

**MINUTES OF THE
2,179th REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, 3:00 P.M.

Directors having been duly notified; Madam Chair Dunning called the regular meeting to order at 3:06 pm at the MRGCD General Office. The following Directors and Staff were present:

DIRECTORS		STAFF	
Karen Dunning, Madam Chair	Present	Mike Hamman	Chief Engineer/CEO
Stephanie Russo Baca, Vice Chair	Present	Dr. Chuck DuMars	Chief Water Counsel
Barbara Baca, Director	Present	Lorna Wiggins	General Counsel
John Kelly, Director	Present	Jason Casuga	Chief Operating Officer
Joaquin Baca, Director	Present	Pamela Fanelli	Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
Glen Duggins, Director	Present	Anne Marken	Acting Water Operations Mgr.
Michael T. Sandoval, Director	Present	Mike Lopez	Water Distribution Div. Mgr.
		DeAnna Phillips	GIS Tech / Board Liaison

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

Viola Sanchez, BIA	Santiago Maestas
James E. Grieco, LRPA	Amara Szrom
Erica Desmet	Adrienne Martinez, MRGCD
David Gensler	Rick Altenberg, MRGCD
Mitch Vergeer	Yasmeen Najmi
Raymond Torres	Thomas Padilla
Page L. Pegram	Marie VanDerGeest
Sadie Baca	Michael Padilla
Amanda Velarde, APS Real Estate	Judith McSweeney, MRGCD
Tricia Snyder, Wild Earth Guardians	Estella Gamboa, MRGCD
Phil Bredfeldt, Western Solutions	Gabriella Coughlin, MRGCD
Anthony Thompson	John Thompson, MRGCD Lobbyist
Beverly Dominguez Romero	Matt Martinez, MRGCD
Marianne Woodard	Sonny Cooper, Western Solutions
Janet Jarratt	Cristian Jimenez Marin, MRGCD
Alicia Lopez, MRGCD	Francesca Shirley, MRGCD

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director Kelly led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Madam Chair Dunning declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice Chair Russo Baca requested to add report from the Ag Committee under Reports From the Board, items 12.b.

Director Barbara Baca stated there was no Mid-Region Council of Government meeting in September.

Mr. Hamman updated that Mr. Casuga would present under Item 10.c. in lieu of himself.

Director Duggins made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA with the above changes**. Director Joaquin Baca seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 – CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Consideration/Approval of Payment Ratification - September 13, 2021
- b. Consideration/Approval of August 2021 Invoice for Wiggins, Williams & Wiggins
- c. Consideration/Approval of August 2021 Invoice for Law & Resource Planning Associates
- d. Consideration/Approval of Minutes for Regular Board Meeting - August 9, 2021
- e. Consideration/Approval of Minutes for Special Board Meeting - August 20, 2021
- f. Memo on MRGCD Approved Licenses for August 2021 (For Informational Purposes Only)

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA**. Director Sandoval seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 – CONVENE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

- a. **Reclassification Hearing - Estella Gamboa, Assessment Clark III**

Chair Dunning convened the Board of Equalization and turned it over to Ms. Estella Gamboa at 3:10 pm.

Ms. Gamboa stated that the 2021 water service charge contracts and protests were reviewed and completed by staff, and that landowners had the opportunity to protest no later than May 31st. She also explained that if any protestor did not agree with the recommendations, they were able to call in and show cause of why it should be reconsidered.

Chair asked if any callers would like to appeal but there weren't any responses.

Further discussion ensued. Director Barbara Baca thanked Ms. Gamboa for her good work. Ms. Gamboa thanked Alicia Lopez and the Mapping/GIS staff for their assistance also.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - RECONVENE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Director Barbara Baca made the **MOTION TO RETURN BACK TO THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING AND FOR THE BOARD TO ACCEPT THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATIONS MADE FOR TODAY'S RECLASSIFICATION HEARING**. Director Joaquin Baca seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED, unanimously**.

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors reconvened at 3:17 pm.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 – DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF AMENDING THE 2021 OPEN MEETINGS ACT RESOLUTION BD-01-11-21-51- CHAIR KAREN DUNNING

Madam Chair Dunning proposed for the Board to go on field day in October to the different counties rather than having two meetings a month, in order for the Board to meet with farmers on their farm and help educate the Board about their farming operations.

Director Duggins expressed that he thinks it's a good idea to visit the farms. Director Duggins reiterated the importance of the water for the farmers and pleaded with the board to change

their minds. He also expressed that all the Board members specialize in different areas and farming is his. He continued to say he trusts their expertise based on certain decisions and wished they trusted his.

