

Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jeanne Moeller, Chairperson
Trish Becker, Vice-Chairperson
Gina LeBlanc, Secretary/Treasurer
Catherine Brandhorst, Commissioner
Gayle Gardner, Commissioner



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Dr. Rui-De Xue



Thursday, April 8, 2021

Next Meeting(s): Thursday, May 13, 2021 – 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The regular Board meeting for the Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County was held on Thursday, April 8, 2021, at 5:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Mrs. Jeanne Moeller, Chairperson
Mrs. Trish Becker, Vice-Chairperson
Mrs. Gina LeBlanc, Secretary/Treasurer
Mrs. Catherine Brandhorst, Commissioner
Ms. Gayle Gardner, Commissioner

Also in attendance:

Dr. Rui-De Xue, Director
Mr. Wayne Flowers, Attorney

Chairperson Moeller called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Brandhorst led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Moeller noted ~ All were present

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: For Items not on the Agenda ~ None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Chairperson Moeller called for approval of the Agenda.

A. A motion was made to approve the Agenda as presented.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Brandhorst
- Seconded by: Commissioner Becker
- VOTE accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: Chairperson Moeller called for approval of the Consent Agenda as modified.

B. A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner

- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Consent Items ~ APPROVAL OF:

1. Treasurer's Report
2. Vouchers (*Cancelled Checks*)
3. Chemical Inventory
4. Minutes: Regular Board Meeting, March 11, 2020 at 5:00 P.M.
5. Budget Amendments ~

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Item 1: Report, discuss and approve AMCD response to County request for AMCD Education Center (ppt.) ~ ppt. by Dr. Xue, report by Commissioner Moeller and Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers

- Dr. Xue gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Disease Vector Education and Research Center. He stated that the idea for the center was introduced in 2017. Dr. Xue stated that the long term goal for the center is to become the World Health Organization center for evaluation of public health, pesticides, and equipment as well as to become the central location for education and research to surrounding Mosquito Control Districts in northeast Florida. He emphasized the many recognitions that the AMCD has received, particularly in reference to the Districts training of interns, other Mosquito Control Districts, Mosquito Control educators, and so on, demonstrating that the demand for a Vector Training facility has never been higher and will bring a lot of positive economic impacts to SJC. Dr. Xue discussed how education is key to prevent and control mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases and the ways that the AMCD values the importance of education through continuously providing and encouraging employee education. He included that mosquitoes are the world's deadliest animal and we can save lives through educating the public on how they can prevent mosquitoes and protect themselves so that less outbreaks occur. Dr. Xue stated that the services of the AMCD have protected SJC citizens from having any local-acquired human case of mosquito-borne disease since 2004. He broke down the economic impacts and costs associated with mosquito-borne disease. Dr. Xue explained the fiscal conservativeness of the AMCD and how the Education Center will be funded.

- Commissioner Moeller stated that she, Mr. Weaver, and Dr. Xue went to visit Chairman Blocker, who was very defensive, and they had to tell him numerous times that the District is building an Education Center, not a museum. She stated that Commissioner Smith seemed to be open and supportive. Commissioner Moeller stated that she has spoken with Commissioner Dean twice on the phone and that he attended the Open House and he told her that he was very impressed with our facility. She explained that she is supposed to speak to Paul Waldron on the phone tomorrow at 11 A.M. Commissioner Moeller stated that she was supposed to meet with Paul last week, but she has been fighting Shingles and with the health issues that she had, she did not want to take any chances so they will speak via phone instead of in the office. Commissioner Moeller explained that Commissioner Whitehurst called her and set up an appointment to meet for coffee at Dos Coffee House, but she waited for 45 minutes and he did not show up. She mentioned that Commissioner Whitehurst apologized via text and told her he would meet her at the AMCD Open House. Commissioner Moeller stated that she waited on him for an hour and a half before she left. Commissioner Whitehurst never showed up to the Open House at all.

- Commissioner Moeller explained that in 5 surrounding counties, there are 80,000 – 100,000 fourth graders that come into St. Johns County every year for field trips and of those 5 counties, none of them have an independent Mosquito Control District aside from the very small East Flagler Mosquito Control District, so many of those student are not aware that they have mosquito control, nor do they have education in the school system. She stated that they can come here and learn about mosquito control biology and our new system. Commissioner Moeller referred to the question asked in the letter from Commissioner Blocker about if we coordinated with or sought input from St. Johns County School District and stated that we absolutely have, and she communicated that in her meeting with Commissioner Blocker. She stated that Commissioner Blocker replied that he spoke to the School Board Commissioners and they said that they do not know anything about it. Commissioner Moeller explained that is because we talked to the staff which were the appropriate individuals to talk to.

- Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated that there should be a response to the letter and that it should be very much to the point, emphasizing that it is not a museum, we are not intending this as a tourist attraction, and it is first and foremost to support education and research. He included that there should be an invitation to tour the facility, meet with Dr. Xue, and be given an opportunity to fully understand what this agency does, how well it does it, and how well the Education Center fits into that.

- Commissioner Becker stated that we have two teachers that head the science and STEM programs for St. Johns County as part of our mutual group to see what they want in the schools and what would be good for children of all ages. She stated that a lot of people reached out to her for the “museum” and were very upset because they only got to read one sentence which was “We are building 3 million dollars,” and there is so much stuff in this county that could be done instead and she understands that, but we have money for one certain thing and that is what we are using it for. Commissioner Becker included that it would have been nice for the County Commissioners to just tell the general public that, because she knows that the County Commissioners got a lot of heat for it. She stated that anytime anyone gets questions from people about the Education Center please send them to her and she will be happy to answer them as the Educational Chair. Commissioner Becker concluded that she thinks people just got off on the wrong foot about it.

- Commissioner Moeller mentioned that Commissioner Blocker has said that they have gotten hundreds of emails at the county regarding the “museum” and that it might be of interest, at the Boards consent, to ask for public records of those emails and any other correspondence. District Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers will write a letter for the public record request.

○ **THERE WAS NO MOTION ON THIS ITEM**

Item 2: Update about AMCD aerial program ~ Aviation Manager Dana Smith

- Aviation Manager Dana Smith explained that we have two used aircrafts and one older aircraft. He stated that the older one we originally had is coming out of the annual for the maintenance that was done to it and of the two newer aircrafts, one is getting radio and one is getting painted. Mr. Smith stated that he is hoping both of them are back by the end of the month. He explained that he has coordinated with the fire department and between us, the sheriff’s office, and the fire department we are all going to sit down and figure out how if something occurs for the county, whether it be a fire or hurricane or whatever, we can all work together as county assets during a disaster. Mr. Smith included that all of the logbooks

have been converted from Army to civilian, Ralph Bruner is now a certified to work on Del-206 helicopters, and Michael Phillips is now qualified for night missions. He mentioned that some other counties are getting this reflective tape installed on their radio antennas and that may be something for us to look into down the road.

- **THERE WAS NO MOTION ON THIS ITEM**

NEW BUSINESS

Item 1: Discussion and approval of COL raise for FY21/22 budget ~ CFO Mr. Scott Hanna

- CFO Mr. Scott Hanna stated that based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the latest consumer price index is showing a 2% increase for the last 12 months. He explained that a 2% increase for all of the employees would be \$39,900. He discussed the increasing gas prices that have been burdening everyone and how they will only cause the cost of consumer goods to increase because everything is shipped.
- C. **A motion was made to add a 2% raise for cost of living for the 2021 – 2022 fiscal budget.**
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Moeller
 - VOTE accepted unanimously by all commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Item 2: Discussion and instruction about new budget development for FY21/22 ~ Dr. Xue

- Dr. Xue stated that he would like to collect all information from Board members about any items planned to be purchased for the new fiscal year and asked for the Boards direction for the budget so that we can start to prepare the new budget for the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year. He stated that we will collect a “Need List” from staff by the end of this month and in the first week of May we will prepare the master budget draft book. Dr. Xue explained that on the May 13th Board meeting we will present each Board member with a budget draft book to be reviewed and brought back in June/July with discussion. The final budget will be due September 30th, so we have 4 – 5 months for the budget process.
- Commissioner Moeller explained that we can set a millage rate in July and once the millage rate is set you cannot really go up, but you can go down. It costs too much money to go up.
- Dr. Xue stated that the District had a very good financial committee meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 2021.
- Commissioner Moeller stated the Commissioner LeBlanc will be out of town for the July 8, 2021 Board meeting. Commissioner LeBlanc proposed possibly rescheduling the meeting for another date, or she can just not be in attendance for the meeting.
- D. **A motion was made to move the July 2021 Board meeting from July 8th, 2021 at 5 P.M. to July 15th, 2021 at 5 P.M.**
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
 - VOTE accepted unanimously by all commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

REPORTS:

1. **Director** ~ Dr. Xue stated that we plan to have mandatory employee training next Monday and we get our sentinel chickens next Tuesday. He explained that we had 6 people travel to

Lee County for employee training who returned today. Dr. Xue stated that we had 31 guests sign in at our Open House and some people attended but did not sign in. He mentioned that a lot of people were very interested and asked a lot of questions. Dr. Xue stated that one Mosquito Control Technician and her significant other tested positive for COVID-19. He included that he quickly informed the Chairperson and staff and that he believes the case was not acquired at work, but we are still being extra cautious and keeping in good communication with the individual who contracted COVID while she is out of work.

