

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

ST. TAMMANY PARISH

MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Meeting December 3, 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. Dawn Wesson, Advisor, attended via video conferencing. Guests included Mr. Nick Delisi, Lab Manager/Entomologist; Mr. Josh Foulon, Supervisor of Field Operations; and Mr. Chad Simon, Accounting Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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

MINUTES

The minutes from the October 21 meeting were presented. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Alfred seconded the motion. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND CREDIT CARD PURCHASES

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

Commissioner Alfred reviewed all credit card purchases for October. All credit card accounts were found reasonable, accurate and consistent with District purchasing policies. Commissioners Gerone and Stuart will verify all credit card purchases before the January meeting. Commissioner Alfred moved to accept the credit card review. Commissioner Englande seconded the motion. Carried.

ADOPTION OF THE 2021 OPERATING BUDGET (Appendix 1)

Accounting Manager Simon presented the proposed 2021 Operating Budget. Projected revenue totaled \$10,062,146, 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 (\$2,666,667).

Commissioner Traina-Dorge resolved to adopt the 2021 Operating Budget as presented. Commissioner Alfred seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote and carried.

YEAS: 5 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 0

PROJECTED SALARIES REPORT AND SALARY SCHEDULE

Director Caillouet reviewed the total salaries for each position for 2021. Salaries comprised 32% of the operating budget, not including benefits. The Director also reviewed the minimum and maximum 2021 salary schedule for each position. The proposed 2021 salary range reflects an increase in salary minimums commensurate with the 12-month Consumer Price Index (1.4 % - October 2020). Maximum salaries are set at 1.75 times the minimum for each position. 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.

Commissioner Englande moved to accept the 2021 salary range schedule as presented. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

EVOLVING COVID-19 POLICIES

The Director stated that prior to Governor Edwards modified Phase 2 mandates, 85% of full-time office staff had returned to the office. Office staff was again asked to work remotely from home, if possible.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) benefits are expiring December 31, 2020. Each employee received up to ten days of FFCRA benefits for Covid-19 related illness, quarantine or childcare in 2020. FFCRA also provided agency reimbursement by crediting social security and medicare taxes. There are presently no known FFCRA benefits available for 2021. Director Caillouet proposed that the District offer one of the following three options to employees: (1) no Covid-19 leave in 2021 other than personal sick, vacation or compensatory time, (2) allow employees to carryover any unused Covid-19 leave from 2020 into 2021, or (3) provide ten days of Covid-19 leave for 2021, with no carryover from 2020.

Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to provide ten days of Covid-19 leave for employees during 2021, with no 2020 carryover. Commissioner Alfred seconded the motion. Carried.

PESTICIDE BIDS

In response to the public bid notice, four sealed pesticide bids were received as follows: Adapco, Clarke Mosquito Control Products, Target Specialty Products and Vesperis.

Commissioner Alfred moved to authorize management to review and select the lowest responsive pesticide bid or the most cost-effective bid based on application rates. Management will provide its findings at the January 2021 meeting for Board approval.

FLOOD INSURANCE CONSIDERATION

Director Caillouet reported that new flood maps changed the flood risk for the administrative building, which is now located within a 100-year storm event. The National Flood Insurance Program sets maximum limits of \$500k for building coverage. An estimate of \$3,546 would provide \$500k building and \$400k contents coverage. Based on the professional insurance risk assessment, and to minimize exposure to public property, Chairman Stuart recommended securing flood insurance. Legal Counsel Abdalla also advised acquiring flood insurance.

Commissioner Alfred moved to purchase flood insurance for the administrative building. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

NEW METHODS TO EVALUATE AERIAL ADULTICIDE APPLICATIONS

Lab Manager/Entomologist Nick DeLisi presented results from aerial adulticide evaluations conducted this fall. Trap abundance is often a poor indicator of spray efficacy, as evidenced by an August trap collection where an abundance of *Culex* mosquitoes actually increased after an aerial treatment. The lab measured spray efficacy by performing ovary dissections to determine the age of mosquitoes. Results from multiple spray nights indicated that abundance did not decrease, but older mosquitoes were replaced with younger, less infectious adults that emerged overnight. Additionally, fluorescent dye was mixed into aerial sprays to confirm the appropriate droplet size and density and to determine if treatments reached the intended areas.

