

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, March 11, 2021

Next Meeting(s): Thursday, April 8, 2021 – 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The regular Board meeting for the Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County was held on Thursday, March 11, 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.

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Moeller noted ~ All were present

Commissioner Becker led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

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 LeBlanc
- Seconded by: Commissioner Brandhorst
- 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 LeBlanc
- Seconded by: Commissioner Brandhorst

- 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, February 11, 2020 at 5:00 P.M.
5. Budget Amendments ~

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Item 1: Present a plaque to Harrell Construction Company for appreciation and recognition of their service in the past 8 years ~ Chairperson Mrs. Jeanne Moeller

- Commissioner Moeller presented a plaque to Harrell Construction Company for appreciation and recognition of their service over the past 8 years.
 - **THERE WAS NO MOTION ON THIS ITEM**

Item 2: Discussion and approval of the contract of education building between AMCD and Compass Group ~ Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers

- Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated that he and Richard have spent a significant amount of time over the last month getting the proposed contract for construction between the District and Compass where it needs to be. He mentioned that Compass was very amenable to work with. Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated that he and Richard would be able to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding the contract.
- Commissioner Becker asked about the playground equipment and how the "decrease price" section is crossed off in the proposed contract. She stated that she thought we could look at new playground equipment to see if we can get a lower price. Commissioner Becker asked if the crossing off means, according to the contract as is, that we would not be able to do that?
- Richard stated that if we decide on less expensive playground equipment or do not include certain elements the price will be cut down and Compass will credit us the difference between what they planned and what we end up doing.

C. A motion was made by Commissioner Brandhorst to approve the contract of the education building between AMCD and Compass Group as presented.

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

- Richard stated that on the Memo for this item he also asked that the Board approve a percentage for change orders of 10%. He explained that for our last contract we did 5% and the contract prior to that we did 10%.

D. A motion was made to approve a 10% change order overlay for the construction of the education building.

- Motioned by: Commissioner LeBlanc
- Seconded by: Commissioner Brandhorst

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

Item 3: FMCA update discussion and vote ~ Chairperson Mrs. Jeanne Moeller

- Commissioner Moeller stated that she distributed a manila folder containing the backup for her coming discussion about our government sustaining dues. She emphasized that if Lewis Lawman and Walker is mentioned as she discusses the sustaining dues, absolutely no statements made are meant to be derogatory towards Lewis Lawman and Walker. Commissioner Moeller stated that it is not about the fact that Lewis Lawman and Walker billed us. She stated that they have been our lobbyists at FMCA for the past 35 years and probably will be for the next 35 years. Commissioner Moeller went on to explain that our articles of incorporation have not changed since 2013 and never have we been demanded to pay our government sustaining dues, nor under those government sustaining dues have we ever been told that if they were not paid we could not have individual members. Commissioner Moeller referred to item number 2 on the FMCA Board Meeting March 17, 2021 handout which stated that, "only the FMCA BOD will be allowed to speak at this meeting so please make sure you have given your FMCA Representative a full outline of your question. In order to have a timely meeting... the agenda will be limited only to pertinent topics." Commissioner Moeller explained that never in the history of Florida Mosquito Control has one president decided what is pertinent issue to a membership, let alone not allow members to speak. She stated that she disagrees with the opinion made by Lewis Lawman and Walker, and she believes that come November of 2021 we will see bylaws that will change the way government sustaining dues and independent dues are handled. Commissioner Moeller stated that the FMCA Executive Director tells us not to have individual membership, yet they sent out a form telling us we can have individual memberships and asking for how many and their names.
- Commissioner Moeller referenced Minutes from June of 2020 stating that a motion was made to approve suspending AMCDs 2020 sustaining dues to the FMCA and a need to have them provide an audit before we pay the following years dues, which is this year. Commissioner Moeller stated that she spoke to Bill Horn, a friend, who stated that FMCA is required to provide the members a full and complete audit. Horn stated that the consultant's reports are woefully inefficient. He included that a professional CPA firm audit, listing detailed expenditures and income entries, should have been prepared and distributed to the members. Horn recommended that the AMCD consider withholding fees from FMCA until the organizations satisfies its basic public accounting obligations. Commissioner Moeller stated that the audit is listed in the board book not as an audit, but as a financial records consulting report. From 2019-2020 the FMCA board has spent \$128,000, \$80,000 in average lobby fees, and an additional \$48,000. They are asking for sustaining dues and they are not doing fiscally doing what they need to do and this is taxpayers' money. Commissioner Moeller broke down examples of the irresponsible financial actions made by the FMCA. She stated that she does not feel that we need to pay the FMCA dues until the FMCA Board of Directors can get their act together and be fiscally responsible.
- Commissioner Brandhorst asked Dr. Xue to explain the direct benefit that we get from the membership with the FMCA.
- Dr. Xue explained that AMCD started paying government dues to FMCA in 1950 and has been for the last 71 years, until last year when we started to hold the dues. He stated that if you

