



APPROVED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

August 9, 2023

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

At 9:00 A.M., Chair Hicham Eltal 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
Daniel Chavez	Planada Community Services District (PCSD)
Jennifer McMaster	Board Coordinator

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA representatives absent:

Cynthia Benavidez	Le Grand Community Services District (LGCSD)
Carlos Valencia	Winton Water and Sanitary District (WWSD)

CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Several Board members noted the printouts they received of the presentations were not legible. The Board requested a legible copy of each presentation.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Minutes – June 14, 2023
2. Cash Transaction Report – May & June 2023
3. Quarterly Financial Report – June 2023

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

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

REPORTS

None.

ACTION/DISCUSSION

Chair Eltal provided a brief overview regarding the status of the development of draft rules and regulations, and policies for MIUGSA and implementation of the GSP within MIUGSA. He noted more work will be done on the urban side moving forward.

Mr. Beaman reminded the Board of the previous presentation of draft rules and regulations. He summarized minor updates made to a few of the rules since his last presentation. He provided an overview of committee and stakeholder meetings held where the draft rules, regulations and policies have been discussed, including approximately six (6) MIUGSA specific Stakeholder Guidance Committee meetings held between August 2021 and February 2023.

Mr. Beaman then discussed two major policies previously adopted by the Board, including the adoption of an allocation and allocation period, where the Board adopted an allocation of natural yield of 1.1 acre-feet per acre per year for the next 3 years (or 3.3 acre-feet per acre cumulative for the three-year period). He also summarized the Boards previously adopted well registration policy. Mr. Beaman said mailers and reminders were sent to each household within MIUGSA's boundaries regarding well registration. He reported that since then, approximately 450 private wells have been registered so far.

Mr. Beaman summarized the developing draft rules, regulations, and policies at length and provided a general timeline for continued development. He said no action is required by the Board at this time, further review and development is needed prior to bringing a comprehensive package to the Board for further discussion, comments, and eventually, action.

The Board asked and Mr. Beaman and Mr. Eltal responded to several questions, particularly regarding how allocation and reallocation would be defined within the rules, regulations, and policies. Mr. Beaman noted the rules provide flexibility in regard to allocations, and reallocations. He said the topic of reallocation is likely to be included in a broader discussion at an upcoming Stakeholder Committee meeting.

Mr. Beaman then provided an overview of penalties and enforcement, including the concepts of notices and orders, and red tags. He also noted the development of a Groundwater Management Implementation Plan. He discussed the next steps in the development of the draft rules, regulations, and policies for implementation within MIUGSA, including potential suggestions from the Board for edits or updates. He noted an ad hoc committee meeting would be held in the next couple of weeks for further discussion.

After a thorough discussion, the Board agreed with the overall direction of the draft rules, regulations and policies being drafted by staff. The Board will take action to adopt the rules after scheduled reviews by the ad hoc committee and Stakeholder Guidance Committee.

Mr. Beaman provided an update regarding potential changes to the County's Groundwater Ordinance relating to groundwater mining and export and potential impacts the proposed changes may have on groundwater management in the area. He provided an overview of the current ordinance and noted a new exemption proposed by the County that would place a burden on local GSAs. The Board discussed providing comments to the County's proposed update to the ordinance. Mr. Beaman noted the County's next meeting regarding this item is anticipated to be held August 22, 2023.

Mr. Eltal discussed current and upcoming SGMA related activities. Mr. Eltal said the GSP has been accepted by DWR, but there is still a considerable list of corrective actions that need to be addressed moving forward. He noted funding will be needed for addressing most of those challenges that have been identified by DWR. He continued that DWR may provide additional corrective actions after reviewing already submitted annual reports, as DWR staff is starting to review and comment on existing annual reports.

Mr. Beaman added to the discussion and presented an overview of current ongoing and planned SGMA related activities taking place over the next couple of years, including a 5 year GSP assessment due January 2025, efforts to fill data gaps through installation of new monitoring wells, and consideration of a potential boundary adjustment. He also discussed the need for an updated fee study/evaluation.

Mr. Beaman provided general timelines and deadlines for each planned SGMA-related activity. He said regarding a potential boundary adjustment and an updated fee study/evaluation, he will be looking for feedback from the Board prior to starting the process as there are a couple of concepts for staff and the Board to consider.

The Board engaged in a discussion regarding potential future projects before adjourning the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15AM.