

Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Dr. Rui-de Xue



Thursday, October 12, 2023

Thursday, December 14, 2023 – 5:00 PM~ Regular Meeting

MINUTES

The regular Board meeting for the Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County was held on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 5:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Mrs. Gayle Gardner, Chairperson
Mrs. Trish Becker, Vice-Chairperson
Mrs. Gina LeBlanc, Secretary/Treasurer
Mrs. Catherine Brandhorst, Commissioner
Mrs. Martha Gleason, Commissioner

Also in attendance:

Dr. Rui-De Xue, Director
Mr. Wayne Flowers, Attorney (arrived via phone at 4:59 P.M.)

Chairperson Gardner called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Brandhorst led the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Gardner noted ~ all were present, except Commissioner LeBlanc, she arrived at 5:05 P.M.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: For Items not on the Agenda

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

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

- Motioned by: Commissioner Gleason
- Seconded by: Commissioner Becker
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: Chairperson Gardner called for approval of the Consent Agenda.

- Commissioner Becker asked if Mobisoft was due for an update since it has not had one since 2019 and can AMCD still get Mobisoft to change the name on public phone app?

- Mr. Weaver informed her that the agreement with Mobisoft is for five years with one-year renewals, so at anytime either party can cancel however we are in the middle of a five-year contract. He continued explaining the only reason it is being brought to the board is because they changed the name and the board needs to approve the change and sign the contract. Mr. Weaver continued explaining as far as the public phone app, that is not a Mobisoft product, the mapping software people developed the public phone app and they have been unresponsive for years, this year money is in the budget for a new mapping software and he is hoping for an updated public phone app as well.
- Commissioner Gleason asked if Mobisoft has the capability of developing a public phone app?
- Mr. Weaver confirmed they could but he believes other people may be able to develop a better public phone app for AMCD.

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

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Consent Items ~ APPROVAL OF:

1. Chemical inventory
2. Minutes:
 - A. August 17th Board Meeting
 - B. September 14th Regular Board Meeting
 - C. September 14th First Public Hearing
 - D. September 28th Final Public Hearing
3. Annual Physical Inventory Report
4. Mobi Soft Contract Renewal
5. Holiday Work Schedule

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Item 1: SIT Building Project Update ~ Mr. Glenn Harrell, President of the Harrell Construction

- Mr. Harrell mentioned he prepared comments and sent them out with the Board books. He continued explaining after checking with the building department, they have received all the necessary paperwork to get a temporary Certificate of Occupancy (C/O), they're hoping to receive that by early next week. Mr. Harrell continued explaining with a temporary C/O the staff will be able to go into the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) building and set up/calibrate equipment but it will not be able to be open to the public. He mentioned they're still waiting on commercial dishwashers, lab doors, clean room doors, and stainless-steel sinks. Mr. Harrell explained those materials were ordered well before construction even started but due to Covid-19 and supply chain issues the items still have not arrived. Mr. Harrell thanked the staff and the Board of Commissioners for all their support.
- Commissioner Brandhorst asked what a temporary C/O is?
- Mr. Harrell explained it means limited occupancy, staff can enter the building and setup equipment but it can not be open to the public yet.

○ **NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM**

Item 2: Agreement about Easement for Utilities Proposed by Saint Johns County ~ Mr. Wayne Flowers

- Mrs. Christine Ellenburger with Jacobs Engineering Group and they are working with St. Johns County (SJC) Utilities on a project called "State Road 207 Water Reclamation Facility & Associated Improvements." She continued explaining it's a large waste water plant with 15 miles of pipeline. Mrs. Ellenburger referred to the pictures in the presentation and explained where the pipeline would be located.

- Dr. Xue asked if any feasible studies have been done to run the pipeline straight and directly connect it to Agricultural drive instead of going around it?
- Mrs. Sheri confirmed that it's a protected conservation easement and they have to go around it.
- Commissioner Becker expressed concern for staff safety, particularly the aerial department, how tall is the equipment that will be used to drill the pipeline?
- Mrs. Sheri confirmed she spoke with Mr. Flowers and Dr. Xue for a temporary construction easement and they're only allowed to work on the project on AMCD property from January – March 2024, that's when AMCD is not doing a lot of spraying. She continued, however if they can't meet that window than they will only have till January – March of 2025 to complete the project and as far as height goes, if they were to leave equipment on AMCD property it is not to exceed 15 feet.
- Commissioner Becker asked if we had a severe mosquito outbreak during January – March 2024 and needed to fly the helicopter, how would that interfere with your project? Can someone from the SJC team stay in contact with Mr. Dana Smith our pilot?
- Mrs. Sheri confirmed that request is certainly something they can do, however if they lost days on the project they may need to amend or extend the temporary construction easement, since they're in such a tight window to finish the project.
- Commissioner Gleason asked if it was a 24/7 project or will they be working specific hours?
- Mr. Flynn began explaining when they do a directional drill, they'll take a day or two to drill and they can stop that process once they start, however once they start pulling pipe into the hole that's been drilled that is a 24-hour operation and/or until completed, the process cannot be stopped.
- Commissioner Becker asked for an example of how long that nonstop process could take?
- Mr. Flynn confirmed it could take up to about 36 hours, it goes pretty quickly, then if there is an open cut, like shown in the PowerPoint, that will take maybe two more days, then they clean up and are off AMCD property.
- Commissioner Becker asked if that time frame was based on staff recommendation?
- Dr. Xue confirmed January – March 2024 was based on staff and lawyer recommendation in a meeting they had previous to this board meeting.
- Commissioner Becker asked how long the whole project will take?
- Mr. Flynn explained they're trying to go online with the treatment plan in late 2025 and hopefully all the pipelines will be done by then.
- Commissioner Becker asked if that was storm water they were using?
- Mr. Flynn explained it is highly treated waste water, filtered and disinfected and sent back to people's yards for irrigation. It is not storm water.
- Commissioner Becker asked what the pipe will be made out of?
- Mr. Flynn explained it's a combination of materials and all pipes are color coded.
- Commissioner Becker asked how many workers might be on site and will AMCD need to provide parking, bathrooms, wash rooms etc., for them?
- Mr. Flynn confirmed AMCD will not be responsible for that, construction workers will park off site and contractors are to provide bathrooms/washrooms for their employees.