are a member, you have the right to vote, select an officer, make a change, and join the meetings. If you are not a member, you do not have the right to join the March 17, 2021 meeting. Dr. Xue stated that we need to vote because we want to change the current FMCA situation and we have to have our voice to vote and ask for change as members. He included that we also have the benefit to join the FMCA annual meeting and exchange information in the network that it provides. Dr. Xue thanked Commissioner Moeller and stated that he really appreciates her service and major contributions to FMCA. He stated that to his personal understanding, he has never seen any commissioner as dedicated to FMCA like Commissioner Moeller, and that it would be his personal suggestion that if we want to see a change, we need to vote, keep our voice, and help make a change. If we leave the organization we will lose our voice. If we do not have a government membership and do not pay the dues we cannot join FMCA. Dr. Xue asked for staff and Board to please support and pay our FMCA governmental dues so we can keep our membership and our voice and make change.

- Commissioner Brandhorst asked about the cost for the FMCA membership. Commissioner Moeller explained that the cost is 1/10 of a percent of the past of the average 2 years of past operating expenses. She stated that it does not include any of our reserve money and many districts this year are not paying FMCA government sustaining dues for a variety of reasons, mainly because of how the FMCA Board is spending our money and how this FMCA Board is treating current and past volunteers. Commissioner Moeller stated the FMCA finance committee has not met since August and the new Executive Director has changed the way they are doing business. She asked why we should pay dues to an organization when they put it in writing that you don't have a voice.
- Commissioner LeBlanc stated that she thinks that it is important that we do get involved. She thinks that if we want to institute change and have leadership we need to be part of it. Commissioner LeBlanc stated we have had a relationship with the FMCA for 71 years. She mentioned that a lot of our employees serve on FMCA committees, which means that we have the ability to lead and change. Commissioner LeBlanc explained that being part of the FMCA, we obtain greater knowledge being able to be an active part of the DODD short course and FMCA meetings. She agreed with Dr. Xue and thinks we should pay the \$5,500 dues and that by being involved we can help change the issues that they are having.

E. A motion was made by Commissioner LeBlanc to continue the government sustaining membership and pay the \$5,500 in dues.

- Motioned by: Commissioner LeBlanc
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
 - VOTE: approved by Commissioner LeBlanc, Commissioner Brandhorst, Commissioner Becker, Commissioner Gardner
 - VOTE: opposed by Commissioner Moeller
 - **MOTION PASSED 4:1**
- Commissioner Becker stated that she appreciates everything that Commissioner Moeller has done, especially for FMCA. She stated that she has noticed that a lot of negative things have happened over the last 3 years of her involvement, and she has noticed that we are getting retaliated against. Commissioner Becker included that if we are not part of the membership, we are just on our own and no one would care what we say anyway, so she thinks that we need to stay in and keep fighting the good fight.

NEW BUSINESS

Item 1: Discussion and approval of the establishment of the proprietary fund for education program for possible donation ~ CFO Mr. Scott Hanna

- CFO Mr. Scott Hanna stated that there has been discussion as to what type of entity we need to be in order for us to accept tax deductible donations in order to encourage people to donate either not cash or cash financial contributions. He stated that section 170 C of the IRS code already enables local governments to receive donations that the donor will get a write off for. CFO Mr. Scott Hanna explained that for right now he suggests it would be reasonable to keep the donation section as an extension of the already existing education program because if you try to give it too much autonomy and establish a proprietary fund in these very beginning stages we are likely to get some scrutiny from the public.
- Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated that as of right now people can donate directly to the governmental organization and get a tax deduction. If the Board feels that it would be better to have a separate non-profit entity to receive donations then we can certainly do that.
- Commissioner Brandhorst asked if we have received donations yet. CFO Mr. Scott Hanna stated that it is still pretty early. Commissioner Brandhorst asked if we have solicited any donations yet. Mr. Richard Weaver explained that we put on our website about the new facility that we are building and that we have a piece asking for donations and listing what kind we'll accept including naming opportunities and things like that, but we have not received anything yet. Mr. Richard Weaver stated that we will mainly be asking for donations of things as opposed to money, such as equipment to put on display.
- Commissioner Brandhorst stated for the record that she is very uncomfortable having a donation section on our website. She stated that we are already collecting taxes from the tax payers to support the education building and the District and she doesn't think that we should also ask for donations. Commissioner Moeller explained that the website is not asking for donations from our taxpayers but from other Mosquito Control Districts for any historical data or pieces of equipment or pictures.
- Mr. Richard Weaver stated that we are depending on a lot of our displays being donated by the vendors. He stated that this will help offset building and operational costs and offset the cost for the taxpayers of St. Johns County.
- Commissioner Moeller concluded that many people around the world donate to education facilities such as schools, universities, and museums. She stated that if they see that we are probably one of the first in the country to have a facility such as this one, they may want to donate.

