

Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Dr. Rui-de Xue



Thursday, October 24, 2024

Thursday, November 21, 2024 – 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 24 2024, at 5:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Mrs. Gayle Gardner, Chairperson
Mrs. Martha Gleason, Vice-Chairperson
Mrs. Gina LeBlanc, Secretary/Treasurer
Mrs. Catherine Brandhorst, Commissioner (Arrived late at 5:36 P.M.)
Mrs. Trish Becker, Commissioner

Also in attendance:

Dr. Rui-De Xue, Director
Mrs. Amy Myers, Attorney (Via Phone)

*Chairperson Gardner called the meeting to order.
Chairperson Gardner led the pledge of allegiance.*

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Gardner noted ~ that all were present, minus Commissioner Brandhorst who arrived at 5:24 P.M.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

- Mr. Ed Slavin thanked AMCD for doing such a wonderful job and showed his appreciation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Chairperson Gardner called for approval of the agenda as presented.

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 (Minus Commissioner Brandhorst, arrived at 5:24 P.M.)
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

A. A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda with moving Consent Item #8 to Unfinished Business #4.

- Motioned by: Gleason
- Seconded by: Becker
- VOTE: Accepted Unanimously by all Commissioners (Minus Commissioner Brandhorst, arrived at 5:24 P.M.)
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Consent Items ~ APPROVAL OF:

1. Chemical inventory
2. Minutes:
 - A. September 12th Regular Board Meeting
 - B. September 12th First Public Hearing
 - C. September 30th Final Public Hearing
3. DACS MOU for Reports
4. Switch November 14th Board Meeting to November 21st
5. Counting Dr. Xue Working Hour as the AMCA President to Join AMCA Board
6. Job Description Updates (One is Increased Duty & Two is Changed Title)
7. Dr. Qualls Attendance at International Beacon Meeting November 17th- 18th, 2024
8. South Gulf CDC Vector Center Agreement (Moved to Unfinished Business #5)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Item 1: Discussion and Approval of AMCD's Resolution about Auditor Selection Committee ~ Mrs. Meyers**
 - Mrs. Myers noted in front of the Board of Commissioners is a proposed resolution to establish and auditor selection committee. She mentioned the Board's current policy was adopted in 1997 and is ed of an update to come in compliance with current state law. Mrs. Myers stated this resolution establishes the duties of the audit committee, which are consistent with those required by section 2.1839 of the Florida Statues. She continued to explain it establishes a five-member committee composed of one Board member who would serve as the chair of the committee, four residents each nominated and appointed by the Commissioners of the Board. Mrs. Myers explained it sets forth eligibility requirements, generally requiring a knowledge of accounting, auditing, and financial management expertise. She noted those are the criteria generally established by the state and required by the statue.
 - Commissioner Becker asked what if each boar member can not find someone to nominate for the committee?
 - Mrs. Myers stated that if Board members know more than one person to nominate, they can suggest that person to the other Board members.
 - Commissioner Becker asked if an application would be provided for nominees to fill out?
 - Mrs. Myers stated people can be nominated with or without an application, it can formal or informal.
 - Commissioner Becker asked when does the selection process begin and end?

- Mrs. Myers stated the resolution would be effective immediately upon adoption and she recommends that in the next meeting or two, an agenda item be added to seek that committee with four appointees.
- Commissioner Gleason asked if there is any flexibility to postpone appointing committee members due to the upcoming election and the possibility of new Board members.
- Mrs. Myers stated the effective date can be changed and kept off the agenda until the election results are known.

A. A motion was made to approve the AMCD's Resolution about Auditor Selection Committee as presented.

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

2. Item 2: Decision Regarding DVEC Admission ~ Dr. Rui-de Xue (10 min)

- AMCD built the Disease Vector Education Center (DVEC) to promote public education about preventing and controlling mosquito and vector-borne diseases and saving people's lives through public education and control efforts of mosquitoes and vectors. In the meantime, AMCD uses the DVEC to show who we are, what we are doing, and how to contact us for service. Due to the construction and operation of the DVEC being fully funded by AMCD, a Special Government through a local tax fund, there are different ideas about whether the DVEC should collect admission fees and who (visitors from out of St. Johns County or discount rate for St. Johns County residents) should pay the admission fee. The DVEC brings more visitors from outside of St. Johns County and also brings more business to the St. Johns County community. Probably the DVEC will attract more visitors without charge. If there is no charge for admission, people may think it is not worth visiting. Also, some revenues from visitors may assist with the DVEC operation cost. In the past couple of years, the Staff has surveyed admission fees from the local no governmental museums (attached) for your reference. Dr. Xue is suggesting no admission fee for the Disease Vector Education Center (DVEC) because the tax payers of St. Johns County have already paid for the building through their taxes.
- Mrs. Moeller stated while the Board was planning the building of the DVEC never was it discussed that St. Johns County residents pay an admission fee to visit and she certainly does not have a problem charging out of county or state residents but St. Johns County residents should not have to pay a fee.
- Mr. Slavin stated he agrees with the notion of no admission fee to the DVEC for St. Johns County residents.
- Mr. Howell stated the purpose of the DVEC was to educate everyone on mosquito borne illnesses and St. Johns County residents should not have to pay an admission fee.

