

Hicham Eltal – Chair Stephanie Dietz – Vice Chair

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

AGENDA October 11, 2023 9:00 AM

Merced Irrigation District Franklin Yard Facility 3321 North Franklin Road Merced, CA 95348

- A. CALL TO ORDER
- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- C. ROLL CALL
- D. CONSIDER CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The Board will consider corrections or additions to the agenda of items requiring immediate action that have come to the attention of the Board after posting of the agenda.

E. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT (5 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)

Interested persons in the audience are welcome to introduce any topic within MIUGSA's jurisdiction. Matters presented under this heading may be discussed but no action will be taken by the Board at this meeting.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine by the Board and will be adopted by one action of the Board unless any Board Member has any questions or wishes to make a statement or discuss an item. In that event, the Chair of the Board will remove that item from the Consent Calendar and place it for separate consideration.

- 1. Minutes September 20, 2023
- 2. Cash Transaction Report August 2023

G. REPORTS

1. The Board will receive a status update regarding Merced County's well permitting process, and coordination efforts with the Merced Subbasin GSA for certain wells.

H. ACTIONS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Resolution 2023-05

The Board will review and consider adopting final Rules and Regulations of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, a Groundwater Management Implementation Plan, as well as take other actions and authorize other actions relating thereto.

I. CLOSED SESSION

None.

J. ADJOURN

Any material that are public records that relate to an agenda item and that are distributed to representative parties of MIUGSA less than 72 hours prior to the meeting shall be available for public inspection at the offices of the Merced Irrigation District, 744 West 20th Street, Merced, CA 95340 during normal business hours. In addition, any materials presented during open session are available for public inspection at the same address.



UNAPPROVED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

September 20, 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

Name

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA representatives present:

Merced Irrigation District (Chair)
City of Merced (Vice Chair)
City of Atwater
City of Livingston
Winton Water and Sanitary District (WWSD)
Le Grand Community Services District (LGCSD)
Planada Community Services District (PCSD)
General Counsel
Board Coordinator

Organization

Roll call showed the following MIUGSA representatives absent:

None.

CORRECTIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. Minutes August 9, 2023
- 2. Cash Transaction Report July 2023

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

Ayes: Eltal, Elwin, Vinson, Chavez, Avina, Valencia, Benavidez

Noes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

REPORTS

None.

ACTION/DISCUSSION

Mr. Beaman provided an overview regarding the status of the development of draft MIUGSA rules and regulations, and policies. He reminded the Board of previous discussions and presentations provided over the course of development. He summarized minor updates made to a few of the rules and policies since his last presentation and Board discussion in August. He noted the MIUGSA ad hoc and stakeholder guidance committees both engaged in in-depth discussions regarding the draft rules, regulations and policies, and provided significant input at each of their respective meetings held earlier this month. Mr. Beaman and Mr. Eltal responded to several questions from the Board regarding a variety of the different rules, regulations and policies.

Mr. Beaman continued to summarize the developing draft rules, regulations, and policies at length and provided a general timeline for continued development and finalization. He said staff is looking for direction on finalizing, and indicated he expects to bring a final package to the Board for final discussion, comments, and action to approve and adopt in October.

Mr. Beaman then discussed a proposed process for assessing fines, including registration deadlines and fine amounts to be assessed. He asked the Board for consideration of the proposed penalties and timeline. The Board and staff discussed the topic at length, especially as it relates to enforcement and timing of enforcement. They also discussed potential outreach opportunities for moving the process forward.

After a thorough discussion, the Board provided direction to staff for final completion of the documents, and agreed with the overall direction of the draft rules, regulations and policies drafted by staff and general timeline as presented.

Mr. Beaman then provided an update regarding potential changes to the Merced County Groundwater Ordinance relating to groundwater mining and export. Mr. Beaman reviewed potential issues and 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 the burden of approving groundwater export activities on local GSAs.

Mr. Beaman noted the County discussed proposed changes to its groundwater ordinance at a meeting held August 22, 2023. Mr. Beaman attended the meeting and summarized the discussion, including the updated draft language proposed by the County. He noted MIUGSA provided a letter to the County relating to GSA review process and timing. In response to the letter and discussions held at the meeting on August 22, 2023, the County agreed to add some additional language to clarify the process for a GSA to make a determination whether any proposed groundwater export is consistent with the local GSP. Proposed language was also added to clarify that any export activity must comply with any state, or federal statutes. Mr. Beaman noted that MIUGSA requested additional language for inclusion in the County's policy, such as requiring GSAs to have approved GSPs and/or be in good regulatory standing with the state as a precondition of approving groundwater export activities, was not agreeable to other GSAs present.

