That is correct.

Chair Wasserman: Yeah. Wow

Director Nickel: It's amazing to think that the system is being utilized and it's being utilized quite effectively and quite frequently.

f. New Board Member Orientation

- General Counsel Gary Baum and I conducted two separate new board member orientations and now that we have Director Kou on board, we will schedule an additional orientation for her and any others who would like to attend. They last about one hour. Staff really appreciates those of you attending and asking thoughtful questions. I think one of the questions that was asked in the second session was, "How can I as a Director help you better?" And I was thrilled to answer that question with one statement, "Educate yourself about the SVRA." The system and issues we discuss can be technical, and we appreciate the Directors educating yourselves and we're happy to provide those orientations to you.

g. Form 700 Reminders

- Executive Director Nickel reminder the Board to complete and turn in their Form 700 filing. There are a few members who still need to file. All Board and Alternates must file. Filing can be done electronically or by mailing the completed form to the SVRIA business address.

Director Melton with a comment and question:

- Comment: With regards to the IRS Investigative Division; I really cannot imagine a better outcome than how elegantly you orchestrated all of that. And to hear that they're going to be hopping onboard as a mutual aid member for when we are doing their business with them in Santa Clara County, I think it's just fantastic. So, tip of the cap on that one, Eric.
- Question: About halfway through your report, you were talking about a volunteer fire department that was using SVRCS and I think you meant that that was as a mutual aid member. Did I track all of that correctly?

The radios that are provided to the Spring Valley Volunteers are coming from Santa Clara County Fire Department. And the reason for that is the amount of mutual aid that Spring Valley runs with fire agencies and that they are picking up part of a coverage area that's typically in Santa Clara County. Spring Valley portable count is included in County Fire, which is a subsection in the overall count of Santa Clara County.

Public Comment: Carl Taylor of the Uvas Volunteers: I had a long conversation with Ms. Plamondon about what to do and I'm waiting to hear back from her. I guess she's out on vacation. We will press forward and get some answers to some questions and I think it'll all work out just fine.

## 7. Action Items

- a. Review and Adopt SVRIA Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Proposed Budget of \$4,711,876
  - Budget Overview Presentation by Executive Director Nickel with a PowerPoint on the FY2021/22 Budget.
  - Adopting the Budget is one of the most important tasks the Board will do each year. Some background, the Joint Powers Agreement requires the budget to be reviewed by the working committee and approved by the board before March 31st. And the reason we go early is because all of our revenue comes from other government agencies who are all currently going through their budget process right now. We are trying to let them know what their commitments would be to SVRIA, as they're preparing their budgets for next fiscal year.
  - This budget was presented and reviewed by the Working Committee on March 8th, and the Working Committee voted unanimously to recommend the budget to the Board of Directors.
  - Some highlights from last fiscal year, the system build-out was completed. All members and participating agencies are on the system with exception of one small fire district, which is South County Fire. They account, as you'll see in the count below, less than 50 radios. And we believe that they are going to be on by the time we meet again in May. We're working with them very closely on the technical aspects and getting their radios appropriately programmed. They still continue to pay for the system, and we want to get them on as soon as possible. Your board established an asset replacement funding plan that was voted and approved on back in June of last year. That also was included in your budget packet and we went through a Director transition. Denise transitioned out and I transitioned in. The board established last year an asset replacement funding plan as reflected in the budget with an extra \$100,000 added into the reserves.

