

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

ST. TAMMANY PARISH

MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Meeting October 21, 2020

OPEN

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners, St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District, was called to order at 1:00pm by Chairman David Stuart, in the St. Tammany Parish School Board Chambers, 321 North Theard Street, Covington, Louisiana.

Present were Mr. Anthony Alfred, Dr. A.J. Englande Jr., Dr. Peter Gerone, Mr. David Stuart, and Dr. Vicki Traina-Dorge, Commissioners; Mr. Jake Abdalla, Legal Counsel; Dr. Kevin Caillouet, Director; and Mr. Calvin Smotherman, Assistant Director. Dr. Ron Francis and Dr. Dawn Wesson, Advisors, were absent. IT Specialist Weber Janssen, Research Assistant Sydney Johnson, Accounting Manager Chad Simon, and Aerial Operations Supervisor Paul Spadoni were guests at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chairman Stuart opened the floor for public comment. There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES

The minutes from the September 16 meeting were presented. Commissioner Alfred moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Commissioner Englande abstained, because he was not present at the September meeting. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND CREDIT CARD PURCHASES

Commissioner Traina-Dorge reviewed all credit card purchases for September. All credit card accounts were found reasonable, accurate and consistent with District purchasing policies. Commissioner Alfred will verify all credit card purchases before the November meeting. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to accept the credit card review. Commissioner Gerone seconded the motion. Carried.

Accounting Manager Chad Simon reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Alfred moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

2021 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET (Appendix 1)

Accounting Manager Simon presented the proposed 2021 Operating Budget. Projected revenue totaled \$9,569,683, with expenses estimated at \$13,906,881. The increase in expenditures is largely due to the planned capital expansion of the facility (\$3,250,000) and the purchase of a helicopter (\$2,555,557). He also reviewed the revenues and fund balance comparison for 2020 and 2021, including each department's current and anticipated budget.

NOVEMBER 17 PUBLIC HEARING - 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

Chairman Stuart announced that the Board of Commissioners will offer the public opportunity to comment on the proposed 2021 Operating Budget at its public hearing Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 12:45pm, in the St. Tammany Parish School Board Chambers.

NOVEMBER 17 REGULAR MEETING-ADOPTION OF THE 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

Chairman Stuart officially stated that the Board of Commissioners will formally adopt the 2021 Operating Budget at its regular open meeting Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 1:00pm, in the St. Tammany Parish School Board Chambers.

CONTINUING EDUCATION TUITION ASSISTANCE

Director Caillouet presented an overview of the Continuing Education Tuition Assistance Program. The program would encourage new skill sets and educational background for greater employee efficacy and career satisfaction. The Director proposed a per semester tuition reimbursement of up to 50% for completed course work toward preapproved degree and certificate programs. The District's cost for the two-year certificate program would be approximately \$2,500 per participating employee. Director Caillouet is currently working with LSU to create a certificate program in mosquito control biology.

2021 SALARY RANGE AND ADDITION OF FIELD BIOLOGIST II AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT II POSITIONS (Appendix 2)

The Director presented the 2021 salary range schedule for each position. Each employee will receive a 1.4% cost of living increase, based on the consumer price index. Employees are also eligible to receive up to an additional 2% increase based on performance evaluations, unless the employee has reached their maximum salary range. He also included two additional positions for employees who take advantage of the continuing education program: Field Biologist II and Research Assistant II. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to accept the 2021 salary range schedule and approve the additional positions of Field Biologist II and Research Assistant II. Commissioner Alfred seconded the motion. Carried.

2021 HEALTHCARE COVERAGE

Director Caillouet presented the 2021 healthcare renewal from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana. The group healthcare benefits incurred a 5.5% increase for 2021 premiums. Commissioner Alfred moved to renew healthcare coverage for 2021 with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana. Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

CAMPUS EXPANSION UPDATE

The Director reported a second appraisal was completed for the existing 3.10 acre-footprint and the 3.5-acre expansion site. The existing site was appraised at \$224k and the expansion property for \$105k, as compared with the first appraisal for \$500k and \$150k, respectively. The Director sought approval for Legal Counsel Abdalla to draft an agreement to purchase both properties from St. Tammany Parish for \$329k. Commissioner Traina-Dorge so moved and Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

SALE OF AG HUSKY

Aerial Operations Supervisor Paul Spadoni sought approval for the sale of the 1979 Cessna Ag Husky aircraft, purchased in 1994 for \$65k, to perform aerial marsh larviciding. Aerial contractor Black Star Helicopters currently performs marsh and urban larviciding and adulticiding. The District also plans to purchase a helicopter in 2021. The Ag Husky was recently appraised for \$100k. Commissioner Alfred moved to approve the sale of the Ag Husky. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

EPA REREGISTRATION OF NALED AND PROPOSED INTERIM DECISION (Appendix 3)

The Director reported that naled is the District's primary aerially applied adulticide. He summarized the EPA's ongoing pesticide reevaluation program and human health risk assessment for naled. The evaluation resulted in new risk models that have raised concerns over ingestion and dermal exposure to young children. The Director responded to the EPA's invitation for public comment on their reregistration decision and communication requirements affecting future aerial applications of naled. The District will now post website communications, include posted information on spray notifications, and lower the application rate from 0.75 to 0.50 oz/acre. The Director's public comment response was submitted to the federal docket.

