

# MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

## ST. TAMMANY PARISH

### MINUTES

#### Board of Commissioners Meeting April 17, 2024

#### OPEN

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners, St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District, was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Commissioner Vicki Traina-Dorge, at the St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District, 62436 Airport Road, Slidell, LA.

Present were Dr. Vicki Traina-Dorge, Ms. Kathryn Townsend, Ms. Terri Lewis Stevens, and Mr. Jacob Groby, Commissioners; Legal Advisor, Jake Abdalla; Dr. Kevin Caillouet, Director; Chad Simon, Accounting Manager; Weber Janssen, IT Manager, Jennifer Bushnell, Outreach Coordinator, and Sarah Malasovich, Office Manager. Assistant Director Calvin Smotherman and Advisor Dawn Wesson attended virtually.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - no members of the public were present.

#### **BOARD APPROVALS**

1. Minutes (Appendix 1) – The minutes from the March 20, 2024 meeting were presented. Chairperson Traina-Dorge called for a motion to approve those minutes. Commissioner Groby so moved, seconded by Commissioner Stevens, carried.
2. Credit Card Purchases – Commissioner Boyer reviewed all credit card purchases for the month of March, 2024. All charge accounts were found reasonable, accurate and consistent with District purchasing policies. Stevens approve the credit card purchases review as presented, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, carried. Commissioner Traina-Dorge will review the April expenditures for the May Meeting
3. Travel – Having reviewed his post-travel documentation for Commissioner Lewis-Stevens, Chairperson Traina-Dorge found it to be in order and requested a motion to approve. Said motion was made by commissioner Townsend, seconded by Commissioner Groby and carried.
4. Director's Time Card and Leave (Appendix 2) – Chairperson Traina-Dorge reviewed the Director's time card and leave for March 17 – April 13, 2024. Chairperson Traina-Dorge called for a motion to approve the Director's time card and leave. Commissioner Groby so moved, seconded by Commissioner Boyer, and carried.
5. Bids
  - a. Banking Services (Appendix 3 & 4) – The district received two proposal for banking entities, from First Horizon and Bank Plus. After reviewing the proposals it was determined that the interest rates were higher in the First Horizon Bank proposal. The district recommended that First Horizon be engaged to handle banking services for the next three years. Commissioner Groby asked if the banking entity could arrange to present at a future board meeting to explain the market. A motion to approve that recommendation was made by Commissioner Groby, seconded by Commissioner Stevens, carried.
6. Contracts –
  - a. Mosquito Dissection – Marisol Mosquedo (Appendix 5) – Director Caillouet reviewed the renewal contract to engage Ms. Mosquedo to perform mosquito dissections at a rate of \$31.00/hour. Advisor Wesson asked how many mosquitoes does Ms. Mosquedo dissect per

hour; Director Caillouet said it is in the range of 30-40 per hour. After reviewing the contract, a motion was made to approve it, contingent on legal review, by Commissioner Stevens, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, and carried.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Campus Expansion Update – Director Caillouet stated that Occupancy of the Administrative Building is anticipated for end of June, 2024. All construction and related expenditures are proceeding as expected.
2. Tier 2 Financial Disclosure Statements are due to the Louisiana Ethics Commission on or before May 15.
3. Septic Inspection Pilot Program Resolution – Commissioner Stevens updated the board on the council’s plan for the resolution, including that there is no plan to correct issues found in the inspections of the pilot group of 1,000 homes. The board agreed that the plan wasn’t a good fit for the district to partner with as the resulting decrease of mosquitoes would not be a component of the plan. Commissioner Boyer suggested utilizing the identified group of septic systems to follow up for remediation and education possibilities. Commissioner Stevens agreed that a post-test opportunity could determine if any remediation had taken place. Director Caillouet agreed that this is the plan, where the district can test the water quality (mosquito counts, fish counts, etc.) some time following the sampling. Commissioner Groby shared that water quality fecal coliform testing might also be helpful and inexpensive. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Townsend asked that Director Caillouet attend a Military Rd. Alliance Meeting as well. Further exposure is encouraged, with the Slidell Independent and Slidell Magazine, with a campaign to distribute it further as well. Commissioner Groby also discussed that there is a potential for signs in the marsh to identify health risks there from effluence. Commissioner Townsend reiterated that public education with approachable language would be very beneficial.
4. BOC Microsoft 360/Teams Account – Board members each have a created email address and Microsoft 365 account. Director Townsend asked if all of that would be public records; IT Director Janssen confirmed that would be public records.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Treasurer’s Report (Appendix 6) - Accounting Manager Simon presented the Treasurer’s Report, summarizing March disbursements, revenue, and vendor payments and reviewed the balances of the accounts, highlighting some larger dollar income and expenses. Commissioner Boyer asked about the Cafeteria Fund; Accounting Manager described this benefit of health savings and childcare savings plans. Chairperson Traina-Dorge called for a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Commissioner Townsend so moved, seconded by Commissioner Boyer, and carried.
2. Assigned Funds Plan 2024 – Director Caillouet stated that the millage rates for 2025 will be suggested at the May board meeting. In reference to that timeline, he described the assigned funds plan that was reviewed at the March meeting. After review, items 1 & 2 have been approved, leaving a surplus available to apply to power backup options, via generator or solar array and battery backup. This would not restore full power in a catastrophic event, but the likelihood is that the building would be closed in the immediate aftermath of a major storm, etc. Backup power would be ideal for maintaining the mosquito environments and to prevent mold, etc. A solar array and battery could contribute to the power usage of the district offices that might offset regular electric bills. Additionally, electric vehicles that could be assets within the fleet could charge during the day and nullify significant fuel costs. Chairperson Traina-Dorge mentioned that a generator would require

