



APPROVED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2022

The Board of Directors for the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA) met on the above date, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

At 9:00 A.M., Chair Hicham Eltal welcomed those present and called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA representatives present:

Name	Organization
Hicham Eltal	Merced Irrigation District (Chair)
Ken Elwin	City of Merced (Vice Chair)
Justin Vinson	City of Atwater
Tony Avina	City of Livingston
Cynthia Benavidez	Le Grand Community Services District (LGCSD)
Daniel Chavez	Planada Community Services District (PCSD)
Phillip McMurray	General Counsel
Jennifer McMaster	Board Coordinator

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA representatives absent:

Carlos Valencia	Winton Water and Sanitary District (WWSD)
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CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Minutes – July 13, 2022
2. Cash Transaction Report

On motion by Director Elwin, seconded by Director Vinson; the Board voted unanimously to accept the Consent Calendar, as presented. The votes were as follows:

Ayes:	Eltal, Elwin, Vinson, Avina, Benavidez, Chavez
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Valencia

ACTION/DISCUSSION

Mr. Beaman provided a presentation and led a discussion of grant funding opportunities provided by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) through its SGMA implementation grant program. He noted that MIUGSA had previously applied for and received grant funding under Round 1. Mr. Beaman said an opportunity for grant funding was recently made available by DWR under Round 2 of its grant funding program. He said consideration for grant funding under Round 2 would be competitive amongst high and medium priority groundwater basins, including critically over drafted basins throughout the state. He noted special consideration will be provided by DWR to groundwater basins meeting the criteria that did not receive grant funding under Round 1.

Mr. Beaman discussed the Round 2 grant funding application process and noted only one application would be accepted, per basin. He discussed the administrative requirements and provided an overview of eligibility criteria. He then noted an application deadline of November 30, 2022.

The Board discussed the item at length, including potential challenges and projects that may benefit from potential funding. Mr. Beaman and Mr. McMurray responded to several questions from the Board. After discussion, the Board supported staff moving forward with the grant funding application process. Mr. Beaman indicated he would report back to the Board at a later time regarding updated status.

Mr. Beaman provided the Board with a status update regarding development of draft rules, regulations and policies for implementation of the Merced Groundwater Sustainability Plan within MIUGSA. Mr. Beaman presented and discussed, in particular, a proposed well registration policy and draft well registration form. Mr. Beaman noted the Stakeholder Guidance Committee had also discussed the proposed item as a key component of implementing the GSP. Mr. Beaman responded to several questions from the Board. Mr. Beaman then provided an overview of the general purpose and potential benefits of the proposed policy and noted similarly situated basins have utilized similar processes to what staff is proposing for within MIUGSA.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Beaman asked the Board to consider adopting the proposed well registration policy and form (in its substantial form, subject to minor modifications if necessary) for implementation and use within MIUGSA.

The Board asked and staff responded to several questions generally focused on extractions, allocation and groundwater usage. The Board also discussed the extensive efforts that may be required by MIUGSA in implementing the policy and the potential for acquiring some assistance with the process in the future.

Following further significant discussion, on a motion by Director Vinson, seconded by Director Benavidez; the Board voted unanimously to adopt the Well Registration Policy and form, as presented. The votes were as follows:

Ayes:	Eltal, Elwin, Vinson, Avina, Benavidez, Chavez,
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Valencia

MIUGSA’s consultant, Mr. Jim Blanke provided an update regarding urban water use and how it relates to the Merced groundwater system. He discussed estimates and data sources, including monthly extractions from purveyors. He also provided an overview and discussed calculations used to determine acre foot per acre water use values for each urban water supplier.

Mr. Blanke presented an overview of a map reflecting the Merced Groundwater Subbasin service area boundaries and Merced County assessor parcel land use data. He discussed the Merced Basin Sustainable Yield Allocation Framework and each of the separate allocation buckets: Developed Supply, overlying use, and appropriative use. He briefly discussed industrial land potentially located within urban areas that may or may not be using groundwater. He said many of the parcels reviewed are known to use municipal supplies, however water use will require more research. Mr. Blanke then discussed the next steps for estimating urban, domestic and industrial groundwater usage.

Chair Eltal provided input and discussed an exercise that may be utilized to determine water provided outside of urban boundaries. He noted the general purpose of the exercise would be to determine the actual impact to the basin. Chair Eltal asked for input from the Board on how to proceed. After discussion, the Board agreed that staff and consultants should continue moving forward with the process, as proposed.

Mr. Beaman then led a discussion regarding comments submitted to DWR relating to the revised GSP for the Merced Groundwater Subbasin submitted in July 2022. He noted and provided a brief summary of comments received from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability.

The Board and staff engaged in a brief discussion regarding each of the comment letters before adjourning the meeting.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15AM.