

**Merquin County Water District**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting  
Of the Board of Directors  
Tuesday, April 4, 2023**

The Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Merquin County Water District called to order in regular session at 19684 Second Ave., Stevinson, California 6:00 p.m.

Present were, President Adam Azevedo, Vice President Freddy Oliviera, Director Danny Drumonde, Director Rick Jones, Director Phil Dores

**MOTION APPROVING MINUTES of March 14, 2023**

Moved by Director Danny Drumonde, seconded by Director Rick Jones approving minutes of March 14, 2023.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**MOTION APPROVING MINUTES of March 22, 2023**

Moved by Director Rick Jones, seconded by Director Phil Dores approving minutes of March 22, 2023.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**MOTION APPROVING LIST OF WARRANTS**

Moved by Director Danny Drumonde, seconded by Director Phil Dores approving the list of warrants \$4,811.65.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**MOTION APPROVING CHECKING ACCOUNT EXPENDITURES**

Moved by Director Phil Dores, seconded by Director Freddy Oliviera approving checking account expenditures: Waterford Irrigation check number 1178 in the amount of \$7,108.00 and PG&E electronic payment in the amount of \$2,000.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**Motion approving Entitlement List 2023electric**

Moved by Director Freddy Oliviera, seconded by Director Phil Dores approving Entitlement List 2023.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**Motion approving Resolution 2023-1 change in Employee Retirement accounts from  
AIG to Nationwide Insurance**

Moved by Director Danny Drumonde, seconded by Director Phil Dores approving Resolution 2023-1.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**Motion approving Drip System Irrigator Plan of Operation and Priority Well use Agreement for Mininger Farms,, A.V. Thomas, and Kandola Farms**

Moved by Director Danny Drumonde, seconded by Director Phil Dores approving Drip System Irrigator Plan of Operation and Priority Well use agreement for Mininger Farms, A.V. Thomas, and Kandola Farms

Motion Carried Unanimously

**Correspondence**

Sales tax notification-Atwater sales tax effective April 1, 2023 from 8.25% to 8.75%

**Civil Engineer Eric Swenson:**

**1. Discussion: Update on Vierra well and Pipeline.**

**Drilling Permit for Well 7R anticipated on April 3, 2023**

**2. Discussion/Action: Groundwater recharge credit options for early April recharge.**

1. Since irrigation is not required for many fields during the first 2 weeks of April and MCWD has ample available supply of surface water, it would be advantageous for the District to apply surface water where possible and obtain recharge credit from the MSGSA.

2. The District Engineer requests authorization from the Board to process forms required to obtain a recharge credit. After discussion by the Board, it was decided to not make any changes regarding efforts to increase groundwater recharge at this time.

**3. Discussion: Update on standby assessment 218:**

1. After discussions between the District Engineer and the District legal consultant, David Hobbs, it was determined that the best way to pursue a

218 in order to raise the *Standby Assessment* for next water season was to use QK who has done such work in the past. The board agreed with this approach to raising the *Standby Assessment*.

2. The District Engineer has been forwarding related documentation to QK and directed them to begin a rate study compliant with Proposition 218.

#### **4. Discussion: Update on 218 for water rate.**

1. The District's legal consultant, David Hobbs, has forwarded to the District Engineer sample RFPs for consulting support for a 218 to support a higher water rate.
2. Four consultants who can do this type of work have already been identified and a newspaper advertisement is planned to attract additional potential firms to complete the necessary studies and make a rate recommendation.
3. The District Engineer plans to create a capital improvement plan for 2024-2029 to present to the Board at a future meeting for their input.

#### **5. Discussion: Presentation on MSGSA activities.**

##### **Groundwater Recharge:**

- An Overview of Governor's Executive Order N-4-23 regarding groundwater recharge between March 10, 2023 and June 15, 2023 was presented.
- Due to the many limitations of the EO, it will likely not provide a benefit to the growers within MCWD.

##### **Future Groundwater Allocations being discussed:**

- Option 1: Allow Sustainable Yield values to vary by Sustainability Zone (SZ), where the variance reflects current local conditions such as proximity of groundwater levels to those reported during Fall 2015 (approximately October 2015 through January 2016) groundwater levels (as represented in the adopted GSP to define Minimum Thresholds).**
- Intent is that there would be more native groundwater available (Sustainable Yield) for a SZ not experiencing groundwater level declines.