- This budget is sensitive to the fiscal constraints of our members and participant agencies. Having been a local government Fire Chief for eight years and going through the ups and downs of the economy and fire contracts, I am sensitive to what belt tightening looks like. And having gone through the first nine or 10 months of the economic shutdown related to Covid-19, I am sensitive to that and proposing a budget that is reflective to that. You're going to see, for the most part, a status quo budget.
- Roughly three quarters of our budget is committed to long-term service agreement contracts for Aviat, Motorola and our partners at County Communication.
- Your board has, particularly with the new Executive Director, is focused on strategic planning for the future. Specifically, how we pay for future system enhancements and maintenance. For example, Motorola has delivered numerous proposals for equipment that has large dollar figures attached to them. We know we are going to need some of these capital items in three or four years. In a separate planning meeting we could say, "Look, we know we're going to need this equipment that costs us a million dollars three years from now. Let's put that down as well as talk about our future opportunities, perhaps things around data and the EComm system from a strategic perspective."
- Propose a nominal amount to begin training curriculum development for our dispatchers and our end users.
- Money included in this budget to purchase a system for Motorola called CirrusCentral, that will allow us to monitor, measure and manage all the system performance down to a very granular level. We will take some of the workload off of our existing staff, primarily Chris Collins, who has to produce reports for the system, this gives that capability to the individual users that they can look at their radios on their system and figure out when and how they're being used and find ways to actually make the system more efficient.
- Challenges for the future include putting together a strategic plan, in particular the future capital expenditures as the equipment in the system needs replacing.
- Proposed budget of \$4,711,876 of that additional agency consoles that were purchased after their system was originally designed, and that doesn't impact all members, just the agencies that purchased the additional consoles. It's about \$135,000 of that. So, the increase that applies to all members of the system is roughly \$167,000.
- What's driving this increase? The biggest item is the board had approved asset replacement reserve program adopted in June of last year. As mentioned earlier, our long-term service and maintenance contracts have annual increases built into them, and that is 71% of SVRIAs total. We also doubled the cost of insurance. The insurance had been about \$85,000, and it's now about \$160,000. We were under-insured, and all of the assets owned by SVRIA are now adequately covered.
- The performance measurement and management system, CirrusCentral is approximately \$86,000.
- We're reallocating some existing budget for consultants and that total budget is less than the amended budget was for this current fiscal year. What that means is that the existing staff or consultants, which is me and Diane Stambaugh will be picking up a little bit more of the workload. We're using technology to create meeting transcripts, so we don't need to pay somebody to take minutes in this meeting

- Propose allocating some consulting money to a training specialist. It doesn't have to be somebody who is a specialist in developing technical things around the radio systems. We have a great team here, we have the public safety chiefs and managers, we have the technical staff, the radio shop folks, but what is needed is somebody who can put together a training curriculum, and training program.
- Envision a training cadre from our member and participant agencies from fire, and law, dispatchers, and the VTA, who maybe have some technical expertise in the system, but also enjoy sharing or teaching that knowledge of how to best use the system. I also envision a series of just-in-time videos that could be shown at a tailgate briefing, a staff meeting that would take five to 10 minutes on basic features of the system.
- We're reducing professional and specialized services; those are the services that we pay for the executive director. Some of the other consultants that have been brought on before that budget has been reduced, we've reduced the office budget, expense budget and we've eliminated travel.
- We build the budget by user count. The user count of radios is what drives what everyone's individual budget.
- Agency assessments are in Attachment B.

Director Melton with a comment: I'm perfectly fine with the budget as you've mentioned it. I would like to express my strategic view for SVRIA. Not just for the coming year, but for the coming decade, or whatever lengthy period of time you want to look at it. The backdrop is, Under Chair Wasserman's leadership, we've accomplished this incredible thing. \$15 million over the last decade to build the SVRCS, which I think is real crown jewel of Silicon Valley, of Santa Clara County, and it must be maintained. It must be protected against things that can go wrong, whether intentional or natural catastrophes. We just have to be ready over the decades and so the system has to be nurtured and it has to be loved and it has to be taken care of. And we always say, we have to be ready for the major events and some examples would be: Superbowl 50, would be the Gilroy Garlic Festival shooting, those are the big things that we have to be ready for. At some point, Eric, I'd like to see a 10 year plan or a 20 year plan for what assets are going to depreciate, end of life, how much money are we going to need so that 20 years from now we're not in a scramble to patch up the system. My goal would be that the system has been well maintained and is as robust as it can be 20 years from now. That is where my mind frame is at when I think about strategic budget. And thank you for letting me speak.