A. A motion was made to approve zero admission fee to the DVEC for anyone who wants to visit, no matter what state, county, country or planet they're from.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason

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

3. **Item 3: Discussion and Approval of Commissioner Brandhorst Attendance at FMCA Annual Meeting, Orlando FL, November 4th-7th**

- Dr. Xue explained Commissioner Brandhorst has requested to attend the Florida Mosquito Control Association (FMCA) meeting on November 4th and based on policy she would need to get it approved by the AMCD Board of Commissioners.
 - A. **A motion was made to not approve Commissioner Brandhorst’s attendance at the FMCA meeting November 4, 2024.**
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
 - VOTE: Accepted by Commissioner Becker, Gleason, and Gardner
 - VOTE: Rejected by Commissioner LeBlanc and Brandhorst
 - **MOTION PASSED 3:2**

4. **Item 4: 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 amendment was to amend the budgeted fiscal year fund balance to the actual reconciled/true beginning fund balance. Mr. Hanna answered questions the Board of Commissioners asked.
 - A. **A motion was made to approve the budget amendment as presented.**
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
 - VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. **Item 5: South Gulf CDC Vector Center Agreement**

- Dr. Xue began to explain that AMCD applied for this cooperative agreement between the City of New Orleans South Gulf Vector and Center Disease Control (CDC) and AMCD last year, however they did not have the funding to contract AMCD the first year but they do have the funding to contract AMCD for the second year of the agreement.
- Commissioner Gleason asked if AMCD is on the cooperative agreement vendors list that is submitted to the CDC?
- Dr. Qualls stated she has seen the form and AMCD is a listed vendor for the cooperative agreement.
 - A. **A motion was made to approve the Cooperative Agreement between AMCD and South Gulf Vector, CDC.**
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Becker
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gleason
 - VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Item 1: Director’s Performance Evaluation Report~ Mrs. Amy Meyers**

- Commissioner Gardner read the letter that was prepared by Mrs. Amy Myers, attorney, describing Dr. Xue's evaluations from each commissioner, with an overall average score of 94.7. The attorney also stated in the letter that consistent with the scores, there were many positive comments from the Commissioners regarding Dr. Xue's performance on the evaluation forms and that "AMCD's policy provides that "based on the budget for pay increases and if the numerical number is 90% or higher, a motion to authorize a pay increase or merit raise can be made". AMCD Board of Commissioners discussed the possibility of giving Dr. Xue a raise, based on the combination of his performance review and the COLA raise that was recently approved.
- Dr. Xue noted he did not need a merit raise due to just receiving the COLA raise.
- After the Board of Commissioners discussed the possibility of a merit raise and taking Dr. Xue's comments into consideration, majority decided no merit raise will be awarded.
- Commissioner Gleason mentioned she would like all Commissioners individual performance evaluations made available on the website for the public.

NOTE: All commissioners individual performance evaluations have been added to the website under the October 24, 2024 Board book.

○ **NO MOTION FOR THIS ITEM**

2. **Item 2: Discussion and Approval of Updated Purchase Policy Provided by Mr. Wayne Flowers ~ Dr. Rui-De Xue**

- Dr. Xue stated the current lawyer (Mrs. Myers), former lawyer (Mr. Flowers), Assistant Director (Dr. Qualls), C.F.O (Mr. Hanna) and himself had a meeting to draft an updated version of the purchasing policy due to the problems with the DVEC purchases. He recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the updated purchasing policy as presented.
- Mr. Slavin thanked everyone for working on updating the purchasing policy and he believes Mr. Flowers is a great lawyer and should apply for the District Attorney position currently being advertised.