diesel fuel as well, another expenditure. Commissioner Stevens suggested that the facility could potentially be an option for post-emergency housing based on need and priority of operational job. Commissioner Boyer asked if Cleco has approved solar feedback into the grid at this time; Director Caillouet said that is something that would need to be reviewed. Commissioner Stevens asked if both solar and a generator system could be put into place, covering all options in case of an emergency. Director Caillouet reiterated that the funding is requesting to be assigned, while acknowledging that these products will need to go through a bid process and further exploration needs to take place, at approximately \$300,000 if a hybrid approach is taken. A motion to approve these assigned funds was submitted by Commissioner Groby, seconded by Commissioner Stevens, and passed unanimously. Finally, Director Caillouet shared the feedback that the District would not be able to pursue a well due to a number of prohibitive factors, including extensive cost, testing, etc. Commissioner Groby offered to research this process further. This project will be tabled until a future meeting when further information is available.

3. Parish Council Commissioner Appointment Process – The process for council appointments have been being scrutinized by the council and the media. The current process currently involves forwarding all interested party’s information to the council and Parish President for review, nomination, etc. The council has requested to review the process for appointments. The council has suggested staggered terms rather than, as is currently in place, all positions being eligible for reappointment on 12/31 every three years. Discussion ensued. No changes to the process have been identified at this time.
4. Aerial Adulicide Treatment Incident – The Director shared an incident that occurred during a helicopter spraying incident. He and Advisor Abdalla met with the party that claims negative impact as a result of our operation, and expect to receive a formal notice of claim related to this event. Further discussion ensued.
5. Calendar of Events – The Director reviewed recent operational highlights and upcoming events:
  - STPMAD Board of Commissioners Meetings
  - Construction Meetings
  - Woodlake Elementary Outreach
  - Lancaster Elementary Outreach
  - LMCA Spring Workshop
  - Water Well Meetings – Magnolia
  - Good Friday Holiday
  - Staff Meetings
  - GIS RS Conference
  - Office Weather Closure
  - IVLP Group
  - Leadership St. Tammany Classes
  - Kiwanis Presentation
  - Vector Control Modelling
  - STPMAD Crawfish Boil
  - Little Oak Middle School
6. Mosquito Control Report – Assistant Director Calvin Smotherman presented the mosquito report. In March there was a tremendous bloom of mosquitoes, primarily *Culex salinarius*, with *Aedes vexans* as the second highest trap counts. Mr. Smotherman reviewed that the calls coming in stating that this is “the worst year ever” is relatively accurate due to the high numbers of *Cx salinarius*. Director Caillouet also remarked that the season has begun earlier and earlier in the last several

years. Mr. Smotherman concurred, stating that the warmer, wetter winter is an indicator of early outbreaks for *Cx. salinarius*. However, *Culex quinquefasciatus* numbers are lower than usual for this time of year. Larviciders have treated approximately 700 miles in March. Truck Adulticide missions have treated approximately 98,000 acres. Aerial Adulticide missions have treated approximately 150,000 acres in March. Advisor Wesson suggested that the district include *Culex salinarius* mosquitoes for testing opportunities.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. on a motion by Commissioner Groby, seconded by Commissioner Townsend, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Terri Lewis Stevens  
Secretary/Treasurer

Appendix 1 – March 20 2024 Minutes

Appendix 2 – Director's Time Card (March 17 – April 13)

Appendix 3 – First Horizon Bid

Appendix 4 – Bank Plus Bid

Appendix 5 – Mosquito Dissection Contract

Appendix 6 – Treasurer's Report