MANSONIA SPP. ASSOCIATION WITH WATER HYACINTH

Research Assistant Sydney Johnson reported that she found *Mansonia* larvae attached to the roots of water hyacinth in 2019. These larvae attach their modified air tube to the roots of these plants to extract oxygen, which makes them difficult to study and control. Floating emergence traps were placed near coastal areas and collected 33,830 *Mansonia* last year. She continued her work this year by conducting weekly surveillance, correlating abundance to ecological parameters, and evaluating larvicides to control this species. *Mansonia* are capable vectors for the transmission of Venezuelan and eastern equine encephalitis.

Director Caillouet stated that the first step in control is locating the numerous breeding habitats throughout the parish through remote sensing of water hyacinth habitats via satellite or aircraft derived images. Once found, the water hyacinth could then be removed or treated with an herbicide. The U.S. Geological Survey has developed a protocol to distinguish water hyacinth and map their parish-wide distribution. A one-year, two-phase remote sensing contract with the USGS is available for \$56k. Commissioner Englande agreed remote sensing techniques are becoming increasingly important for identifying mosquito habitats. He suggested also contacting Stennis Space Center about their remote sensing program.

BOARD APPROVALS

a. Travel - none

b. Contracts

1. USGS - Remote Sensing Identification of *Mansonia* habitat

Director Caillouet asked the Board to approve the \$56k one-year contract with USGS for remote sensing of *Mansonia* habitats. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to approve the contract, subject to consideration of similar services provided through Stennis Space Center, and Legal Counsel Abdalla's review and approval of the contract. Commissioner Alfred seconded the motion. Carried.

2. Innovative Turbine

Aerial Operations Supervisor Spadoni presented the contract for Innovative Turbine to provide all inspection and maintenance requirements, including general repair services, at a renewal rate of \$95.00 per hour, for all District aircraft. Legal Counsel Abdalla reviewed and approved the contract. Commissioner Alfred moved to accept the renewal contract. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

3. Coastal Building Services - Janitorial Agreement

The Director stated that after providing office cleaning services for 14 years, Ann Roy retired. Four quotes were obtained for commercial cleaning and the lowest price was \$625 per month to provide comparable services. Commissioner Alfred moved to accept the janitorial agreement with Coastal Building Services. Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

4. Pilot Life Insurance Principal Sum Increase

Pilot Brandon Campbell requested an increase in the AD&D Pilot Life Insurance to cover the monetary difference between workers compensation surviving spouse benefits (60%) and the remaining portion (40%) of his salary. The current coverage is \$250k at \$1,353 per year. The Director proposed increasing the coverage to \$670k for \$2,272 per year. Commissioner Alfred moved to increase the AD&D Pilot Life Insurance coverage for Pilot Brandon Campbell to \$670k. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

C. Director's Time Card (Appendix 4)

Chairman Stuart reviewed and approved the Director's time card for September 13-October 10, 2020. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to accept the Director's time card as presented. Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF DR. ROBERT C. LOWRIE JR.

Chairman Stuart read the letter of resignation from Advisor Robert C. Lowrie Jr. He presented a resolution to honor Dr. Lowrie's service to the District and the residents of St. Tammany Parish. Commissioner Alfred moved to accept the resolution as presented. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Director reviewed the following recent and upcoming events.

- Pandemic Disaster Resiliency Planning
- 2021 Departmental Budget Meetings
- LMCA Annual Meeting Planning
- Arthropods and Public Health Lecture for Dr. Dawn Wesson
- October Staff Meeting Planning
- Grant Meeting with LPBF
- Third Quarter Report Planning
- October Staff Meeting
- USGS Hyacinth Detection Meeting
- Aquatic Invasive Plants Coalition
- Emergency Relief Committee Meeting
- Flood Resiliency Planning
- Lee County MAD Hyacinth Control
- November Staff Meeting Planning
- November Staff Meeting
- 2021 Training Planning
- Veteran's Day Holiday
- Insecticide Resistance USDA Meeting
- November 17 Board of Commissioners Meeting

MOSQUITO CONTROL REPORT

Director Caillouet reported *Culex quinquefasciatus*, *Cx. nigripalpus* and *Cx. salinarius* populations remained below average; however, *Cx. nigripalpus* and *Cx. salinarius* typically increase in the fall. This season seven West Nile virus-infected mosquito pools (*Aedes vexans*, *Cx. nigripalpus* (2), *Cx. quinquefasciatus* (2), *Cx. erraticus*, and *Cx. salinarius*) returned positive, out of 4,182 mosquito pools submitted to the Louisiana Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. One asymptomatic human case of WNV was detected in a blood donor and one WNV-infected equine was reported in April.

Assistant Director Smotherman reported the most abundant mosquito species in September were *Cx. nigripalpus* and *Ma. titillans*. During the month of September, ground adulticide operations sprayed 2,204 miles and jeeps larvicided 1,817 miles.

Assistant Director Smotherman also explained thresholds for determining adulticiding operations, which include species thresholds, landing rates, service requests and WNV positives. Species thresholds are trap based and determined by trap counts evaluated over a two-week interval. Event-based thresholds are determined by recorded actions, occurrence count criteria, and weekly evaluations.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:24pm on a motion by Commissioner Alfred and seconded by Commissioner Gerone. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Peter J. Gerone
Secretary

Appendices

1. 2021 Proposed Operating Budget
2. 2021 Salary Range
3. EPA Naled Reregistration and Public Comment
4. Director's Time Card