A. A motion was made to approve the updated purchase policy provided by Mr. Wayne Flowers as presented.

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

3. **Item 3: Explain and Report Regarding AMCD's New Organization Chart and Personal Report ~ Dr. Rui-De Xue**

- Dr. Xue explained the department of science has been divided into two different departments and the new organization chart was approved in the April Board meeting. He continued to explain the former science department manager has been promoted as Assistant Director and a Education and Research manager has been hired and the molecular biologist has been promoted to Surveillance and SIT manager. Dr. mentioned the Assistant Director's duties are assisting the Director to implement

programs and acting Director when the Director is absent. He continued to explain to avoid confusion, Director of Administration Department manager oversees daily administration and major program activity and the four department managers report directly to the Director, as demonstrated on the new organization chart. Dr. Xue mentioned the Surveillance and SIT and Education and Research managers will report directly to the Director about all administrative related items based on the new chart and this will benefit the communication and management based on previous experience.

- Commissioner Becker expressed her concern for Mr. Morgan Duett and his lack of job title and salary change regardless of all the training he has completed and all the roles he plays within the District. She requested Dr. Xue and Dr. Qualls evaluate his position and come up with a new job title/job description and pay to compensate him for all his hard work.

A. A motion was made to approve changing Morgan Duets job title and increasing his salary.

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

4. Item 4: Discussion and Approval of Creating a Full Time Human Resource Position and Job Description~ Commissioner Becker

- Commissioner Becker read from a letter she wrote to the Board of Commissioners; the letter outlined the need for a Human Resource (HR) Generalist to assist with District HR related business. She believes due to the growth of the District the lack of an HR Generalist is no longer acceptable. Commissioner Becker stated over the past several years repeat minor issues have been witnessed that could have been prevented or reconciled with a HR Generalist. She mentioned the Board of Commissioners have a responsibility to not only the residents of St. Johns County and the District but also the employees within the District. Commissioner Becker then presented research on what an HR Generalist entails, their responsibilities and pay grade ranges.
- The Board of Commissioners discussed and agreed with Commissioner Beckers request and thanked her for doing the research.

A. A motion was made to approve staff to hire a Human Resource generalist position and for approval of C.F.O to adjust the budget amendment to account for the salary.

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

5. Item 5: Discussion and Approval of Purchase of Human Resource Information System Software~ Commissioner Becker

- Commissioner Becker also explained the need to purchase a comprehensive human relations information system (HRIS), which is a software specifically made for all aspects of HR to assist our potential HR Generalist with HR related task. She is requesting the Board of Commissioners grant a small budget to the potential HR Generalist to get started.
- After discussion the Board of Commissioners decided to grant a small budget to get the potential HR Generalist started, however they have decided to wait to put a number on it until that position is filled and a better idea of how much is needed is presented.

○ **NO MOTION FOR THIS ITEM**

REPORTS:

Director ~ Dr. Xue reported this year St. Johns County has experienced two hurricanes, Helene and Milton but the District did not get a lot of damage just heavy rains. Dr. Xue mentioned the mosquito population has been high, 13,000 mosquitoes were caught in one trap in one night and the number of infected chickens has also increased. He thanked ground operation for all their hard work the past few months and thanked all staff for working hard in response to the hurricanes and flooding. Dr. Xue explained the District may need to re-evaluate November and extending Seasonal employees, and the second issue is that the Chief Pilot has submitted his resignation letter. Dr. Xue mentioned the former chief pilot has agreed to work as a part time as needed until the District can fill the pilot position. He also mentioned on October 31st an all-employee staff meeting will be held to discuss important business topics and show appreciation for seasonal employees and interns. Dr. Xue stated that Mr. Ralph Bruner has been promoted to Aviation Manager and the job description will be updated as well as his pay and hoping AMCD hires a new pilot by the end of the year. Dr. Xue noted two seasonal technicians have been promoted to full time technicians and two interns have been promoted to full time biological technicians. Dr. Xue also noted he appreciates everyone's hard work and contribution to the District.

Attorney ~ Mrs. Amy Myers had nothing to report

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gardner ~ Seconded Commissioner Brandhorst comment.

Commissioner Brandhorst ~ Thanked Commissioner Becker for her hard work and she appreciates it and looks forward to many more years on the AMCD Board.

Commissioner LeBlanc ~ None.

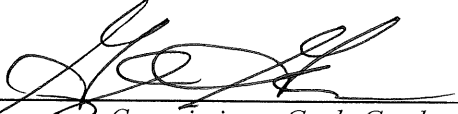
Commissioner Becker ~ Noted Egypt has been declared as malaria-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) and thanked the staff for all their hard work and to not give up, HR issues will be fixed soon and she looks forward to a wonderful year.

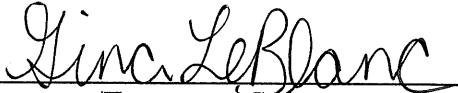
Commissioner Gleason ~ Thanked Commissioner Becker for all her hard work.

ATTACHMENTS: ~

ADJOURNMENT: Chairperson Gardner adjourned the meeting at 7:30 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 proc