Directors having been duly notified, Vice-Chairman Duggins called the regular meeting to order at 3:00 pm at the MRGCD General Office. The following Directors and Staff were present:

**DIRECTORS:**
- Derrick J. Lente  Chair  Absent
- Adrian Oglesby  Vice-Chair
- Glen Duggins  Director
- Karen Dunning  Director
- John P. Kelly  Director
- Chris Sichler  Director
- Beverly Romero  Director
- Karen Dunning  Director
- David Fergeson  Secretary/Treasurer
- Jeanette Bustamante  Administrative Officer
- Doug Strech  GIS Supervisor
- Lorenzo Benavidez  Socorro Division Manager
- Jason Casuga  Engineer I
- Alicia Lopez  Engineering Technician

The following names of individuals were interested viewers and/or participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ernie Marquez, Automated Election Services</th>
<th>Pat McCraw, South Valley Ink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Thompson, MRGCD Lobbyist</td>
<td>Harvey Crowley, Mesa Verde Farms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Willis, AMAFCA</td>
<td>Charles Gabaldon, La Joya Acequia Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Haynes</td>
<td>Marcel Abeyta, La Joya Acequia Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angela Gregory, UNM</td>
<td>E. Hank Talioferro, La Joya Acequia Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Reitzel, US Representative Lujan-Grisham</td>
<td>Frank Chaves, Pueblo of Sandia</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Laura McCarthy, The Nature Conservancy   | Paula Sichler

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice-Chairman Duggins welcomed the guests and declared a quorum.

Vice-Chairman Duggins requested that Director Oglesby lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice-Chairman Duggins called for approval of the agenda. Vice-Chairman Duggins informed the Board there would be no Executive Session and it could be removed from the agenda and of a correction to the dates listed on the agenda for the minutes of the last meetings.

Director Oglesby made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 23, 2017 AGENDA AS MODIFIED.** Director Dunning seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.
AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 – APPROVAL OF MRGCD PAYMENT RATIFICATION & ATTORNEY INVOICES

a. Consideration / Approval of Payment Ratification – January 23, 2017

Vice-Chairman Duggins called for approval of the January 23, 2017 Payment Ratification. Directors Dunning and Kelly had questions and David Ferguson, MRGCD Secretary/Treasurer responded accordingly.

Director Oglesby made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT RATIFICATION OF JANUARY 23, 2017 AS PRESENTED. Director Dunning seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

b. Consideration / Approval of December 2016 Invoice for Law & Resource Planning Associates

Vice-Chairman Duggins called for approval of the December 2016 invoice for Law & Resource Planning Associates. There were no questions from the Board on the invoice.

Director Romero made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 2016 INVOICE FOR LAW & RESOURCE PLANNING ASSOCIATES AS AMENDED. Director Oglesby seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 – APPROVAL OF THE MRGCD MEETING MINUTES

a. Consideration / Approval of Minutes for Special Board Meeting-Water Bank – January 9, 2017

Vice-Chairman Duggins called for approval of the minutes for the Special Board Meeting-Water Bank January 9, 2017. There were no revisions to the minutes as presented.

Director Kelly made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING-WATER BANK JANUARY 9, 2017 AS PRESENTED. Director Romero seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

b. Consideration / Approval of Minutes for Regular Board Meeting – January 9, 2017

Vice-Chairman Duggins called for approval of the minutes for the Regular Board Meeting January 9, 2017. Director Dunning had one correction.

Director Oglesby made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING JANUARY 9, 2017 AS AMENDED. Director Dunning seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Dr. DuMars requested to explain one portion of the Law & Resource Planning Associates December 2016 invoice regarding the billing for the Application of Asociacion de Acequias Nortenas de Rio Arriva and Vice-Chairman Duggins allowed the explanation.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 – REPORT(S) FROM THE 2017 ELECTION DIRECTOR – Ernie Marquez, Automated Election Services

Mr. Marquez explained he is requesting from the Board approvals on the 2017 Election Calendar and his memo on compensation for judges and poll workers for the 2017 election.
a. Consideration / Approval of 2017 MRGCD Election Calendar

Mr. Marquez gave a brief review of some of the items on the calendar. Director Kelly said he would like to make the recommendation that the calendar item on Declaration of Candidacy; Signature of Electors Forms Monday March 6th be modified to include that the forms must picked up in person and would not be available on the MRGCD website, by US Mail or sent by electronic mail.

