



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
The State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board
NORFOLK COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT
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ROBIN L. CHAPEL **NORMAN P. JACQUES** **MAUREEN P. MACEachern** **LINDA R. SHEA** **RICHARD J. POLLACK, PHD**
 Commissioners

DAVID A. LAWSON
 Director

CAROLINE E. HAVILAND
 Field Operations Manager

May 6th, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes of The Norfolk County
Mosquito Control District Commission
Held by Zoom Conference

Commissioners present: Robin Chapell, Norman Jacques, Maureen MacEachern, Richard Pollack, Linda Shea

Commissioners absent:

Quorum: A quorum was established.

Others in attendance: David Lawson, Director Caroline Haviland, Field Operations Manager
 Kylee Sullivan – BOH Dedham.

Note taker: David Lawson

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m.

1) **Agenda Item: Approval of the minutes of the March 25th, 2021 Commission Meeting**

Action: The minutes of the March 25th, 2021 Commission meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Jacques, with a roll call vote of the five Commissioners.

2) **Agenda Item: Budget Overview**

a. **Overview of FY 2021**

The Director, previous to the meeting, sent a budget overview document to the Commissioners. This sheet showed an overview of the FY 2021 appropriation of \$2,001,629, the FY 2020 rollover of \$102,194, and a rebate of \$3,608, for a total available funds for FY 2021 of \$2,107,431. The Director noted a rough estimate of year end expenditures at about \$1,971,738. A larger than expected rollover into FY22 will likely occur due to reduced acreage treated during the aerial larvicide application. And also possibly from delayed purchases of Zenivex E4 due to ongoing concerns around the PFAS issue. The current rollover estimate stands at \$135,693. It appears the SRMCB does not have a date set yet in May for budget certification. The NCMCD continues to request a 3.0% increase for FY22.

Action: The Budget Overview report was unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Pollack, with a roll call vote of the five Commissioners.

3) **Agenda Item: Fieldwork Overview**

a. **Overview of 2021 year to date:**

The Director, previous to the meeting, sent a spreadsheet highlighting field work accomplished for the calendar year 2021 so far. The Director noted ongoing regular work of the field crew conducting water management and more recently, ground larviciding. Mr. Jacques requested information on the Telematics issues and tire recycling contract issue. The Field Operations Manager updated the Commission on how the Telematics devices were in fact draining batteries and how OSD has recommend that Fleet Managers make sure that vehicles are driven at least every 14 days for 45 minutes to avoid battery issues. The Commission made note of the fact that this contradicts one of the original stated goals of the telematics installations of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Field Operations Manager also updated the Commission on the work of developing a departmental contract for tire recycling. More should be known by the next Commission meeting. The District has continued to suspend the tire program until this can all be resolved. The Director noted that the District normally pauses tire pickups during the spring/summer mosquito season anyway, so as not to interrupt other more pressing control work.

b. **Post-spring aerial larvicide review:**

The Director gave a quick summary of the recent April 28th aerial larvicide. Due to persistent high winds over the time frame, it was difficult to schedule the entire acreage that the District wanted to treat. With added scheduling conflict on the contractor's side, The District ended up with a one day application with 2 helicopters. The originally planned acreage was cut in about half. It has been generally a quite dry spring, so we expect we had a helping hand from that in reducing spring numbers that will emerge soon.

The Field Operations Manager took the opportunity to show an aerial photograph with GIS data overlain, and some field photographs with the Commission, that was instructive on how our ground surveillance for the aerial larvicide program was reducing acreage that needed to be treated by air by the judicious use of hand cleaning in blocked ditches that had previously created mosquito larval habitat. This particular ditch was able to be cleaned and so reduced standing water, and this in turn, eliminated the need to treat the area in the aerial application. An example of cost savings achieved over many future years.

Action: The Fieldwork Overview report was unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Jacques with a roll call vote of the five Commissioners.

4) **Agenda Item: Employee's compensation increase consideration:**

a. **Municipal COLA survey presentation.**

The Director presented a chart showing the results of a survey of the 25 District municipalities DPW Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) adjustments for the coming fiscal year. Results of the survey showed a mean of 2% and a mode of 2% for all municipalities that reported data.

