

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

ST. TAMMANY PARISH

MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Meeting October 18, 2023

OPEN

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners, St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District, was called to order at 12:55 p.m. by Chairman David Stuart, at the St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District, 62436 Airport Road, Slidell, LA.

Present were Dr. Vicki Traina-Dorge, Ms. Kathryn Townsend, Mr. David Stuart, and Dr. Peter Gerone, Commissioners; Advisor Dr. Dawn Wesson; Dr. Kevin Caillouet, Director; Mr. Chad Simon, Accounting Manager; Mr. Nick DeLisi, Lab Manager, and Mrs. Sarah Malasovich, Office Manager. Dr. A.J. Englande, Jr, Commissioner, was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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

BOARD APPROVALS

1. Minutes (Appendix 1) – The minutes from the September 20 meeting were presented. Chairman Stuart called for a motion to approve those minutes. Commissioner Townsend so moved, seconded by Commissioner Traina-Dorge, carried.
2. Credit Card Purchases – Chairman Stuart reviewed all credit card purchases for the month of September. All charge accounts were found reasonable, accurate and consistent with District purchasing policies. Commissioner Gerone moved to approve the credit card purchases review as presented, seconded by Commissioner Traina-Dorge. Carried. Commissioner Traina-Dorge will verify October credit card purchases before the November Meeting.
3. Travel – Director Caillouet shared that his travel to Lafayette for a State of the Vermillion River Meeting went well. Director Caillouet mentioned that the St. Tammany Parish council will be voting on the wastewater management plan at an upcoming meeting that the LMCA Annual Meeting will be December 7-9 in Lafayette, and requested anyone who planned to attend to notify the District as soon as possible. The AMCA Annual Meeting in Dallas will be March 4-8, 2024. Any commissioners who plan to attend should notify the District by January 1, 2024. A motion to approve the Director’s travel to Lafayette was made by Commissioner Traina-Dorge, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, and carried.
4. Director’s Time Card and Leave (September 17 – October 14) (Appendix 2) - Chairman Stuart reviewed the Director’s time card and leave for September 17 through October 14, 2023. Chairman Stuart called for a motion to approve the Director’s time card. Commissioner Traina-Dorge so moved, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, and carried.
5. Bids
 - a. Right-hand Drive Larvicide Vehicles – one bid was received from Lakeshore Chrysler Dodge Jeep Inc. for nine 2024 Right-hand Drive Jeep Wranglers, each costing \$50,488 plus tax title and license, totaling \$55,542.96 per vehicle. Noting that the district is tax exempt so the total pricing will be decreased by the amount of taxes, a motion to approve the bid was made by Commissioner Traina-Dorge, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, carried.
 - b. ULV Units – four bids were received for Ultra-low Volume Insecticide Sprayers, totaling as follows:
 - i. MCES – \$39,260.40

- ii. Clark - \$40,135.50
- iii. Viseris - \$ 44,651.10
- iv. Adapco - \$45,600.00

The district recommended selecting the MCES bid. Commissioner Traina Dorge so moved, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, and carried.

6. Contracts –

- a. VeriDaas (Appendix 4) – Lidar Collection Services; The contract is for payment of \$130,000 for a contractor to fly Geiger-mode LIDAR mission in leaf-off conditions. Previously approved last year, this contract is a renewal.
- b. Pinell & Martinez, LLC (Appendix 5 & 6) – The district bid out audit services as per LLA’s best practices. Three proposals were received. Pinell & Martinez, LLC were the lowest offer, and the District selected this proposal. Ericksen Krentel and LaPorte also submitted proposals. \$21,750 is the cost, a significant savings from previous service.
- c. Everbridge (Appendix 7) – Service for community notifications for residents. This company services the parish for their emergency alert notification system. Three responses to the RFP were received and Everbridge was cheapest and appears easiest to use.

Chairman Stuart asked for a motion to approve all three contracts. Commissioner Gerone so moved, seconded by Commissioner Traina-Dorge, and carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Campus Expansion Update – Director Caillouet updated the Board on the construction of the new building. The estimated occupancy date is December 24, 2023. No new disbursements have been made since the last board meeting.
- 2. Commissioner Succession Plan – Director Caillouet has contacted five potential new board candidates. Commissioner Traina-Dorge has an additional recommendation that she will contact.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Treasurer’s Report (Appendix 8) - Accounting Manager Simon presented the Treasurer’s Report summarized September disbursements, revenue, and vendor payments and reviewed the balances of the accounts. Accounting Manager Simon reviewed an increase in revenue that resulted in a component of the amended budget for 2023. Chairman Stuart called for a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Commissioner Townsend so moved, seconded by Commissioner Gerone, and carried.
- 2. 2024 Proposed Budget (Appendix 9) – Accounting Manager Simon presented the proposed budget for operating year 2024, reviewing anticipated revenue and disbursements, and detailing some of the items with significant change in anticipated expense from 2023 to 2024. Director Caillouet requested that the Board consider this proposed budget for vote in November, 2023.
- 3. 2024 Salary Range – The District is unfreezing salary minimums to accommodate the CPI increase of 3.7%. Additionally, the District is increasing part time minimum wage to \$16.68 per hour to be in line with the standard minimum living wage.
- 4. 2024 Healthcare Insurance – Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana submitted a renewal for Health Insurance with a 6.75% increase. Commisisoner Traina-Dorge moved to approve this renewal. Seconded by Commissioner Townsend, the motion carried.
- 5. 2024 Ancillary Benefits (Dental, Life, Vision) – Principal submitted a renewal for these benefits at no increase. Commisisoner Traina-Dorge moved to approve this renewal. Seconded by Commissioner Townsend, the motion carried.
- 6. New Facility Emergency Power – The Board decided to table this topic until the next meeting.