Director Oglesby made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTOR’S ELECTION CALENDAR AS MODIFIED. Director Dunning seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

b. Consideration / Approval of 2017 Election Poll Worker Compensation Rates

Mr. Marquez reported to the Board the compensation remains the same as the 2015 election; $150.00 for the Presiding Judge and $125.00 for all other polling officials. He said he is also recommending a $25.00 incentive pay for attending election training as in years past. Director Sichler inquired of the number of polling officials at each polling site and after discussion Mr. Marquez stated three; one presiding judge and two poll workers. He said at certain locations they may determine that an additional judge or worker may be needed and that decision is done on Election Day.

Director Oglesby made the MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTOR’S ELECTION POLL WORKER COMPENSATION RATES. Director Romero seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 – UPDATE 2017 NM STATE LEGISLATURE – John Thompson, MRGCD Lobbyist

Mr. Thompson reported the 2017 NM State Legislative session is six days old and there is not a lot to report. He said first and foremost the committees have been established and secondly the MRGCD has been removed entirely from Senator Ivey-Soto’s bill which he presented at the last Board meeting. Mr. Thompson said this is temporary and there are a lot of steps the bill has to go through before its final and he will keep the Board advised. He said the same is potentially going to happen for Representative Bandy’s bill and there are a few cards that need to fall before the MRGCD is taken out of this bill. Mr. Thompson said there will be no capital outlay for anyone this session; this is grim, however, it is the reality. He said the last day for bills to be introduced is February 16th and the MRGCD won’t know fully what to anticipate until that date. Mr. Thompson said Representative Ruiloba requested a Board member to attend a meeting on the 25th and he will get pertinent information to the directors. Director Kelly asked about the qualified elector portion of the election bills and what is Mr. Thompson’s view on the possibility of getting it inserted back into the bill? Mr. Thompson said there are those looking closely at the qualified elector viewpoint this session, there are many agencies that like the idea of consolidation from a cost effective standpoint and there are a great number of agencies that will be affected by this bill. Mr. Hamman said the Board has a memo prepared by Dr. DuMar’s firm relative to the constitutionality aspect of Senator Ivey-Soto’s election bill. He said he and Mr. Thompson will be meeting next week in relation to the questions being raised by the Legislature regarding the Water Trust Board; the value of it and whether it should be funded, etc. He said they will present information on how the Water Trust Board has helped the MRGCD and the water community in New Mexico as a whole. Director Oglesby asked if the Law & Resource Planning Associates memo should be offered to Senator Ivey-Soto in letter format and Dr. DuMars said he thinks so and he also offered additional information on the Water Trust Board issue. Mr. Thompson said it is important for the Board to remember that in the short term this is great to send the letter, however, there is a long way to go on this particular election bill.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 – THE NATURE CONSERVANCY – Laura McCarthy, Director of Conservation

Ms. McCarthy presented a PowerPoint presentation. She reviewed the 2011 Las Conchas fire, the consequences of the fire and the rain and flooding events that happened after the fire. She showed a slide of
the new debris flows that are affecting the area after three years. Ms. McCarthy said there are four accelerated strategies to meet the challenge and scale of severe wildfires and she will concentrate on the tree thinning strategy. She gave details on the Rio Grande Water Fund, the participants and the funding and the working groups and studies. Ms. McCarthy then shared highlights on the study completed by Dr. Mark Stone, Sakia Afrin and Angela Gregory of UNM Department of Civil Engineering and the actual report will be shared with the MRGCD; and they will keep the Board posted on subsequent steps to be carried forward. Ms. McCarthy said she would like to share with the Board a report on the Blanco-Navajo Landscape Resilience Strategy report and showed a slide on areas that are susceptible to fire and likely to burn. She then gave information on FY 2018 Watershed Investment Projects. Ms. McCarthy said The Nature Conservancy has put together a funding proposal for FY 2018 for their signatories and they have commitments up to 60% and will put the proposal out there for MRGCD consideration for their 2018 budget. Ms. McCarthy fielded questions from the Board regarding the various projects, funding, proposed MRGCD funding and working together with the NM State Legislature, the US Forest Service and other NM state agencies for watershed restoration.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 – LA JOYA ACEQUIA AGREEMENT – Marcel Abeyta, La Joya Acequia Association & Mike Hamman MRGCD CEO