2. **Attorney** ~ Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers mentioned that there are approximately 3 weeks to go on the legislative sessions and the accountability bills are still out there and by all accounts are likely to pass.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gardner ~ No comments.

Commissioner Becker ~ Commissioner Becker stated that next Wednesday she will attend the AMCA webinar about mosquito pesticide resistance. She continued that the Open House went really well, we had a great turnout with lots of kids and a lot of the people that came in said that it was their first time that they had gone out of the house other than to get groceries in over a year so they really enjoyed it and appreciated the steps that we took to stay safe. She mentioned that Melissa from the Coffee Break Radio for the City of St. Augustine came and said they want to have us on again to talk about the education center. She said that she gave out her 1600th hand-delivered mask today and vaccines are now open to anyone 16 and up. Commissioner Becker stated that on Tuesday she has a meeting with a woman from a local PR company to discuss the benefits of having a PR person to help us for situations such as the Education Center so we don't have to worry about having different messages in the public for special projects. She mentioned that Earth Day is April 22nd so she will be doing a beach cleanup and maybe a tire gathering. Thanked everyone, especially over the last few weeks, she said she knows it has been a little tough but we are getting through it and we have a great program and a great team.

Commissioner LeBlanc ~ Commissioner Leblanc noticed one other conflicting date. She stated that she will be attending a graduation ceremony on the set June 10th, 2021 Board meeting and that as staff she is required to attend.

E. A motion was made to move the June 2021 Board meeting from June 10th, 2021 at 5 P.M. to June 17th, 2021 at 5 P.M.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
- VOTE accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Commissioner LeBlanc thanked staff for all hard work and mentioned that it is no small thing that we have had no locally-acquired mosquito-borne disease over the past 17 years and that she knows that takes a lot of hard work.

Commissioner Brandhorst ~ Commissioner Brandhorst stated that she agrees with Gina and thinks it takes a lot of hard work to make sure that there are no human cases. She stated that she would like to thank Dana for his update and good job again to Rudy.

Commissioner Moeller ~ Commissioner Moeller stated that she distributed an email on everyone's desk from Adrian Rogers. She said that she does not need to go over it, she just wanted

everyone to know what was going on with the Legislation Committee. She is not sure when they will have their next meeting but if any Board members want to sit in on the next meeting she can text them the date and the call in number. Commissioner Moeller stated that the Homeless Coalition is looking for a speaker for their community days. She spoke to Dr. Xue about it and he said he would be more than glad to send Eddie. It is usually the second Monday of the month at 5 pm. She stated that they have about 42 children at the homeless coalition and she told them we would be more than glad to do a tour for them as a field trip sometime in June. Commissioner Moeller went on to discuss that if this money of state fund goes to the districts that have less than 1 million dollars in funds, this \$291,000 that they want to distribute to those 23 districts in the state that have less than 1 million dollars, they would receive \$12,652 each. She continued that at this point she is not so certain how she feels about that because she does not think they have a whole lot of oversight so she is concerned that at some point this \$500,000 is going to fade away because it is part of the provisional language unless we can figure out a way to keep it. She stated that if they are not going to have good oversight, some of the districts would not know what to do with more money, and they also have to put up a 25% match, so she is not sure whether they can afford to put up this 25% match of this \$12,652 or whether it just happens to be a gift. She stated that until she gets more information she cannot tell how she would vote. The other issue was that it was in discussion that the money go to applied research, but they wanted the applied research to really happen out of IFAS. Commissioner Moeller stated that she has been on this committee since 2008, and that we have probably given \$500,000 a year to IFAS for the last 10 years and she does not know that we have gotten anything out of it so she is not really excited about doing that either. Thanked all staff for the hard work that they do.

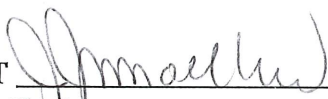
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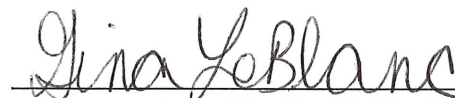
1. None

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Moeller adjourned the meeting at 6:52 P.M.

ATTEST



Chairperson, Commissioner Jeane Moeller

Secretary/Treasurer, Commissioner Gina LeBlanc

These minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript of this meeting and could easily be misinterpreted by a reader who was not present. To obtain a full and accurate record of the meeting, an individual should view/listen to the entire proceedings via the District's DVD visual/recording system.