A. A motion was made to approve the St. Johns County Easement Contract as presented.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Item 3: Financial Report and Budget Amendment ~ Mr. Scott Hanna, C.F.O.

- Mr. Hanna reviewed the treasurer's report/vouchers with the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Hanna also explained the budget would be amended for \$1,401,235.19 dollars partially due to the increase in the 2023 Christmas bonus.

A. A motion was made to approve the budget amendment as presented.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner LeBlanc
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Item 1: Discussion and Approval of Christmas Bonus Recommended by Director ~ Dr. Rui-De Xue

➤ Dr. Xue read from the memo, in 2023, AMCD Board of Commissioners, Attorney, and all employees have worked very hard to conduct the programs, especially dealing with the outbreaks of salt marsh mosquitoes and WNV and EEE. He continued explaining, AMCD received a very good and positive review from the Balmoral Group for special district accountability and the Distract received more than \$300,000 dollars in grant funds from the Federal and several private industries. Dr. Xue mentioned these funds benefited the AMCD operation programs and in order to recognize, appreciate, and thank everybody who made the contribution to the AMCD programs in 2023, I would like to recommend the Board give the bonus amount (\$1,000 dollars) per employee for the holidays except for the manager choice award (\$100/each) from each department, one outstanding employee (\$2,000), and the appreciation of the years (1 at \$150 for 15 years and 2 at \$200/person for 20 years) of services, the total cost would be \$39,450.

A. A motion was made to approve the Christmas bonus as presented with also adding 100 dollars to each special award minus the outstanding employee for a total cost of \$43,221.00 dollars.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Item 2: Exploring and Challenge of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Mosquito Control (Ppt) ~ Dr. Rui-De Xue

➤ Dr. Xue gave a presentation on exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) for mosquito control. He began the presentation with an overview of typical terms used like AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning. Dr. Xue spoke about the differences between ChatGPT an Open AI, ChatGPT it's text only, good for writing, generating topics, reports etc., and Open AI is a model for connecting vision and language understanding images, content and text. He discussed how AI can be used for surveillance by using robots and drones, AI powered unmanned ground vehicle to spray pesticides, Senecio robot for SIT Mosquito Sex separation and robots, and robot sprayers for agricultural pesticides. Dr. Xue lastly mentioned some of the advantages and disadvantages of AI.

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

3. Item 3: Commissioner Becker to Speak on District Community Project with Possible guest ~ Commissioner Becker

➤ Commissioner Becker mentioned Mr. Willy was unable to make it to the meeting. She continued explaining recently there has been a huge increase in the efforts to preserve African American cemeteries, one we used for testing because the flower urns would fill with water and we would test the mosquitoes that breed in them. Commissioner Becker continued explaining Mr. Willy was able to ask the community for help with monthly clean ups and it's really been looking good. She mentioned since not much has been done with the education budget this year, she would like for AMCD to possibly sponsor an event at that cemetery, provide information, handout water, snacks ect.

Commissioner Becker mentioned she just wanted to put it on the Boards radar and hoped to pick a date for December or January.

○ **NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM**

REPORTS:

Director ~ Dr. Xue reported last week SJC has mosquito outbreak, the fourth one this year, so AMCD started to control the outbreak by thermal fogging during the day and ground/aerial fogging at night and early in the morning. He continued explaining so far **SJC had 68 sentinel chickens positive for WNV and EEE** but the mosquito population has been low. Dr. Xue mentioned next week AMCD will prepare to larvicide due to all the rain SJC has had recently. He continued to mention AMCD plans to aerial spray hot spots. Dr. Xue mentioned he will be off the next two weeks and Dr. Whitney Qualls will be in charge while he is gone, however he can be reached by email.

Attorney ~ Mr. Flowers had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gardner ~ No comment.

Commissioner Brandhorst ~ Congratulated Dr. Qualls on her promotion to Assistant Director

Commissioner LeBlanc ~ Thanked the staff for all their hard work.

Commissioner Becker ~ I will not be attending the Florida Mosquito Control Association (FMCA) this year but I have been speaking with Commissioner Goodman, the president, and we have a really good program going. This is off topic but there is so many discounts out there for first responders, how do we get AMCD staff to earn those same discounts?

- Mr. Weaver explained that would be something you would do through the state and FMCA has done a lot of research and to get that special designation it effects other people like fireman and police officers, it also effects retirement.

Commissioner Gleason ~ Thanked the staff for all their hard work and asked about the upcoming audit and would like to discuss paragraph four, where it states they will not be auditing the required supplementary information (RSI) or rendering an opinion on it, why not?

- Mr. Hanna confirmed he will reach out the Mrs. Julieann Klien for an answer and get back to the board with her answer.

ATTACHMENTS: ~

1. None

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Gardner adjourned the meeting at **6:49 P.M.**

ATTEST



Chairperson, Commissioner Gayle Gardner



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.