



APPROVED GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 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	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)

CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chair Eltal requested to move Report Item 2 to be presented following Action Item 1.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Meeting Minutes: June 10, 2020

On motion by Ken Elwin (City of Merced), seconded by Cynthia Benavidez (Le Grand CSD); the Board unanimously approved the minutes as written.

REPORTS

Chair Eltal provided a status update regarding the 2019 Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Planning Grant – Round 3 (Proposition 68). Chair Eltal reminded the Board of a \$500k grant request submitted to Department of Water Resources (DWR) and awarded to Merced Irrigation District (as administrator) under Proposition 68, a portion of which would be used to address critical data gaps and develop a remote sensing tool. He indicated that an amendment to an existing agreement with DWR to include terms and conditions related to funding has been executed and work has been done with neighboring basins, including the Delta Mendota and Chowchilla basins, to coordinate efforts in regard to addressing data gaps to resolve or reduce the impacts of subsidence. Chair Eltal indicated that work will need to be done in collaboration with the surrounding GSA's to secure a consultant and establish guidelines moving forward.

Chair Eltal expressed appreciation for letters of support in regard to the grant proposal submission for funding under Proposition 68, and reported that approximately 20 letters were received.

ACTIONS

Catherine Hansford, Hansford Consulting provided a visual presentation and overview of the MIUGSA management area and the development of the final fee study. She discussed costs associated with the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) ordained by the State Sustainability Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), paid for by MIUGSA member agencies; and, the anticipated costs associated with future regulatory activities associated with the implementation of the plan. Ms. Hansford proposed that all property owners, including those with domestic wells, as beneficiaries of MIUGSA's activities be required to pay a fee to fund such activities. Ms. Hansford reviewed the chronology of the fee development, including public outreach efforts made in order to encourage public participation. She discussed the two fee options developed as part of the fee study and proposed that the Board approve the final fee study report with the recommendation to accept the Option 2B fee structure with a consumer index attached.

Ken Elwin commented regarding the simplicity of the fee options presented. Ms. Hansford provided an overview and comparison of the fee options. Following discussion amongst the Board, Cynthia Benavidez (Le Grand CSD) made a motion to adopt the Final Fee Study Report (Report), including the Report's recommendation to accept the Option 2B fee structure with a consumer

index attached for consideration by the public, the motion was seconded by Ken Elwin (City of Merced); the Board voted unanimously to approve. The vote was as follows:

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

REPORTS

Ms. Hansford discussed the next steps for the proposed adoption and implementation of a fee to fund the regulatory activities of MIUGSA. She announced that the public hearing regarding acceptance of fees in the Final Study Report is expected to be held on July 28, 2020. Schaelene Rollins, Pando Public Relations discussed the public hearing notice, which is anticipated to be posted on the MIUGSA website and circulated in multiple newspaper publications throughout the basin. The Board discussed revisions to the notice and suggested providing a hard copy of the final fee study for public review in advance of the hearing. A hard copy of the fee study will be made available for public review at the main office of each member agency, the publication can also be found at MIUGSA.org.

Ms. Hansford noted that, if the proposed fee is adopted, a list of fees by Assessor’s Parcel Number would be submitted to Merced County Auditor-Controller by approximately August 1, 2020 to be included with the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 property tax roll - those that cannot be charged with their property taxes could anticipate a bill by approximately September 30, 2020. Upon adoption, an appeals process would be made available for members of the public who wish to dispute charges.

BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

Chair Eltal advised the Board that he will be looking to set up the first Coordination Committee meeting since the adoption of the GSP to continue discussions regarding the framework. He noted that a meeting for the MIUGSA ad-hoc Framework Committee is anticipated to be held on July 15, 2020.

CLOSED SESSSION

None.

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 10:40 A.M.