The Board and staff discussed a potential timeline the County may follow in adopting changes to its ordinance. They also discussed providing additional comments to the County opposing changes to the County's ordinance that would allow exports outside of the basin.

Mr. Beaman then provided an update regarding upcoming SGMA related activities. He discussed DWR's acceptance of the GSP and noted the list of corrective actions previously identified by DWR. He briefly discussed additional corrective actions that DWR may provide after reviewing already submitted annual reports.

Mr. Beaman discussed the development of the first 5-year update to the Merced GSP. He noted that in the coming months, Woodard and Curran will begin working on drafting the 5-year GSP Periodic Evaluation. He said this will be a lengthy and very detailed process that is expected to continue over the next couple of years. He indicated the final document updating the Merced GSP should be complete in January 2025. He noted staff has already begun discussions regarding the update and that the first meeting with the GSP Coordination Committee to discuss potential and needed updates is anticipated to be held in November 2023. After responding to a few questions, Mr. Beaman indicated staff will provide further updates to the Board on an ongoing basis.

The Board and staff discussed briefly before adjourning the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:30AM.

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Transaction Report

August 2023

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	NUM	NAME	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Professional Serv	vices				
Financial Service	ces Support				
Annual GSA Fe	ee Administration				
Beginning Balance					
08/02/2023	Bill	582	Hansford Economic Consulting, LLC	Professional Services:Financial Services Support:Annual GSA Fee Administration	2,417.50
Total for Annua	al GSA Fee Administra	ation			\$2,417.50
Bookkeeping &	Accounting				
08/08/2023	Bill	121994	Grimbleby Coleman CPAs, Inc.	Professional Services:Financial Services Support:Bookkeeping & Accounting	1,675.00
08/24/2023	Bill	122219	Grimbleby Coleman CPAs, Inc.	Professional Services:Financial Services Support:Bookkeeping & Accounting	1,675.00
Total for Bookk	eeping & Accounting				\$3,350.00
Total for Finance	ial Services Support				\$5,767.50
GSP Developm	ent				
Basin-wide Sup	pport				
Monthly Monit	oring				
Beginning					
Balance					
08/30/2023	Bill	120143	Quad Knopf, Inc.	Professional Services:GSP Development:Basin-wide Support:Monthly Monitoring	3,143.06
Total for Mont	hly Monitoring				\$3,143.06
Total for Basin-	-wide Support				\$3,143.06
GSP Implemer	ntation Policies & Guid	delines			
Outreach					
Beginning Balance					
08/21/2023	Bill	467631	Olsson, Inc.	Professional Services:GSP Development:GSP Implementation Policies & Guidelines:Outreach	2,676.78
Total for Outre	each				\$2,676.78

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Transaction Report

August 2023

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	NUM	NAME	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Technical Supp	oort				
Beginning					
Balance					
08/21/2023	Bill	467631	Olsson, Inc.	Professional Services:GSP Development:GSP Implementation Policies & Guidelines:Technical Support	3,336.00
Total for Techn	ical Support				\$3,336.00
Total for GSP In	nplementation Policie	es & Guide	lines		\$6,012.78
Total for GSP De	evelopment				\$9,155.84
Legal Counsel					
Beginning					
Balance					
08/04/2023	Bill	1034	Phillip R McMurray	Professional Services:Legal Counsel	1,360.00
Total for Legal C	ounsel				\$1,360.00
Total for Profession	nal Services				\$16,283.34
Regulatory Compl	iance and Administra	ition			
Data Manageme	nt & Technology				
Beginning					
Balance					
Total for Data M	lanagement & Techn	ology			
Bill.com					
Beginning					
Balance					
08/03/2023	Expense		Bill.com	Regulatory Compliance and Administration:Data Management & Technology:Bill.com	133.81
Total for Bill.con					\$133.81
Total for Data Ma	anagement & Techno	ology with	subs		\$133.81
-	ork Improvements				
08/14/2023	Bill	15068	Woodpecker Microsystems	Regulatory Compliance and Administration: Monitoring Network Improvements	9,769.00
Total for Monitor	ing Network Improve	ments			\$9,769.00
Total for Regulato	ry Compliance and A	dministrati	on		\$9,902.81

Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Transaction Report

August 2023

DATE	TRANSACTION TYPE	NUM	NAME	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
TOTAL					\$26,186.15

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MERCED IRRIGATION-URBAN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

<u>DATE</u>: October 11, 2023

SUBJECT:

The Board will review and consider adopting Rules and Regulations of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, a Groundwater Management Implementation Plan, as well as take other actions and authorize other actions relating thereto.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff's recommendation for Board action is -

- adoption of final Rules and Regulations of MIUGSA (Rules), as presented;
- adoption of a Groundwater Management Implementation Plan (GMIP), as presented;
- confirm previous Board action determining Allocation Period and Allocation of natural yield of
 groundwater of the Merced Groundwater Subbasin, e.g., 3.3 acre feet per acre over a three-year
 period beginning April 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025 (average of 1.1 acre foot per acre,
 per year over 3 years);
- adoption of penalty and schedule for failure to register groundwater well as required by the Rules:
- amend timeline for requirement of registration of groundwater wells previously adopted by the Board; and,
- adoption of penalty for the overextraction of groundwater as required by the Rules.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

In 2014, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was signed into law. SGMA went into effect on January 1, 2015. SGMA generally requires the sustainable management of groundwater basins in California through the local management of groundwater resources. SGMA provides local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) with the authority needed to work towards and enforce those goals, over time. (Water Code section 10720, et. seq)

On or about April 24, 2017, the Board of Directors for the Merced Irrigation-Urban GSA (the Board and MIUGSA, respectively) executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with several local agencies to form the MIUGSA, for the purpose of ensuring local control of groundwater resources within its jurisdictional boundaries. Subsequently on September 5, 2017, the Board executed a separate MOU between the MIUGSA and the other 2 GSAs, who cooperated with each other to develop a single

groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) to manage the Merced Subbasin. The 3 GSAs and their respective member agencies responsible for managing the Merced Subbasin are:

1. MIUGSA

Merced Irrigation District, City of Merced, City of Atwater, City of Livingston, Winton Water and Sanitary District, Planada Community Services District, Le Grand Community Services District

2. Merced Subbasin GSA (MSGSA)

Merced County (generally, the White Areas), Le Grand Athlone Water District, Plainsburg Irrigation District, Stevinson Water District

3. Turner Island Water District GSA-1

Since that time, the draft GSP was submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for review and approval, as required by SGMA, said GSP having been approved by DWR earlier in 2023 with corrective actions included.

Among other things, SGMA requires implementation of the GSP. The Board took action in May 2022 directing staff to draft rules, regulations and policies to, aside from addressing other administrative matters, provide guidance and a framework with respect to implementation of the GSP.

Staff has completed a final draft of said Rules, and they have been thoroughly reviewed on multiple occasions.

- The draft Rules have been posted on the MIUGSA website for public review since September 2023.
- The draft Rules were presented to the Stakeholder Guidance Committee (SGC) for review, consideration and input at a meeting of the SGC on September 7, 2023.
- The draft Rules were presented to the ad hoc committee of the Board, assigned by the Board to review, consider and provide specific input, at a meeting of the ad hoc committee on August 29, 2023.
- Staff has presented a draft of the Rules Board for review, consideration, input and direction on multiple occasions, including at meetings of the Board on May 16, 2023, August 9, 2023 and September 20, 2023. At the Board's last meeting in September 2023, the Board gave staff final direction and input on the draft Rules, and indicated action may be taken to approve and adopt the Rules at its next meeting, in October.

A copy of the final draft of the proposed Rules has been posted on the website, and paper copies will be made available at the Board's meeting for the Board's review. Staff will be available at the Board's meeting to summarize the Rules, provide additional information, and answer any questions the Board may have.