Madam Chair Dunning stated that people who have issues need to come to the staff with the issues first before the Board. She also stated that they do return calls. She explained that two meetings a month were costly and not necessary.

Director Barbara Baca requested to hear from Pam Fanelli on the cost of a typical board meeting and what the savings would be by only having one per month. Ms. Fanelli replied that a typical board meeting on average costs about \$10,000, which includes the preparation of the meeting minutes, the delivery of the Board packets, the mileage for the Board to attend, legal counsel and staff's time and salaries to prepare and attend, etc. By having one meeting per month comes to a savings of approximately \$80,000 to \$100,000 additionally annually. Director Barbara Baca then suggested using the savings for the agronomy section.

Director Sandoval agreed with Director Baca expressing that he did not think two meetings per month would be beneficial.

Director Kelly expressed this is a personal subject for everyone. He also spoke highly of the engineers on staff and his confidence in their decisions. He stated that meetings take much preparation and does not support to modify the Open Meetings Act, but he doesn't mind having special meetings.

Vice Chair Russo Baca expressed she did like the idea of meeting more often with members of the public. She liked the Informational Meetings at the Division Offices which occurred pre-Covid19 including a couple of Board members in attendance, but they weren't well attended. She proposed to keep one meeting a month in the boardroom and then a second meeting out in the field.

Director Joaquin Baca said he was not in favor of two meetings a month and did not see a reason to amend the Open Meetings Act resolution.

Director Duggins once again expressed his reasoning for two meetings a month. He stated the farmers are the ones that are losing from this. Director Duggins also reiterated that the farmers need more of a notice before shutdown.

Director Kelly pointed out that he has never seen a situation where the Board had to make a decision to overrule the CEO, current and past. He agreed with Vice Chair Russo Baca's suggestion of holding a second meeting out in the field.

Mr. Hamman stated the irrigation season will end October 1st. He said doing that would advance the repayment of the debit. He also said the forecast for the next two weeks was dismal as far as temperatures and precipitation.

Madam Chair ended by saying there wasn't going to be a motion to amend the 2021 Open Meetings Act Resolution BD-01-11-21-51.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 – ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are held to six (6) minutes)

a. Letter from Steve Ruffennach to Mike Hamman, Chief Engineer/CEO

Madam Chair read a letter to Mr. Hamman from Mr. Steve Ruffennach, which expressed his thanks to everyone for professional water management this year. He also gave thanks to a ditch rider named Josh Armijo for doing a great job.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2021

MIKE HAMMAN
CHIEF ENGINEER/CEO



HI MIKE,

I JUST WANT TO THANK YOU AND EVERYONE AT MRGCD FOR YOUR VERY PROFESSIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT THIS YEAR. IT HAS BEEN A VERY DYNAMIC, DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE SITUATION, AND IT WAS HANDLED SUPERBLY. MAY I MENTION JOSH ARMIDO, NORTH VALLEY, WHO ROLLED WITH THIS "BUMPY" IRRIGATION SEASON VERY SMOOTHLY.

SPECIAL THANKS TO HIM PLEASE. AND, I REALLY APPRECIATED YOUR AUGUST 16 LETTER MIKE, THANKS. LET'S HOPE FOR A VERY ROBUST SNOW PACK THIS WINTER.

YOURS,

STEVE RUFFENNACH
HARWOOD LATERAL SINCE 1980

Mitch Vergeer

Mr. Vergeer stated that he had to drop two hay customers just to make it to the meeting and expressed how much farmers rely on the Board to make the right decisions for the farmers. He expressed that he does not feel that's happening and said it seems they're going backwards. He expressed the importance of a business to do what is needed to be done first.

Note: Director Joaquin Baca left the meeting at 3:56 p.m. due to family obligations.

Raymond Torres

Mr. Torres phoned in regarding the breach of the New Belen Acequia south of Delgado Avenue specifically at his father's home off of West Castillo Avenue which is a dead end. Over the years this location has had many breaches, but he was happy with the amount of fill that was brought

in 2021. Stating from 2018 there were cables, wires, etc., that were left there for months. He explained that he did try calling the engineering office in Albuquerque to get that resolved. He was concerned that there didn't seem to be any compacting equipment brought in to repair that ditch bank. He then stated that Comcast, requested by the District's engineering staff to ensure cables were buried to the District's specifications, said he would have to dig a distance of ~40 yards to a utility pole and again expressed concerns of disturbing a steady ditch bank. He suggested that the District return phone calls to the public and stop finger pointing.