Commissioner Englande asked about the status of the water hyacinth remote sensing contract. Director Caillouet contacted Stennis and learned they do not presently have a remote sensing program for water hyacinth. He further reported the Army Corps of Engineers is currently seeking program funding through an internal \$10k grant.

NEW TOOL FOR OPERATIONAL MOSQUITO MANAGEMENT IN PARKS

Supervisor of Field Operations Josh Foulon stated that service requests are frequently received from recreational parks regarding increased populations of mosquitoes; however, scheduled events at sunset prevent treatments at the optimum time for control. The lab experimented with residual insecticides for selective use at parks known to have high mosquito activity and large crowds. After extensive testing, residual insecticides were applied at Pelican, Fritchie, and Fontainebleau Parks. Results indicated three weeks of effective control and a new viable solution to treat a recurring problem.

CAMPUS EXPANSION UPDATE

Director Caillouet reported that a purchase agreement for \$329k was forwarded to the parish attorney on November 6. The parish attorney is drafting ordinances for the St. Tammany Parish Council. A closing in January may be possible.

PERSONNEL POLICY HANDBOOK CHANGES FOR 2021 (Appendix 2)

Director Caillouet presented revisions to the Personnel Policy Handbook for 2021. He asked the Board to review the highlighted changes to the handbook for discussion at the January meeting.

Commissioner Alfred moved to table discussion on the Personnel Policy Handbook revisions until the January meeting. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion. Carried.

VIRTUAL LMCA MEETING, DECEMBER 8-9

The Director informed the Board that they will receive an emailed link to join the LMCA Annual Meeting webinar. Five employees are scheduled for the following presentations: alternative aerial adulticide products and survey of mosquito abatement district plans, dissections and fluorescent droplets on aerial spray efficacy, ten-year analysis of bird data and the future of WNV bird ecology, perimeter spray programs to protect park patrons, and insecticide resistance.

BOARD APPROVALS

- a. Travel - none
- b. Contracts - none
- c. Director's Time Card (Appendix 3) - Chairman Stuart reviewed and approved the Director's time card for October 11-November 21, 2020. Commissioner Traina-Dorge moved to accept the Director's time card as presented. Commissioner Gerone seconded the motion. Carried.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Director reviewed the following recent and upcoming events.

- Disaster Resiliency-Pandemic Planning
- Budget Planning
- LMCA Annual Meeting Planning
- Arthropods and Public Health lecture for Dr. Dawn Wesson
- Staff Meeting Planning
- LPBF Grant Meeting
- Third Quarter Report Planning
- Monthly Staff Meeting
- USGS Hyacinth Detection Meeting
- Employee Assistance Committee Meeting
- Flood Resiliency Planning
- Lee County Hyacinth Control Meeting
- 2021 Staff Training Planning Meeting
- Insecticide Resistance USDA Meeting
- Election and Veterans Day Holidays
- Thanksgiving Day Holidays

MOSQUITO CONTROL REPORT

Director Caillouet reported *Culex quinquefasciatus*, *Cx. nigripalpus* and *Cx. salinarius* populations remained below average. 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 November were *Ae. vexans*. Ground adulticide operations sprayed 1,141 miles and jeeps larvicided 753 miles in November. Due to overwintering of *Cx. quinquefasciatus*, larviciders last day was November 20; however, field biologists will continue to spot check septic ditches. The seasonal larviciders are scheduled to return on March 15.

Advisor Wesson commended the lab's dissection study to learn if mosquito age can accurately measure impact on WNV transmission and determine the success of applications for vector control.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:26pm on a motion by Commissioner Alfred and seconded by Commissioner Traina-Dorge. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Peter J. Gerone
Secretary

Appendices

1. 2021 Proposed Operating Budget
2. 2021 Personnel Policy Handbook Revisions
3. Director's Time Card