- For illustrative purposes, this option could result in circumstances where one SZ may have a Sustainable Yield value of 0.5 af/ac/yr while another may have 2.5 af/ac/yr.
- Adjustments to Sustainable Yield may occur on a 5-year basis, depending on the progress toward achieving GSP objectives.
- Additional limitations to pumping any portion of the Sustainable Yield below the Corcoran Clay layer may be required based upon technical evaluation of conditions in the SZ. This may impact whether Transition Water would be needed in a SZ if the Sustainable Yield is enough to continue existing crop mixes (noting that Transition Water is intended to help shift from high consumptive use of groundwater to a lower consumptive use condition).

Option 2: Create a third allocation term, potentially labeled “Sustainability Zone Surplus”, where the surplus would be available to a SZ depending on the groundwater conditions in that SZ.

- Sustainable Yield allocations would be consistent for all SZs,
- Additional limitations to pumping any portion of the Sustainable Yield below the Corcoran Clay layer may be required based upon technical evaluation of conditions in the SZ.
- If groundwater levels in any SZ are at or above those reported during Fall 2015 (approximately October 2015 through January 2016) and average conditions have remained stable for a defined period of years, then a calculable volume of Sustainability Zone Surplus would be made available to the SZ and allocated to the agricultural lands similar to the Sustainable Yield.
- The Sustainability Zone Surplus would be re-evaluated every 5 years (or other reasonable timeframe) to capture any trending away from groundwater stability.
- Sustainable Yield would also be re-evaluated every 5 years and adjusted depending on the progress toward achieving GSP objectives. This may impact whether Transition Water would be needed in a SZ if the Sustainable Yield is enough to continue existing crop mixes (noting that Transition Water is intended to help shift from high consumptive use of groundwater to a lower consumptive use condition). The volume of Sustainability Zone Surplus would be determined based upon hydrogeologic conditions present in the SZ as determined through a technical evaluation.

## March 27<sup>th</sup> MSGSA Meeting

- The District Engineer Reported that there appeared to be more support for option 1 where each sustainability zone would have a different groundwater allocation.
- A schedule of events related to groundwater allocations was presented.
- This schedule calls for DRAFT numerical values for groundwater allocations in late October 2023 and final approved values in December of 2023.
- The Board did not agree to have in person public workshops as indicated in the proposed schedule covering groundwater allocations in April and May of 2023, but rather that on-line information materials be developed that can be accessed remotely.

### 6. Discussion/Motion to accept SWD/MCWD East Side Canal Water Wheeling Agreement.

Discussed the verbiage of the water wheeling agreement with SWD. Postponed the motion to approve with plan to add it to the agenda of April 26, 2023.

### MATTERS FOR THE GOOD OF THE DISTRICT

Dave Nervino asked if the PG&E rates plan for pumps has been re-evaluated?

### OFFICE

The lien against Manual Silva Pump #4 has been removed. Director Azevedo asked if there were any others pending.

Entitlement invoices mailed out to customers.

### Maintenance

Jimmy reported Eric J Tree Service removed the trees on Hwy 140.

Burnt the weeds in the ditch on the old hotel.

Burned brush near Pump #4. Ditch still needs to be cleaned.

Pump #4 burned the brush, needed to clear the ditch need to clean the ditch.

Sent reminder letters to all customers there is a three-day advanced notice for water orders.

The hours to place water orders are between 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Water season begins April 1, 2023

Larry Matos is installing two valves.

**Add Agenda Item 13A.**

**Motion approving cancelation of the Merquin County Board Meeting April 14, 2023**

Moved by Director Rick Jones, seconded by Director Danny Drumonde approving the cancelation of the Merquin County Board Meeting April 14, 2023.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Moved by Director Danny Drumonde, seconded by Director Phil Dores to Adjourn.

Motion Carried Unanimously



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Adam Azevedo  
President



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Freddy Oliveira  
Vice President



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Betty Guest  
Secretary