Mr. Hamman expressed to Mr. Torres that some of his answers would be answered in item 10.e.

David Gensler

Mr. Gensler, former MRGCD Water Operations Manager, called in to express his opinion regarding announcement of October 1 shutdown. Chair Dunning asked that he email his comments as it was hard to understand him, at times, over the phone. He did so, in his message he thanked the Chair for allowing him to speak. He said he misses the District and is sorry if his comments (below) sound harsh.

David Gensler Comments to MRGCD Board of Directors, September 13, 2021 meeting:

Last week I heard that the District has announced it will "shut down" Oct 1. Apparently this decision was made by the Board during an August special meeting.

If what I've heard is correct the Board made that decision because of RGC status. I knew what the RGC status was at the end of 2020, and I know that an early shutdown was called for last year due to the exceptions made to the RGC in 2020. The District also delayed startup in the spring of this year for the same reason. I was part of those decisions, for better or worse, and the District did exactly what we promised to do last fall and last spring.

I heard from many irrigators last fall, and again this spring. A universal comment was the inability to plant in the fall was a serious hardship for farmers. At the time, I could only say that I understood, but it was necessary, and it was only for one year. Now it looks like it will be two years in a row farmers can't plant in the fall.

The District did what it said it would do. I was disappointed it wasn't as effective as it should have been at making the RGC whole again after the events of 2020. The benefit of the early shutdown was greatly reduced by the very poor condition of the floodway between San Acacia and Elephant Butte. I sat there last fall and watched as the flow ran nicely through the valley to San Acacia, then disappeared and never made it the rest of the way to the Butte. This was due to the lack of maintenance of that stretch of the river, the responsibility of the Bureau of Reclamation under the authorizing language of the Middle Rio Grande project. Worse still, what Reclamation has been terming "maintenance" for many years is largely intentional creation of wetlands. Very nice for birds and fish. But NOT good for delivering water to Elephant Butte. To my knowledge, nothing has changed, so what is the point to bypassing water in October and watching it evaporate.

Then in the spring, while we delayed startup for a month to allow extra water to get to the Butte, Reclamation again undermined the District's efforts to deliver water to the Butte. Reclamation began storing water at EL Vado in January for the "P&P" reserve, as has been their practice now for several years. As they were doing this I requested many times that they bypass all of this natural flow through the winter and early spring. They could have done so and delivered an extra 18K AF or

so into elephant Butte while the river was in an efficient mode (fully wetted, minimal ET/evap loss). They would still have had time to store in late April/early May, during what we knew was going to be a pitifully small runoff.

They ignored those request, for what I believe were 2 reasons. First, they like to give the Indians what they want, and that means symbolically placing the "P&P" reserve at the head of the list. It is given precedence over anything else, no matter whether it makes hydrologic sense to do so or not. But second, and probably more importantly for them by storing early Reclamation insured that what little runoff was present in May was not reduced in any way and that was good for the silvery minnow. No doubt that was the best thing for the fish, but in so doing they clearly placed the needs of the water users in the District in the lowest priority. In my opinion, the early shutdown this fall is effectively the irrigators of the middle valley having to "pay" the water debt for the silvery minnow, not the RGC.

Now I know 2021 has been a very difficult year. There was an abysmal runoff, following a very dry previous year, and nearly zero water in storage for anyone. I have not been privy to all the water discussions this year, but I see things this year that appear different from others. Previously the District worked very closely with Reclamation to help, but we never gave away New Mexico water to keep the river wet. When water supplies were super-tight, the District carefully maximized the efficient use of water for our irrigators, making as much available as possible.

This year I am not certain that practice is still in place. On occasion I have seen water passing dams, or returning from wasteways that could have been used by someone. Once switching to the "P&P" reserve, what appears to me to be a constant bypass of 140-150 cfs has been maintained below Angostura dam and some water has been returned at Central avenue that probably didn't need to be. Of course The District has kept the "minnow water" whole, bypassing the full required amounts at Isleta and San Acacia. This appears to me to be the District covering the full conveyance loss for the federal minnow water, at the expense of District water users.

I urge the District to reconsider the decision to end water delivery October 1. Its entirely possible there will be no water to divert, but that's an act of God. If there is water, it should be made available to any water user who needs it. This might mean diverting 100% of the flow at Angostura, and seeing a dry river through Albuquerque. It wouldn't be the first time. Prior to 1983 this was a very common event. Now its faded from people's memory and has become "unthinkable". It probably needs to happen.