Mr. Hamman reported that Marcel Abeyta, Charles Gabaldon and Mr. Talioferro of the La Joya Acequia Association are in the audience and will speak to the Board. Mr. Hamman gave a brief history of the MRGCD and La Joya Acequia relationship. He said the 1936 and 1977 Memorandum of Agreements with the La Joya Acequia requires both organizations on an annual or bi-annual basis to negotiate an assessment and the La Joya Acequia is required to report to the MRGCD how many acres are being utilized no later than June 1st of each year. Mr. Hamman said this year they are setting up the agreement so that it is an on-going assessment. He said there was a meeting with the MRGCD Irrigation/Water Bank Committee and members of the La Joya Acequia Association regarding the agreement and the resolution being presented to the Board. Dr. DuMars provided additional comments on the relationship with La Joya Acequia. Mr. Gabaldon said the Acequia has enjoyed a good relationship with the MRGCD for over forty years and they would like to keep it that way. Mr. Abeyta said they have over 600 acres that are serviced by this agreement and the MRGCD has been very responsive to their needs. Director Dunning inquired about how they came to the assessment value and Mr. Hamman explained the process. Mr. Hamman read several paragraphs of the agreement into the record.
Director Sichler made the MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION M-01-23-17-146 LA JOYA ACEQUIA AGREEMENT – 2017 TO 2019 IRRIGATION SEASONS AND BEYOND AS PRESENTED. Director Romero seconded the motion. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 – ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes)

Pat McCraw said she did some research since the last meeting in reference to the Senator Daniel Ivey-Soto presentation on his election bill. She said she would like the Board to know there is an association of NM County Clerks; a private organization and not funded by any State money and is pretty much volunteer. She said the Executive Director of that association is Senator Ivey-Soto and he gets paid to be their Executive Director and she thinks that might be a conflict of interest. Ms. McCraw said the Chairman of that organization is Dave Kunko who lives in Chaves County and is the Chaves County Clerk. She said another thing that is interesting is that Senator Ivey-Soto’s constituents are mostly urban and few very that would be in the MRGCD. She said she has done considerable research and no meeting minutes exist and the County Clerk’s did not vote to support the bill in case the Board was under the mistaken impression that they did vote their support; there is not an official vote of any type that says they supported this legislation.

Paula Sichler said she is at the meeting on behalf of the NM Farm and Livestock Bureau and she would like to inform the Board of their annual Ag Fest on February 7th at the Santa Fe Convention Center from 6 pm to 9 pm and she has tickets for the event.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 – REPORT(S) FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

a. Bureau of Reclamation – Jennifer Faler, Area Manager

Ms. Faler did not attend this meeting. The following summary report was received electronically from the Bureau of Reclamation.
1. Heron Summary

   Content = 66,482 ac-ft. (1/19)
   Azotea Tunnel: 0 cfs
   Total SJ-C inflow year-to-date: 0 ac-ft.
   Currently releasing: 0 cfs
   Current MRGCD storage: 0 ac-ft.

2. El Vado Summary

   A. Total storage (all contractors and natural) in El Vado as of 1/19:
      51,261 ac-ft.
   B. Native in El Vado
      2,682 ac-ft.
   C. MRGCD SJ-C storage in El Vado
      36,953 ac-ft.
   D. P & P
      0 ac-ft.
   E. EDWA:
      0 ac-ft.
   F. All other SJ-C contractors:
      11,626 ac-ft.

   Current release is 100 cfs      RG Inflow is 60-100 cfs

3. Storage in Abiquiu

   Content = 120,205 ac-ft. (1/19)
   MRGCD SJ-C storage = 0 ac-ft.

   Total water for minnow released to date in 2017: 0 ac-ft.