As part of the Board's proposed action to adopt the Rules, there are a number of supplemental decision points for the Board to determine. Those include:

- Groundwater Management Implementation Plan the Rules contemplate and provide for the
 adoption of rules or policies to supplement the Rules from time to time, including for example, a
 GMIP. Staff has prepared, and the Board has previously reviewed and provided input on a draft
 GMIP. The GMIP provides additional clarifying details on topics such as, for example,
 groundwater accounts, flowmeter requirements and require timelines for installation, pooling
 and reallocation. Board action as proposed would approve and adopt the final draft GMIP, as
 presented.
- Allocation Period and Allocation the Rules provide that the Board will determine allocations on a regular basis. As part of its determination, the Board will describe the length of time for which the allocation applies. In May 2022, the Board took action determining its first Allocation Period and Allocation, namely making available 3.3 acre feet per acre over a three-year period beginning April 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025 (average of 1.1 acre foot per acre, per year over the 3 years). Board action as proposed would confirm the Board's prior action with respect to this Allocation and Allocation Period.
- <u>Penalty for failure to register groundwater well</u> the Rules provide that the Board will
 determine a penalty for failing to timely and appropriately registering groundwater wells. Board
 action as proposed would approve and adopt a penalty for failure to register groundwater wells,
 in substantial form as follows:

Fine Amount	Invoice Date (or as close thereafter as practical)	Registration Deadline
\$0	N/A	12/15/2023
\$200	12/16/2023	1/31/2024
\$800	2/1/2024	2/28/2024
\$50/day	3/1/2024	

• Amendment of timeline for requirement of registration of groundwater wells previously adopted by the Board — in approximately October 2022, the Board took action identifying a timeline and process by which owners of groundwater wells are required to register those wells with MIUGSA e.g., a Well Registration Schedule. Board action as proposed would approve and adopt an amendment to that timeline, essentially granting certain well owners additional time to fulfill their obligation to register their wells with MIUGSA. In summary, the revised timeline would be, as follows: timeline for all private municipal and industrial groundwater wells would

be extended to June 30, 2024. The remainder of the Well Registration Schedule would remain as previously adopted by the Board, without change.

- Penalty for overextraction of groundwater the Rules provide that the Board will determine a penalty for the overextraction of groundwater. Board action as proposed would approve and adopt a penalty for the overextraction of groundwater, in the substantial form, as follows below. As proposed however, although Board action would approve the penalty for overextraction of groundwater, penalties would not be imposed until the year beginning 2025. Any penalties for overextraction that may have accrued during the Allocation Period would be applied retroactively.
 - < 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation Period:
 \$200/af
 - > 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation Period:
 \$500/af

Staff will be available at the Boards meeting to provide additional information and respond to any questions.

ALTERNATIVES/PROS AND CONS OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

As an alternative to adoption of the Rules, as presented, the Board could delay adoption and instruct staff to make additional changes to section(s) of the Rules. As previously discussed however, delay of adoption puts at risk the ability of MIUGSA to timely enforce the GSP within MIUGSA, adding risk to the potential for possible intervention by the State Water Resources Control Board.

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None.

MERCED IRRIGATION-URBAN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-05

RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE MERCED IRRIGATIONURBAN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY; APPROVING AND ADOPTING GROUNDWATER
MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN; CONFIRMING PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION DETERMINING
ALLOCATION PERIOD AND ALLOCATION; APPROVING AND ADOPTING PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO
REGISTER GROUNDWATER WELL; APPROVING AMENDMENT OF WELL REGISTRATION SCHEDULE;
APPROVING AND ADOPTING PENALTY FOR THE OVEREXTRACTION OF GROUNDWATER; AND
AUTHORIZING OTHER ACTIONS RELATING THERETO

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (the "Board" and the "MIUGSA", respectively) is 1 of 3 legislatively authorized groundwater sustainability agencies with authority over the Merced Groundwater Subbasin.

WHEREAS, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (Water Code section 10720, et. seq) authorizes groundwater sustainability agencies to adopt rules and regulations to, among other things, achieve groundwater sustainability (Water Code section 10725.2).

WHEREAS, the Board desires to adopt rules and regulations detail certain administrative matters for the general governance of MIUGSA, as well as help achieve groundwater sustainability, and provide clear guidance regarding implementation of the Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan to not only the staff, but also MIUGSA member agencies, residents, farmers, customers and other members of the public (the "Rules").

WHEREAS, the Rules will also help ensure the orderly, efficient and equitable distribution, sustainable use and conservation of water resources and facilities within MIUGSA, and will establish and help guide the orderly and efficient general administration of MIUGSA.

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and considered the proposed Rules, which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A", and hereby determines it to be in the best interests of MIUGSA to adopt the Rules, in the substantial form presented.

WHEREAS, the Rules contemplate and provide for the adoption of rules or policies to supplement the Rules from time to time, including for example, a Groundwater Management Implementation Plan (GMIP). The Board has reviewed and considered the proposed GMIP, which is attached hereto as Exhibit "B", and hereby determines it to be in the best interests of MIUGSA to adopt the GMIP, in the substantial form presented.