In early October, it will take a minimum of 400-450 cfs to deliver any water to Elephant Butte. It's a lot less than that now. Maybe it will come up. If its any less than that it will just evaporate before getting there. So I can't see much benefit to the early shutdown this year. This won't be popular with some people in the room, but in my opinion, the decision to end water delivery October 1 this year has everything to do with Reclamation, the silvery minnow, and the optics of drying in Albuquerque reach. It has nothing to do with the RGC.

The District has an obligation to provide irrigation water to New Mexicans, using whatever natral RG flow may be available. These guys need your help!

Erica Desmet

Ms. Desmet thanked Vice Chair Russo Baca for reaching out and keeping her informed of the meeting minutes. She also volunteered her farm to host the Board. Ms. Desmet asked if who has water rights and who does not is public record.

Mr. Hamman explained the different tiers of water rights in the District. He stated there are the prior and paramount water rights of the pueblos. There are pre-1907 water rights proven through the Office of the State Engineers. Lastly, there are the reclaimed lands water rights which has two groups: newly reclaimed lands within the pueblos; and the District's reclaimed water rights

that serves all water users that are in the benefited area of the MRGCD and that have a valid connection to the system.

Ms. Desmet appreciated his answer but thought she was asking the wrong question as she's frustrated when she's irrigating, and built-up tons of pressure and sees people watering their front yards and trees. She then asked what power they are going to give to ditch riders to shut those people off. She feels that property owners that make a living off the land sits at a higher priority than individuals watering their cottonwood trees in their front yards.

Mr. Hamman stated that every irrigator or water user has an equal right, or equal access, to the system and said it's next to impossible to set different priorities for the different water use. He stated he knows they're going to experience shortages ahead of them and they are preparing to address those issues as they arise.

Glen Duggins

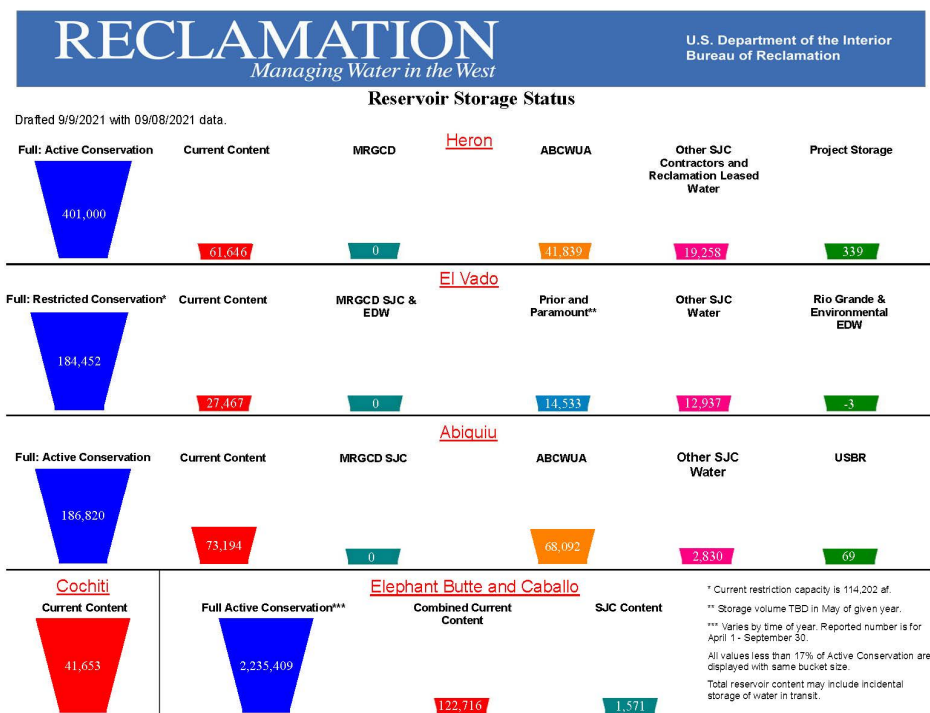
Director Duggins thanked the ditch rider, Robert Parnell, Julian Avalos and a Socorro County deputy sheriff that helped a man in San Lorenzo who had tried to cross the flooded arroyo. Mike Lopez, MRGCD Water Distribution Manager, said he would pass on his message.

Vice Chair Russo Baca said she was also in Escondido when the flooding occurred and thanked our staff for being there and recognized them for doing a good job.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 – REPORT(S) FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

a. Bureau of Reclamation - Jennifer Faler, Area Manager

Ms. Faler did not attend the meeting; below is the provided reservoir storage status.



