

**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

**MAY 13, 2024 - 2:00 P.M.**

Directors having been duly notified; Madam Chair Russo Baca called the special meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. The following Directors and Staff were present:

**DIRECTORS**

Stephanie Russo Baca, Madam Chair	Present
Karen Dunning, Vice Chair	Present
Brian Jiron, Director	Present
John P. Kelly, Director	Present
Glen Duggins, Director	Present
Michael T. Sandoval, Director	Present
Colin T. Baugh, Director	Present

**STAFF**

Chief Engineer/CEO
General Counsel
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
Chief Operations Officer

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

John Fleck, UNM	Alicia Lopez, MRGCD	Casey Ish, MRGCD
Amanda Molina, MRGCD	Christine Nardi, MRGCD	Ashley Veihl, MRGCD
Josh Gamboa, MRGCD	Judy McSweeney, MRGCD	Julian Avalos, MRGCD
Josh Hind, MRGCD		

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

DeAnna Philips led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Madam Chair Russo Baca declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed. This meeting was a hybrid meeting.

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

Director Kelly added 5(a)(i)(2), CFO Performance Evaluation, to Agenda Item No. 5.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION FOR AMENDMENT REQUEST TO THE AGENDA**. Seconded by Vice Chair Dunning. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Madam Chair Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA with the above changes**. Seconded by Director Kelly. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**AGENDA NO.3 - CONSIDERATION/DISCUSSION OF THE GOALS TO MEASURE THE CHIEF ENGINEER OFFICER'S PERFORMANCE**

Director Kelly stated the Personnel Committed evaluated Mr. Casuga on the goals and objectives that were given to him and found his performance to be satisfactory or better. He said they dwindled some of the goals down, and going forward they will let him deal with the process, delegation, contracts, and everything else to meet those goals.

Mr. Casuga discussed what has been accomplished the last couple years and the major items he would be focusing on going forward. Under the administrative goal section, he noted coordinating with the Secretary of State's Office for the 2025 election and MRGCD's policy manual are in the works. He also talked about the budget, stating MRGCD has invested in

seeking after funds to augment the capital they bring in, and there has been significant growth in that. He added that the planning for the 100 years of MRGCD is continuing. He then went onto the financial goals section, including the new BIA contract and negotiations, the annual five-year forecast, and work order system involving the financial system, Munis.

Director Kelly requested adding complete the update of the MRGCD policies and procedures manual and compliance with all financial reporting requirements including all state and federal grants.

Mr. Casuga reported on the field operations goals, including seeing the investment in becoming an O&M agency again and relying on the infrastructure budget they get and leveraging that for design and construction of capital infrastructure. He thanked field staff and Mr. Zamora for helping with that. He said they were looking at what having the levee in Socorro County will look like for Socorro, and a maintenance manual is being integrated. He talked about integrating O&M work in regard to the low flow from San Acacia Division Dam to the northern boundary of Bosque Del Apache; while recognizing they have an equipment deficiency right now. He assured them they would be acquiring the correct equipment to do the O&M regularly. Mr. Casuga reported on the Human Resources challenges, stating Human Resources had a heavy workload and the importance of taking care of staff.

Director Duggins complemented whoever did the grading and said it has never looked better.

Mr. Casuga moved on to capital infrastructure goals, stating they continue to have a significant capital infrastructure challenge, including issues with the Corrales Siphon.

Vice Chair Dunning suggested adding “with emergencies encountered” to the end of oversee support and ensure proper management of all things involved in the projects on the five year project schedule and things we have budgeted for.

Mr. Casuga went on to discuss the safety section, including how far their safety program has come and growth in the safety budget. He noted they owed staff, including Eric Zamora and Leanne Woodruff for those successes. He then discussed the water portion, suggesting to add an item about delivery. He expressed that they face tough challenges from a water standpoint now and in the future. He stated they just started to have conversations on an alternate storage agreement, and also conversations on what it would look like for MRGCD to have a water delivery policy and how to enforce it. Mr. Casuga spoke on the growth of the conservation program and investing in infrastructure. He stressed that farming is in danger and assured that he stands firm to protect Ag in a manner consistent with what the whole valley needs. He went on to discuss communication and the success of social media and Ms. Molina.

Vice Chair Dunning said it was important to include the word education in the communication section.

#### **AGENDA NO.4 - ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes)**

No one came forward to address the board at today’s special meeting.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)2
  - i. Limited Personnel Matters
    - 1. CE/CEO Performance Evaluation
    - 2. CFO Performance Evaluation

The chair requested a motion to go into the closed session at 2:48 p.m.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**. Seconded by Vice Chair Dunning. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Director Jiron	Yes	Vice Chair Dunning	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Duggins	Yes
Director Kelly	Yes	Director Baugh	Yes
Chair Russo Baca	Yes		

The chair requested a motion to reconvene to the regular session at 2:54 pm

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO GO BACK INTO REGULAR SESSION**. Seconded by Vice Chair Dunning. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Director Kelly stated that the board discussed and recommended a 3% salary increase for both the CEO and the CFO during the closed session. He then made the **MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CEO AND CFO's 3% SALARY INCREASE**. Seconded by Director Baugh. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of May 13, 2024.

**ATTESTED:**

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Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM  
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

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Stephanie Russo Baca, Madam Chair  
MRGCD Board of Directors