



APPROVED GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
September 9, 2020

The Governing Board of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA) met virtually on the above date pursuant to notice at 9:00 A.M., consistent with temporary authorization to deviate from Brown Act meeting guidelines issued through Executive Order by California Governor Gavin Newsom.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

At 9:00 A.M., Chair Hicham Eltal welcomed those present and called the meeting to order. MIUGSA Board Coordinator, Jennifer McMaster made an announcement regarding changes that have been made to the Board meeting procedures in order to make good faith efforts to comply with the Governor’s Executive Orders and allow the public the opportunity to observe, participate and comment in the Board’s meeting.

Ms. McMaster stated that staff had not received any emails from members of the public requesting a link to the video portion of the meeting or commenting on any agenda item. Ms. McMaster also informed the public of the procedure for submitting comments during the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA Representatives present:

Name	Organization
Hicham Eltal (Chair)	Merced Irrigation District
Ken Elwin (Vice Chair)	City of Merced
Justin Vinson	City of Atwater
Jose Antonio Ramirez	City of Livingston
Carlos Valencia	Winton Water and Sanitary District (CSD)
Cynthia Benavidez	Le Grand Community Services District (CSD)
Daniel Chavez	Planada Community Services District (CSD)

WRITTEN PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

None.

BOARD ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chair Eltal requested removal of the July 28, 2020 draft minutes from the consent calendar.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Meeting Minutes: June 23, 2020
- 2. Meeting Minutes: July 07, 2020

On motion by Ken Elwin (City of Merced), seconded by Cynthia Benavidez (Le Grand CSD); the Board unanimously approved the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the votes were as follows:

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

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

REPORTS

Catherine Hansford, Hansford Economic Consulting provided a presentation and update regarding the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA) fee implementation. She noted that Schaelene Rollins of Pando Public Relations received an update from the Merced Sun-Star that they failed to run the Spanish ad in the newspaper for the July 15th and 16th fee study workshops. Ms. Hansford discussed an errata to the Final Fee Study Report, acknowledging that the ad was not run as previously indicated. She stated that while the workshop was properly advertised through direct mail in English, and Spanish, that the Spanish publication was intended as an additional step to further encourage public participation.

Ms. Hansford reported that the FY 2020/2021 property tax roll with the MIUGSA fee has been finalized with the Merced County Auditor-Controller’s office. She noted that approximately 94% of the fees will be included on the property tax roll. Ms. Hansford discussed MIUGSA’s budget, billing, anticipated fee revenues, and next steps for fee implementation. Ms. Hansford expressed that she will continue under the current contract with MIUGSA, to work with Ms. Rollins on the next steps for implementation moving forward.

Matthew Beaman, Merced Irrigation District Water Regulatory Engineer, discussed the GSP development and provided an overview of the cost share amongst the three Groundwater Sustainability Agency’s - MIUGSA, Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency, and Turner Island Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

Mr. Beaman noted several items for future discussion including: professional services, regulatory compliance, administrative support, and repayment of member agencies. He discussed the development of a schedule for repayment to be shared at a future MIUGSA Board meeting. The Board provided feedback with regard to administrative support and discussed potential options for professional services, including hiring an independent consultant.

Chair Eltal discussed securing future legal services and asked for feedback from the Board regarding any potential suggestions for representation. Mr. Eltal noted a number of qualifications to be considered.

Mr. Beaman provided a status update regarding the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Disadvantaged Community Involvement Grant received by the Merced Integrated Regional Water Management Agency (MIRWMA). Mr. Beaman reported that MIRWMA received approximately \$230,000 in grant funding from DWR to ensure the involvement of disadvantaged communities in economically distressed areas, or underrepresented communities in the Integrated Regional Water Management planning process. Mr. Beaman indicated that Woodard & Curran was hired by MIRWMA to conduct a domestic well inventory to guide and define effects on disadvantaged communities in the area. Staff anticipates a technical memorandum to be completed by December 2020. Mr. Beaman discussed the next steps, including an anticipated contract for public outreach.

Mr. Beaman presented and provided an update regarding the progress of three (3) projects benefiting Severely Disadvantaged communities, funded under the 2017 Proposition 1 Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant. Mr. Beaman provided a summary of funding received as well as the projects funded under the grant. Specific projects include the Planada Groundwater Recharge pilot project & Monitoring Well project, the El Nido Groundwater Monitoring Wells Project, and the Meadowbrook Intertie Feasibility Study Project. Mr. Beaman noted, regarding the Planada Groundwater Recharge Pilot Basin and Monitoring Well Project, a permanent monitoring well is scheduled for installation this month and staff is currently considering alternative approaches to a traditional recharge basin. All wells under the El Nido project have been installed and the project is nearing completion. As to the Meadowbrook Intertie Feasibility Study, a draft technical memorandum has been distributed to the Merced Irrigation District, City of Merced, City of Atwater, and American Water. Staff intends to hold two stakeholder outreach meetings in October 2020. Mr. Beaman discussed the next steps for each project moving forward.

ACTIONS

None.

BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

Chair Eltal provided an update on the Merced Groundwater Subbasin Allocation Framework. He discussed continued concern regarding the MOU as it relates to groundwater pumping and carry over storage and suggested that the member agencies currently attending the Coordinating Committee meetings continue to attend the framework meetings as well. The Board provided feedback recommending the same.

Chair Eltal discussed a phone call received from a property owner residing in northern Merced. The caller indicated that their well went dry below where they could extend a pump. Chair Eltal noted that a portion of the property is located within MIUGSA and the well is a domestic well on a property that is surrounded by recent development lying just outside of the MIUGSA boundary. Mr. Eltal indicated that staff will contact with the Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency on this issue.

Chair Eltal provided an update regarding the status of the Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant. He discussed funding received and noted that continued coordination with surrounding basins will be necessary to assess data gaps and determine how the grant money will be spent.

Chair Eltal reported that there is a new Proposition 68 grant opportunity available for implementation of the GSP. He noted the deadline to file and asked for assistance from MIUGSA member agencies regarding submission of draft comments to DWR requesting an extension to file.

ADJOURN

On motion by Ken Elwin (City of Merced), seconded by Cynthia Benavidez (Le Grand CSD); the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 A.M.