MRGCD BOARD MEETING (09-13-21)

1. Heron Summary
 - Content = 61,646 ac-ft (9/8)
 - Azotea tunnel: 0 cfs
 - Total SJC inflow year-to-date: 59,999 a.f.
 - Currently releasing 400 cfs
 - Current MRGCD storage: 0 ac-ft
2. El Vado Summary
 - A. Total storage (all contractors and natural) in El Vado as of 9/8:
27,467 ac-ft.
 - B. Native in El Vado
0 ac-ft.
 - C. MRGCD's SJ-C storage in El Vado
0 ac-ft.
 - D. P & P: 14,533 ac-ft
 - E. EDWA: 0 ac-ft
 - F. All other SJ-C contractors: 12,934 ac-ft

Current release is 100 cfs RG Inflow is 30-40 cfs
3. Storage in Abiquiu
 - Content = 73,194 ac-ft (9/8)
 - MRGCD's SJ-C storage= 0 ac-ft

Total water released for minnow to date in 2021: 5,517 ac-ft

b. Bureau of Indian Affairs - Viola Sanchez, Designated Engineer

Ms. Sanchez reported irrigation season continues for the pueblos and is going well. She also stated there is some surplus water in the system from return flows and excess pool releases in Cochiti. Ms. Sanchez commented that the pueblos were not asked to end their irrigation season early on October 1st, so they plan to go until at least November 3rd or 5th. She also thanked Mike Lopez, Anne Marken, and the ISO's for their help. She said the pueblos are working directly with the ISO's to bring adequate deliveries.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 – REPORT(S) FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER/CFO - Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM**a. Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Approved by Department of Finance and Administration – Pamela Fanelli, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO**

Ms. Fanelli announced that the State Department of Finance sent approval for fiscal year 2022 final budget and the fourth quarter report for fiscal 2021.

b. Notice that the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Reflects the Board of Directors Waiver to Increase the Water Service Charge by the Annual COLA – Pamela Fanelli, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

Ms. Fanelli reported that in the fiscal year 2022 budget, the District did not increase the water service charge rate due to severe drought conditions and the impact on the farming community.

She stated that the Finance Committee did recommend suspending the statutorily authorized inflation that indexes the water service charge in fiscal year 2022. That did not happen; therefore, the water service charge remains the same.

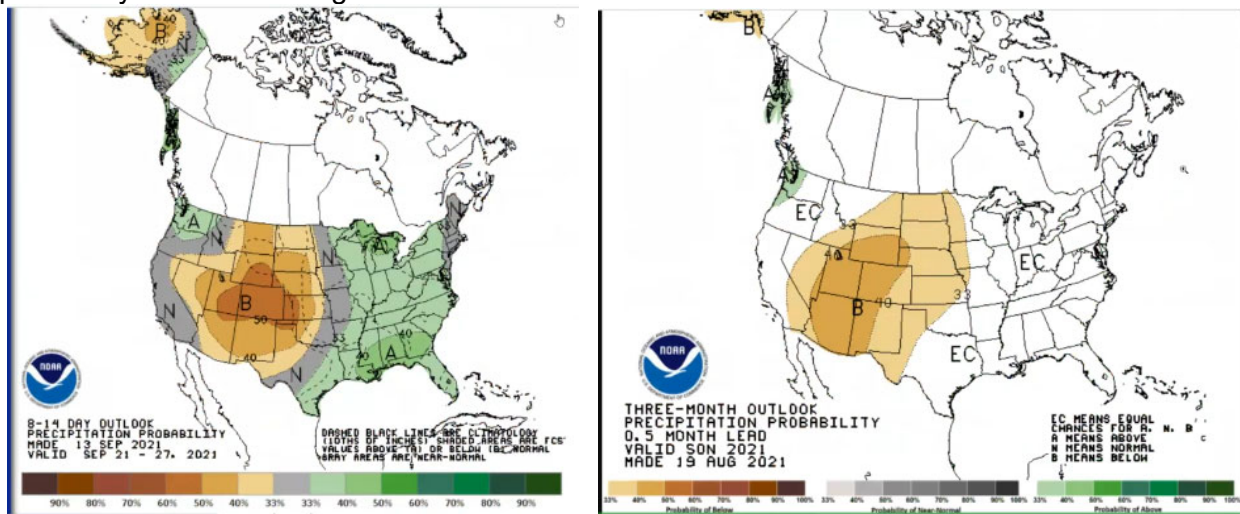
Vice Chair Russo Baca asked for the difference between the fiscal year and the calendar year; she replied the fiscal year starts on July 1 and ends June 30th. Ms. Fanelli informed the Board that the water service charge billing would start next month. She stated that the District is always a year behind and the charge is for the tax year of 2021 which is paid in two installments.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 – REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER - Mike A. Hamman, PE

a. Report on Water Supply Conditions - Anne Marken, Acting Water Operations Division Manager

Ms. Marken reported 50 cfs at Lobatos Guage at the Colorado border and 25 cfs at La Fuente and the District is out of storage water and not capable of augmenting base flows in the river. She stated they're seeing flows in river trend down gradually and they're trending lower.