   Snowpack Data:
   As of 1/20/17 (% of median)

   Rio Chama Basin.........................177%
   Upper Rio Grande Basin.................146%
   Sangre de Cristo Basin.................130%
   Jemez Basin.............................133%
   San Juan River Basin....................143%

   January Streamflow Forecast

   Rio Grande @ Del Norte CO 470,000 ac-ft.  (91%)
   El Vado Reservoir Inflow (Mar-Jul) 275,000 ac-ft.  (122%)
   Rio Grande @ Otowi 720,000 ac-ft.  (100%)
   Jemez R. below dam 33,000 ac-ft.  (97%)
   Rio Grande @ San Marcial 505,000 ac-ft.  (99%)

   b. Bureau of Indian Affairs

      Bureau of Indian Affairs was not at this meeting to make a report.
AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 – REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER (Michael A. Hamman, MRGCD CEO/CE)


Mr. Hamman reported that Mr. Gensler was away from the office and he would be giving the water report. Mr. Hamman said the BOR has furnished a water summary report and their snowpack information as of the 20th and with the forecast of today and tomorrow will only add to the good news. He said there is approximately 550 cfs flowing at Embudo right now, 720 cfs at Otowi, 900 cfs at San Acacia and drops to 550 cfs into Elephant Butte. He said that it is odd to see this kind of a drop going into the Butte and that is something they will look into. Mr. Hamman said the January streamflow forecast is averaging around 110% of average with the exception at El Vado running a little higher at 122%. He said the Rio Grande Project storage at Elephant Butte & Caballo is 245,000 and the chances of getting out of Article VII are slim, but it depends on the runoff and the window of opportunity to store could develop like the in the last year. Director Sichler asked if the MRGCD made their full allocation of San Juan-Chama this year or how did it turn out and Mr. Hamman said it just missed the 100% mark and it was about 98%.

b. Update on the Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program - Mike Hamman, MRGCD CEO & David Gensler, MRGCD Water Operations Manager

Mr. Hamman said he will give an update and then have Patrick Redmond, LRPA step in for Mr. Gensler. Mr. Hamman said the non-Feds have met a couple to times to try to pull together a non-Fed position in the future of the Collaborative Program and come up with a strategy that since there is a Biological Opinion (BO) focused in on a performance method for the three agencies to meet; the question becomes what is the purpose of the Collaborative Program and how will it be used going forward, funding and priorities for Reclamation. He said Reclamation will be focusing on meeting the requirements and what does that mean for the future of the Collaborative Program. Mr. Hamman said the non-Feds have been formulating their ideas and what they would request of the Federal agencies in the Collaborative Program as a whole. He said they came to the conclusion they want to encourage the Program to be formulated as the hub of everything that everyone does in the middle valley; not only for ESA purposes, but whatever the projects would be. He said the scientific endeavors that are need to better develop a monitoring strategy and a good scientific foundation and a good peer review process engaged in a true adaptive management format. Mr. Hamman said they are recommending another re-start of the Collaborative Program and will schedule a two or three day conference sometime in April to get the Program repurposed.

Dr. DuMars said Patrick Redmond has been with his firm for the past ten years and has been involved with ESA and environmental issues and now he has the opportunity to move on and will relocate to Washington, DC to be a part of the Trump Administration in the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Redmond said he was just taken on board in the Department of Agriculture General Counsel as an attorney advisor in the Natural Resources & Environment Division; working in support of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). He said he would like to thank the MRGCD Board staff for the opportunity to work with ESA and it was satisfying to be part of the process of contributing to a successful conclusion to the Biological Opinion and to work with other ESA and water issues. The Board each gave their congratulations and thanks to Mr. Redmond.

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Mr. Redmond said he was at the Collaborative Program EC meeting this last Wednesday and he gave a brief review of the presentations that were given. He said the issue that seems to be occupying people is what is the role of the Collaborative Program now there is a Biological Opinion. Director Dunning asked now there is a BO, is it his perception that there will be less risk of lawsuits. Mr. Redmond said now that he is employed by another agency, he cannot continue to represent the MRGCD and will have Dr. DuMars answer the question. Dr. DuMars said there may be challenges to the BO and if that happens, the MRGCD might be involved. He said the BO is much more defensible, protected under the Section VII provision and is in much better shape than prior to the BO and the MRGCD will be less likely to be sued. Director Sichler asked Mr. Hamman if the MRGCD
and smaller groups, farmers, etc. will still have a process or some participation in these types of programs and Mr. Hamman said that is a question that is still open about how the other entities that participated and he thinks what they will try to do is keep it collaborative and keep it broad so there is enough representation and oversight, however, the main thing is adaptive management. He said there is a lot of interest from all types of venues and Mr. Redmond said it has been recognized for a long time that there is value in having a more inclusive process in which various entities can come to the table along with the MRGCD, the Corps, the State and Reclamation and contribute whatever perspective they have. He said for this reason there is motivation to keep the Collaborative Program going.