Chair Wasserman with a comment: Thank you. It certainly speaks to strategic focus and of course, replacements, replacements, replacements. And I believe Eric's got some areas in the budget as far as depreciation, annual funding that goes into a replacement account. I know we did that with a couple previous Directors.

Director Kou with a question: Please help me understand the site leases as part of the operating expense. I noticed that it's only for this fiscal year. In the past, there wasn't any. General Counsel Baum replied that the site in Los Gatos is owned by Crown Castle, so we pay a portion of the tower space. Otherwise, we have no major outstanding leases and that

has been a board policy and I will explain to you the one lease we had that we no longer have when we do your new board member orientation.

- Motion to approve by Director Constantine. Second by Director Leroe-Munoz on the three recommendations in the staff report. Ayes: 11, No 0. Motion Carries. Alternate Director Kou also voted Aye for the record but is not included in the total count as Director Weinberg arrived and voted Aye.
- b. Authorization to Accept Grant of \$300,000 and Enter Agreement with the California Office of Emergency Services Community Power Resiliency Program
- SVRIA did receive the Public Safety Power Shutoff Grant from Cal OES. We submitted for the full \$300,000 and were awarded the \$300,000 if we choose to accept the grant. The plan for the grant was presented verbally to the board in October.
  - Executive Director Nickel brought to the Board's attention that there are two challenges with the grant. The biggest challenge to share with the Board is a very tight time frame to complete this project. It has to be completed by October 31, 2021 unless an extension is granted, that is not a lot of time. And because what we are proposing is enhancing the existing trailer that we had used for Super Bowl 50, the trailer's radio equipment needs to be updated.
  - The proposed use of the trailer would be when the power is shut off in the county. We could set up a site and run it, even though all of our sites have fuel and generator backup. If we had a site go down for any reason, or if we needed it for another large event, say like the Super Bowl, we can move the trailer to the location, set it up, and it would be an additional tower site.
  - And the fact that the state is paying for a large portion of the enhancements is great. Additionally, we use Motorola equipment, and we are determining if it would be a sole source procurement, which means we have to obtain approval to do so. CalOES has a sole source approval process.
  - Staff is not proposing any new, additional budget. We do anticipate a budget carryover of somewhere between \$150,000 and \$200,000 in this current fiscal budget. From previous Board policy, carryover funds would go into the Operating Reserve. Staff is not asking for any new dollars for our match once we have all of the items priced out. Staff does want the Board to be aware of the cost items and is seeking Board approval to accept this grant.
  - When staff comes back at the May meeting, and if it appears that these hurdles are too onerous to overcome in this tight time frame, I will certainly advise and SVRIA wouldn't be out any money at that point.

Chair Wasserman with a comment: Thank you for specifying the strings that are attached. That could be problematic sometimes, so I appreciate your alerting us to that. The county had funds awarded to it from the state for the new jail, and the strings were so severe, we turned down the money. And it was a lot of money.

Director Nickel: Well, we're incredibly fortunate with SVRIA staff member Diane Stambaugh as she did grant management for her career with the County Sheriff's office and

County OES. All credit goes to her for her attention to details and informing us about the strings. I want to make sure that we recognize Diane here, she's in the meeting, as well.

Vice Chair Smith with a comment: Having worked with Diane, I completely agree with the assessment and acknowledgement.

➤ Motion to approve Director Jones. Second by Director Constantine. Ayes: 11, No 0. Motion Carries. Alternate Director Kou also voted Aye for the record but is not included in the total count as Director Weinberg arrived and voted Aye.

8. Future Agenda Items

9. Board Comments

➤ Chair Wasserman: Hoping to hold the meetings in-person sometime soon.

10. Adjournment (Next Meeting May 27, 2021)

➤ Chair Wasserman adjourned the meeting at 4:49 pm