She presented the National Weather Service's 8 to 14 day precipitation outlook showing a 40% chance being below average rainfall; and the 3 month forecast also shows 40% chance of probability of below average rainfall.



Ms. Marken said we're not in P&P operations yet. Embudo is at 215 which is below P&P demand. Currently there's 300 cfs out of Cochiti and 100 of that is San Juan-Chama water to maintain sections of the river which the District is bypassing certain diversions. The State updated the current Rio Grande Compact status as of August 31, are still approximately 133,000-acre feet in debit. She stated we are meeting P&P demand and continuing to deliver to non-P&P lands as possible although very difficult to do so.

Mr. Hamman emphasized they are cycling into La Nina cycle. He stated they had a visit with the San Juan-Chama contractors of the San Juan-Chama Project and noted it to be drier than he thought, which caused concern about soil moisture. He also commented on something Mr. Gensler said earlier relative to the way the prior and paramount water was stored in the early part of the runoff period rather than later. The District plans to engage with the Reclamation and BIA on a different strategy of when the P&P actually gets stored this coming runoff period.

b. Status Report on Water Distribution - Mike Lopez, Water Distribution Division Manager

Mr. Lopez felt fortunate to be delivering this report in September and not much earlier in the season like was anticipated. He stated they are currently not in P&P only operation, so they are still delivering. He also stated they have been operating in a rotation for pueblo irrigation and have that process down pretty good. He also said they are focusing on the worst areas to address them.

c. Discussion/Consideration of the NM Water Trust Board Application - Jason Casuga, COO

Ms. Casuga presented to the Board a draft resolution for their review and feedback. The District plans to submit a Water Trust Board Application for approximately \$7.1 million dollars for a water conservation project that would see us line a significant portion of the Socorro Main Canal. One of the things that we are looking at is -- in looking at our canals, we believe a balance between what we do and keeping the valley green, but also have to move water from north to south means hopefully making our arteries really efficient, so as we have to move water around in the driest times, we accrue the least amount of losses to move that from north to south in our mains.

He explained there's a hurdle to climb here on a staff level as we have a design analysis report that we'll be working with our on-call contractor that has to go in with this application that may or may not be able to happen between now and the deadline. He felt it is and wants to be ready for that report can be finished. The Water Trust Board Application requires a planning document of some kind to accompany it's application that can be a larger planning report or that can be what we call a project specific design analysis report and that's the route we're going. Mr. Casuga expressed they would be investing in planning dollars for a broader planning report associated with some beneficial lining.

Director Kelly asked about a 10% match for next years budget. Mr. Casuga explained that the District has to show the monies now, or financially solvent, and Ms. Fanelli confirmed the District has the reserve funds available but is not budgeted for this project in the current fiscal year.

d. Report on the MRG Pueblos Coalition Meeting, September 2, 2021 - Mike Hamman, CE/CEO

Mr. Hamman explained the purpose of the meeting was to discuss water operations and irrigation delivery efforts with the six middle Rio Grande pueblos and their staff. He expressed there is not a drop of water stored at El Vado that has been required to be released because of monsoon and base flows. Mr. Hamman urged fellow partners, constituents, and waters users, the best thing for everyone to do is manage the water as efficiently as possible in order for us to stretch that for all of us. He commended the pueblos and their staff for running a fairly tight operation but still getting their fair share of the water but also having some left over for the ISOs to rotate to the non-pueblo water users. He also stated they discussed much of the federal funding opportunities, which led to a joint request verbally with Melanie Stansbury's office to try to get some funding injected into the New Mexico Pueblos Irrigation Infrastructure Act. Ms. Stansbury requested \$200M over a 10 year period to fully fund that authorization for pueblo infrastructure funding for all 19 pueblos. He added there is a much money that is being allocated through the state process that Pam (Fanelli) is working on through Bernalillo County.

e. Report on the Valencia County/Local Governments Flood Response Workshop, September 8, 2021 - Jason Casuga, COO and Mike Hamman, CE/CEO

Mr. Casuga stated that he and Mike Hamman attended a gathering of local governmental entities that included MRGCD, Valencia County, Belen, and Los Lunas. He stated they provided a version of that presentation a month ago at this Board meeting and an open discussion on how irrigation sits as a primary important component and flood control and drainage had to happen first. He explained the District's official plan was leading us, so that we could restore the economy of agriculture in the middle valley, but we had to do *river* flood control, and then we had to do basin wide groundwater drainage. He believed this group of municipal folks understood.