WHEREAS, the Rules provide that the Board will determine allocations of the natural yield of groundwater within the Merced Groundwater Subbasin on a regular basis. As part of its determination,

the Board will describe the length of time for which the allocation applies. The Board hereby determines it to be in the best interest of MIUGSA to confirm the Board's prior action with respect to determining its first Allocation Period and Allocation, namely making available 3.3 acre-feet per acre over a three-year period beginning April 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025.

WHEREAS, the Rules provide that the Board will determine a penalty for failing to timely and appropriately register groundwater wells within MIUGSA. The Board hereby determines it to be in the best interest of MIUGSA to establish and adopt a penalty schedule for failure to timely and appropriately register groundwater wells, in substantial form as follows:

Fine Amount	Invoice Date (or as close thereafter as practical)	Registration Deadline
\$0	N/A	12/15/2023
\$200	12/16/2023	1/31/2024
\$800	2/1/2024	2/28/2024
\$50/day	3/1/2024	

WHEREAS, the Board previously adopted a timeline and process by which owners of groundwater wells are required to register those wells with MIUGSA e.g., a Well Registration Schedule. The Board hereby determines it to be in the best interest of MIUGSA to approve and adopt an amendment to that timeline, essentially granting certain well owners additional time to fulfill their obligation to register their wells with MIUGSA, as follows: the timeline for all private municipal and industrial groundwater wells is hereby extended to June 30, 2024. The remainder of the Well Registration Schedule shall remain as previously adopted by the Board, without change.

WHEREAS, the Rules provide that the Board will determine a penalty for the overextraction of groundwater within MIUGSA. The Board hereby determines it to be in the best interest of MIUGSA to establish and adopt a penalty for the overextraction of groundwater in the substantial form, as follows:

- < 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation Period: \$200/af
- > 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation
 Period: \$500/af

Penalties for overextraction of groundwater shall not be imposed until the year beginning 2025, however any penalties that may have accrued during the Allocation Period shall be applied retroactively.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The facts contained in the recitals above are true and correct, and the Board so finds and determines.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. The Board hereby adopts the Rules and Regulations of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, attached hereto in Exhibit "A", which Exhibit is by this reference incorporated herein, in substantially the form presented to the Board.
- 2. The Board hereby adopts the Groundwater Management Implementation Plan of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency, attached hereto in Exhibit "B", which Exhibit is by this reference incorporated herein, in substantially the form presented to the Board.
- 3. The Board hereby confirms the Boards prior action with respect to determining its 1st Allocation Period and Allocation, namely making available 3.3 acre-feet per acre over a three-year period beginning April 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2025.
- 4. The Board hereby establishes and adopts a penalty and schedule for failure to timely and appropriately register groundwater wells, in substantial form as follows:

Fine Amount	Invoice Date (or as close thereafter as practical)	Registration Deadline
\$0	N/A	12/15/2023
\$200	12/16/2023	1/31/2024
\$800	2/1/2024	2/28/2024
\$50/day	3/1/2024	

- 5. The Board hereby adopts an amendment to its previously adopted Well Registration Schedule, as follows: the timeline for all private municipal and industrial groundwater wells is hereby extended to June 30, 2024. The remainder of the Well Registration Schedule shall remain as previously adopted by the Board, without change.
- 6. The Board hereby establishes and adopts a penalty for the overextraction of groundwater in the substantial form, as follows:
 - < 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation
 Period: \$200/af

 > 1.1 af/ac over groundwater account's total water availability during the Allocation Period: \$500/af.

Penalties for overextraction of groundwater shall not be imposed until the year beginning 2025, however any penalties that may have accrued during the Allocation Period shall be applied retroactively.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Chair, staff or either of their designees as may be appropriate given the applicable circumstances, is authorized to execute such other documents that may be necessary or appropriate, and is authorized to take such other actions as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the intent of this Resolution, said execution to provide conclusive evidence of the Board's approval.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency this 11th day of October, 2023 by the following vote:

Aye	!S:	Directors:	
Noe	es:	Directors:	
Abs	tain:	Directors:	
Abs	ent:	Directors:	
Hicham Elta	ıl		Stephanie Dietz
Chair			Vice Chair/Secretary