c. Consideration / Approval of Dates & Times for MRGCD Informational Meetings – Mike Hamman, MRGCD CEO

Mr. Hamman presented options for possible meeting dates and after discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that the Socorro County Informational meeting would be held on Monday, February 27, 2017 at 5:00 pm, Valencia County Informational meeting on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 at 5:00 pm and the Sandoval County Informational meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 2017. The locations for all meetings will be determined at a later date as well as the time for the Sandoval County meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12 – REPORT(S) FROM THE MRGCD ATTORNEY(S) (Chief Water Counsel and/or General Counsel)

a. Update – ESA Litigation – Dr. Charles T. DuMars, MRGCD Chief Water Counsel

Dr. DuMars said there are still two pending pieces of litigation; one is the Federal court case filed by WildEarth Guardians (WEG) against the Corps of Engineers and the MRGCD as a collective body and the Corps has since branched out and is doing its own thing. He said the other suit regarding the Bureau of Reclamation; most of the claims from WEG have to do with violations of the existing Biological Opinion and the existing BO no longer exists; there is a new BO. He said there is a case in the 10th Circuit which says the BO is suspended by the Congress of the United States which rules the previous claims under the BO are moot. He said in the case of the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow and the Grand Canyon Trust case; it is his expectation that both of these claims will be dismissed. Dr. DuMars said the claim against the MRGCD saying they want to control the MRGCD’s activities; that one has already been dismissed. Dr. DuMars said as far as the case with the Corps, this case is still viable. He said that Mr. Redmond informed him there is a lawsuit regarding the San Acacia Levee by the WildEarth Guardians that was dormant for a long time and has been started over and the United States has filed a response pleading. Dr. DuMars said the last litigation is the State Mandamus case and he was speaking with some of the State lawyers about this and because of their involvement with the Legislature and he gave additional comments on the status of this issue. Director Kelly said since the MRGCD is the local sponsor on the San Acacia/Socorro levee and responsible for maintenance; keeping it salt cedar and woody vegetation free during any WEG litigation is necessary and discussion followed.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13 – REPORTS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS


Director Dunning said she attended both meetings and there was one item on the Executive meeting that was forwarded to the regular meeting and that was the approval of Mr. Dewey Cave as Executive Director of two different organizations, MRCOG and (unintelligible) and a legal agreement for how you do that. She said they indicated their lobbyists could be used for issues and she did speak to him about the Senator Daniel Ivey-Soto bill indicating that some of the smaller members of MRCOG might be impacted by the bill and he said they were well aware of the bill. She said the John Thompson, MRGCD Lobbyist had already spoken to him about the issue. Director Dunning said one of the items in the regular meeting was the time the regular meeting should be held and she
gave additional information. Director Dunning said the legislative priorities are pretty much the same as they were in the last legislative session.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE REPORT BY DIRECTOR DUNNING ON THE MRCOG EXECUTIVE & REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS OF JANUARY 12, 2017**. Director Sichler seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.


Director Sichler reported that most of what they discussed during this meeting was the La Joya Acequia issue and that was presented earlier in this meeting. He said they did speak to some revisions on the Water Bank policy and it was requested that this be placed on the next meeting agenda for discussion.

Director Oglesby made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE REPORT BY DIRECTOR SICHLER ON THE MRGCD IRRIGATION/WATER BANK COMMITTEE MEETING OF JANUARY 19, 2017**. Director Kelly seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Duggins requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

With no further comments, questions or concerns, Director Romero made the **MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Director Oglesby seconded the motion and the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of January 23, 2017.

**Attested:**

David M. Fergeson
Secretary/Treasurer

Glen Duggins, Vice-Chairman
MRGCD Board of Directors