Mr. Casuga commented that they did share the financial affect to the District and thought that it opened people's eyes about the cost of insurance and trouble MRGCD faces. He stated that he and Mr. Hamman have expressed the best place for those taxes to go is incrementally in smaller amounts that can be leveraged for broader dollars from both the feds and the state whether that's through a flood control or through one of the local municipalities taking a lead, like the county.

Mr. Hamman added that MRGCD was there as a local government partner. He thinks there are two studies that need to be done. One is a flood control master plan that all participants would develop. He said the second would be some kind of socioeconomic ability to pay a taxing document that the legislature could utilize to form an authority to allow that to happen.

Raymond Torres was still on the call and stated that he appreciated the update and looked forward to hearing from Jason (Casuga).

f. Report on the San Juan-Chama Facilities Tour, September 9-10, 2021 - Mike Hamman, CE/CEO

Mr. Hamman, Jason Casuga and Pam Fanelli attended the tour. Mr. Hamman said they participated in working with all of the San Juan-Chama contractors on the fiscal side, policy side, and the engineering side. He stated they have been meeting on a quarterly basis (sometimes monthly basis) to determine roles and responsibilities in management of the San Juan-Chama Project. He also commented that the idea of performing total assessment plan in priority of need has become a forefront of the contractor's interest. Mr. Hamman explained that going out with an on-call contractor really opened everybody's eyes to what the future investment is needed in the San Juan-Chama Project. He stated there was good discussions, i.e., John Fleck was an invited participant who gave his views of why it's critical that New Mexico and this association get involved in the Colorado River issues.

Ms. Fanelli stated that she learned how little she knew about deliveries before the tour. She also mentioned it was good to see where the District's money is going and see the facilities and what is needed.

Mr. Casuga appreciated the opportunity of going once again and thought the investment has shifted the networking that is required to be able to work across municipal and entity boundaries being an extremely important part for him.

g. Report on Congressional/Agency Efforts to Address Water Infrastructure Needs in the MRG - Mike Hamman, CE/CEO

Mr. Hamman reiterated that the funds from Melanie Stansbury's efforts to address the Pueblo Infrastructure Act can also be utilized on District facilities that deliver water to pueblo lands. He also stated that the House of National Resources Committee has voted the bill out of the committee in Congress and is now headed to the Appropriations Committee. Mr. Hamman discussed how the District has close to 60% efficiency of moving water through the system down to San Acacia, but beyond that the numbers drop to below 40%. He also stated that we need to address something in that reach to increase our efficiencies to Elephant Butte. He mentioned that they have put in requests for the Bernardo Siphon, as a water efficiency improvement project, some canal lining work as an efficiency measure and also still have a pending RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program) application in for funds for small family farm operations.

h. Announcements - Atrisco Acequia Madre Celebration and the Great NM Chile Taste-Off Event, September 18, 2021 - Mike Hamman, CE/CEO

Director Barbara Baca announced that the Atrisco Acequia Madre Celebration invitation is here, which is coming up this Saturday at 10:00 am.



ATRISCO ACEQUIA MADRE CELEBRATION
SHARE YOUR IDEAS FOR THIS SITE AND LEARN ABOUT NEARBY PROJECTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18
8:30 - 10:00 AM | Volunteer Bosque Cleanup - Free coffee & donuts!
10:00 - 10:30 AM | Introduction to Atrisco Acequia Madre Project & Presentations
10:30 AM - 1:00 PM | Acequia Walk and Talk with Center for Social Sustainable Systems
3901 Central Ave NW

Community members are invited to learn about and have the chance to share their ideas for the Atrisco Acequia Madre Master Plan project.

Bernalillo County in partnership with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, the City of Albuquerque, the ABQ/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, the South Valley Regional Association of Acequias and CESOSS (Center for Social Sustainable Systems) are pleased to host a community celebration honoring the site of the Atrisco Acequia Madre headwaters.

LINK TO VOLUNTEER
LINK TO WEBSITE
LINK TO SURVEY

Learn more at:
WWW.ACEQUIAMADREPLAN.ORG

Logos: Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, City of Albuquerque, ABQ/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, CESOSS, ONE ALBUQUE ROQUE, and South Valley Regional Association of Acequias.