7. Laboratory Update – Lab Manager Nick DeLisi shared that an article the lab personnel wrote has been published in the Journal of Medical Entomology. The article reviewed a discovered failure to see a decrease abundance in *Culex quinquefasciatis* quantities following treatments. The district hypothesized that the mosquitos were reinfesting the same area post-treatment. Testing disclosed that age was decreased with some of the products used but not all, revealing that insecticide resistance is a reality in these populations. The lab has created a special report to help educate the community about insecticide resistance in *Cx quinquefasciatis* in St. Tammany Parish, which Mr. DeLisi highlighted for the board. Chairman Stuart asked if the District is communicating with the chemical companies regarding resistance. Mr. DeLisi suggested that more communication across other mosquito abatement districts provides more feedback on widespread resistance concerns and resolutions. Advisor Wesson suggested also that additional species might return different resistance due to the lack of exposure to septic conditions in ditches, as the exposure to wastewater does, by its nature, develop resistance. The Board congratulated Mr. DeLisi on the diligent effort of the lab. Commissioner Traina-Dorge asked if larvicide efforts can help with controlling *Mansonia titillans*. Mr. DeLisi responded that there are efforts but do not seem to be effective yet. Dr. Wesson asked if there was any downside to herbicidal efforts. Mr. DeLisi responded that there was risk from drift when applied, creating non-target impact. Additionally, rotting plant life creates other habitat impacts, including a potential habitat for *Culex* species. Assistant Director also clarified that herbicidal efforts do not take place when it is very hot, to alleviate the issue of rotting plant material. Finally, Mr. DeLisi disclosed a new publication that has been approved regarding a new species of mosquito identified in St. Tammany Parish.

8. Calendar of Events – The Director reviewed recent operational highlights and upcoming events:
 - STPMAD Board of Commissioners Meetings
 - Construction Meetings
 - Notification Services Demo
 - New Treatment Decision Process Meetings
 - UAV 2024 Planning
 - Meeting with Mayor Cromer
 - Director Teaching at Tulane
 - STP Council Ordinance Outreach Meetings
 - BVPA State of the River Meeting
 - WWTF Steering Committee Meeting
 - Audit Services Meetings
 - Visit from Clarke Mosquito Control
 - STPMAD Staff Meetings
 - Indigenous Peoples’ and Veteran’s Day Holidays
 - Visit from Bell Helicopter
 - GIS District Meetings
 - STPSB Career Fairs
 - Leadership St. Tammany Classes
 - Emergency Relief Committees
 - NSF DISES Research
 - LSU Terrestrial Laser Scanning Meeting
 - Wild Things Festival
 - IVLP Visit
 - LLA Workshop
 - Cub Scout Pack 611 Visit
 - UAV Planning

- Performance Evaluations and Health Physicals Meeting
- Abney Elementary STEM Night
- USM Master Student Thesis Defense
- OSDS Ordinance Public Meetings
- UMAA Annual Meeting
- STP Council Meeting Presentation
- ArcPro GIS Training Meetings
- Magnolia Trace STEM Night

Note: the November board meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 14, along with a budget hearing at 12:45 preceding the regular meeting.

9. Mosquito Control Report - Assistant Director Smotherman mentioned that cooler weather has started early in the morning, then shared the monthly mosquito control report. There were nine of 5,753 West Nile Virus infected pools with two human infections reported in St. Tammany Parish. *Culex nigripalpus* are the most abundant species, with a significant spike in population in the last month. *Culex quinquefasciatus* are below average, as are *Culex erraticus* and *Culex salinarius*. *Cx salinarius* have increased, possibly due to a freshening of the marsh habitats. The parish is below average for all species. Approximately 1,400 miles were treated in larvicide missions. Ground adulticide missions have treated approx. 91,814 acres, and aerial adulticide missions treated 221,014 acres.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m. on a motion by Commissioner Gerone. Commissioner Traina-Dorge seconded the motion, which carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Peter J. Gerone
Secretary

Appendix 1 – August 16, 2023 Minutes

Appendix 2 – Director’s Time Card (September 17 – October 14)

Appendix 3 – Treasurer’s Report

Appendix 4 – VeriDaas Contract

Appendix 5 & 6 – AUP and Engagemet Letters – Pinell & Martinez

Appendix 7 – Everbride Contract

Appendix 8 – Treasurer’s Report

Appendix 9 – Proposed 2024 Budget