Action: On a motion by Mrs. Chapell, the Commission unanimously approved a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for the entire pay scale to take effect on July 1, 2021.

b. Employee Performance Reviews overview.

The Director shared about recent performance reviews with the staff. The Director shared about recent events of concern regarding the discovery of extended break times being taking by certain field employees, especially in the morning. This came to light after a resident (who wished to remain anonymous) had called the office and reported employees taking extended breaks in a particular spot. The Director had instructed the Field Operations Manager to utilize the Telematics data to verify this one way or the other. With a limited time frame of Telematics data to work with, it nevertheless became clear that there was an issue of concern. The Director and Field Operations Manager utilized the performance review process to address the issue with the entire crew. The Director communicated his own opinion to the Commission, that after discussion with all of the field crew, he did not think the issue rose to the level of instituting discipline in the form of a reduction in any employees pay increase. Several Commissioners communicated their concern that there possibly should be pay discipline. It was pointed out by the Field Operations Manager that the performance review process, specifically the number system, and its average inclusive of the whole year, did actually not warrant pay discipline for any of the employees. In the end, the Commission agreed that the system worked, but encouraged the Director and Field Operations Manager to at least periodically use the Telematics to check on employees. It was communicated to management that it would be irresponsible to have the tool available and not utilize it.

Action: On a motion by Mr. Jacques, the Commission unanimously approved one step increase for all eligible employees to take effect on July 1, 2021.

c. Pay scale 6 year review.

The Director had, previous to the meeting, shared with the Commission a chart summarizing the results of a survey of all the Massachusetts Mosquito Control Districts in regard to their pay scales or relevant compensation data. In addition, the Field Operations Manager shared results of survey work done utilizing compensation comparison data from reputable internet compensation company sources for the field positions at the District. She reported that, overall, the Districts positions are generally in line with similar positions outside of the Mosquito Control District sector. The Director highlighted the most serious pay discrepancy on the MCD chart as the NCMCD Administrative Assistant position. It is noticeably below the average of the other MCD's Administrative positions. There was general discussion regarding compensation for employees and how to best accomplish competing goals. With the changes made to the pay scale at this meeting, the Commission agreed that a harder look at the pay scale is warranted for possible changes next year. The Director will note to re-address the pay scale over the coming winter 2021/2022.

Action: Mrs. Chapell made a motion to shift the Administrative Assistant position pay scale, removing the bottom 3 steps and adding 3 steps to the top, in the same 3% increment as all other steps in this position. She also recommended the Director position be shifted by removing the bottom 2 steps and adding 2 steps to the top, in the same 2.3% increment as the rest of the steps for this position. In addition, the seasonal contract position pay hourly rate was to be increased from \$15/hour to \$17 per hour. The Commission unanimously approved the changes to the pay scale on a roll call vote. The changes are to take effect on July 1, 2021, (Note: The contract seasonal rate will be in effect for the next season, 2022. Seasonal contract employees have already been hired and pay rates set for the 2021 season.) The motion was unanimously approved on a roll call vote of all 5 Commissioners.

d. **Agenda Item: Mosquito Control for the 21st Century Task Force**

The Director shared about his interview on May 5th by the Eastern Research Group, the contractor that is conducting the independent review of Mosquito Control in Massachusetts for the Mosquito Control for the 21st Century Task Force. In addition, Mr. Pollack shared with other Commissioners his take on the public listening session meeting of the task force which took place on Monday May

3rd. The current timeline is for ERG to produce a draft report in July, a final report in August, and for the task force to possibly make a set of recommendations to the Massachusetts Legislature by the end of October.

Action: No action taken.

Other Notes or Information

1. The Director, previous to the meeting, sent a copy of a letter he had sent to the towns. He updated the Commission regarding this letter he sent to the District Towns which provided information on developments in regard to the aerial spraying opt-out process, and on developments around the issue of PFAS found in Mosquito Control Products in the Commonwealth.

The Commission set the next Commission meeting to be held virtually on Thursday, June 24th, at 1:30 pm.

At 3:16 p.m. the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Jacques.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Shea, Chairman