Director Duggins announced earlier in the meeting details on the Great NM Chile Taste-off also occurring on Saturday at the Socorro Rodeo Arena. With a parade prior to the gates opening, bring the family down.



DO YOU love CHILE?

THE GREAT NEW MEXICO CHILE Taste-Off

SEPT 18

SOCORRO RODEO GROUNDS

Taste the widest selection of **RED** and **GREEN** chile from around New Mexico
FREE Entry | Gates Open at 3 pm
NMChileTasteOff.com

Logos: New Mexico Certified Chile, Chile from New Mexico, Buena Vista, City of Socorro, and Socorro Rodeo Grounds.

Mr. Hamman added MRGCD will have staff and tables set up at both events.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 – REPORT(S) FROM THE MRGCD ATTORNEY(S)

James Grieco, with LRPA, was in attendance in lieu of Dr. DuMars and stated there was nothing to report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 – REPORT(S) FROM THE BOARD**a. Report on the 2021 Annual Field Day at NM State Agricultural Science Center at Los Lunas, August 18, 2021 - Vice Chair Russo Baca**

Vice Chair Russo Baca reported receiving a thank you letter from Mark Marsalis, the superintendent of the Agricultural Science Center.



New Mexico State University
College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences
Agricultural Science Center at Los Lunas
1036 Miller Road
Los Lunas, NM 87031
Phone: (505) 865-7340 or (505) 865-4684



August 23, 2021

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy
P.O. Box 581
Albuquerque, NM 87103

Thank you for your generous donation toward Field Day this year. We're happy to say that the day was a huge success with over 200 attendees. We appreciate the support of our cooperators and sponsors to help make this day a successful one. I would like to emphasize the importance of agricultural research. It is with the support of people like you that we are able to provide educational events that highlight our important research efforts and results to the public. Once again, we appreciate your support and look forward to our continuing association.

Sincerely,

Mark Marsalis, Superintendent
New Mexico State University, Agricultural Science Center at Los Lunas

She stated there were over 200 attendees there including MRGCD staff: Casey Ish, Gabriella Coughlin and Yasmeen Najmi. She stated the public asked many questions about soil testing and were eager to speak with Gabby (Coughlin). Vice Chair thinks she has great ideas and can really get into motion with the Board's support.

Gabriella Coughlin, MRGCD's Agronomist/Agroecologist, added that she is scheduled for different outreach events at the Village of Los Ranchos. On October 23rd, there is a fall festival in support of their Rio Grande Community Farms, where they have their Maize Maze event. She stated that they also provide free workshops on different things at the Agri-Nature Center, not only soil sampling to test for pH, electrical conductivity, organic matter but they will also have

shearing sheep, wines and vineyard management. They will highlight different equipment shares for those 0 to 3 acre farmers. She's been working with Director Sandoval to address salinity issues at the San Felipe Pueblo. It was also mentioned that there are salinity issues up at the pueblo. Ms. Coughlin expressed we should approach these problems with science but also economics.

Director Duggins excused himself from the Ag Committee or any committees prior to the Board meeting but invited them to his farm anytime.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE REPORT ON 2021 ANNUAL FIELD DAY AT NM STATE AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE CENTER.** Directory Sandoval seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Report on Mid-Region Counsel of Governments (MRCOG) Executive Meeting, September 9, 2021 - Director Barbara Baca

Director Barbara Baca stated there wasn't a MRCOG Executive Meeting; so nothing to report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 – EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)7

1. Threatened or Pending Litigation

Madam Chair Dunning requested a motion to move into Executive Session.

Vice Chair Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO GO TO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Director Barbara Baca seconded the motion. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED.**

Director Barbara Baca	Yes	Vice Chair Russo Baca	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Duggins	Yes
Director Kelly	Yes	Director Joaquin Baca	Absent
Madam Chair Dunning	Yes		

Madam Chair Dunning Adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.

Madam Chair Dunning reconvened the meeting at 5:47 pm.

Director Barbara Baca made the **MOTION TO RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION.** Director Kelly seconded the motion. Rollcall vote was administered, and the **MOTION CARRIED.**

Director Barbara Baca	Yes	Vice Chair Russo Baca	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Duggins	Yes
Director Kelly	Yes	Director Joaquin Baca	Absent
Madam Chair Dunning	Yes		

During Executive Session, updates were given on threatened or pending litigation. No decisions were made, nor any votes taken during Executive Session.

With no further comments, questions or concerns, Madam Chair Dunning adjourned the meeting at 5:47 pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of September 13, 2021.

ATTESTED:

Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

Karen Dunning, Madam Chair
MRGCD Board of Directors