○ **NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM**

Item 2: Mosquito control action based evidence at AMCD ~ Mrs. Kay Gaines

- Mrs. Kay Gaines gave a PowerPoint presentation on how AMCD makes the decision for control action based on the evidence thresholds. She gave an overview of how AMCD serves St. Johns County, FL and the amount and kinds of mosquitoes and vector mosquitoes in St. Johns County. Mrs. Kay Gaines explained the mosquito-borne diseases and possible threats in St. Johns County along with the control action decisions taken by AMCD in the case of various scenarios. She concluded by thanking all employees and Commissioners for always supporting us.

○ **NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM**

F. Mutual benefits of collaboration between AMCD and DoD organizations in the past 18 years ~ Dr. Xue

- Dr. Xue gave a PowerPoint presentation on the mutual benefits from collaboration between AMCD and related DoD agencies. He explained that the AMCD has been conducting applied research since 2003. Dr. Xue stated the many similar interests between AMCD applied research and military organizations and how we can help each other. Dr. Xue went over the numerous cooperation projects AMCD has had with military agencies and NECE since 2003. He summarized the status and importance of finished projects as well as current and continued projects. Dr. Xue concluded by summarizing the overall related benefits and accomplishments since 2003 and thanking all cooperation military agencies and organizations, the AMCD Board, AMCD employee's, participates from AMCD, participates from the military, and some others for their support.
 - **NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM**

REPORTS:

1. **Director** ~ Dr. Xue stated that the annual report is an attachment in the Board Book and please inform him of any corrections that are wished to be made. Otherwise, we will publish it on the website next week. He mentioned that employee annual evaluations have been finished by last week and that we started working with the new budget, so please prepare a "Need List" to be presented to the Board in April. Dr. Xue mentioned that the Surveillance Program we are preparing hopefully to start in late April or early May.
2. **Attorney** ~ Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers discussed House Bill 1103 which requires the office of program policy analysis and government accountability (PAGA) to do a performance audit of independent mosquito control districts. He stated the performance audit must compare the services provided by each district examined with similar services provided by the county municipal governments wholly or partially within the boundaries of the district and expressly state the similarities and differences and relative cost and efficiencies between the services provided by the district and the relevant counties municipalities. Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated PAGA shall submit the final report of the performance audit to the president of the Senate and the Speaker of the Souse by September 30th, 2023. He explained that the intention is likely to determine if there are duplicate functions being provided by the mosquito control district and the host local government to enable the legislature to decide whether the special district needs to continue to exist. Attorney Mr. Wayne Flowers stated that in our case, the county nor the local government provides mosquito control functions, and concluded that will see if it passes and it is something that we should keep an eye on in the meantime.
 - Commissioner Becker asked if the language was geared towards mosquito control districts only. Commissioner Moeller stated that it was towards all 1700 special districts. She stated that the bill is suspected to pass and that it is being fast tracked.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gardner ~ No comments.

Commissioner Becker ~ Happy Women's Month! Oversaw the letter that Chairperson Moeller signed on behalf of the AMCA and sent a letter out personally last week to ask them to fund the SMASH act. She was accepted to the St. Johns County Chamber Of Commerce leadership program

that starts in April. Thanked Chairperson Moeller for all of her hard work on the FMCA situation. She loved our presentations tonight and emphasized what a good job everyone is doing; thanked all for their hard work.

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

Commissioner Brandhorst ~ No comments.

Commissioner Moeller ~ Asked Rudy to get a hold of James Clauson and make sure that the zoom meeting for March 17th from 2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. has not changed so that those of us who choose to be on it can be, even though as members we cannot speak but might like to see how the Board of Directors runs their meetings; she wants to see if any of the questions we have asked are pertinent enough to be addressed at the Board of Directors Meeting. Commissioner Moeller spoke to Chris Lyins about appropriations we wanted. Unfortunately, Cyndi Stevenson did not put in our paperwork in time for the house to go to the committee for appropriations, so at this point we are dead in the water with the \$890,000 that we were asking for SIT. She stated that it is not anything that the staff or our Attorney did; explained that Stevenson stood her up for two different meetings; both she and Rudy have emailed her assistant who has not given the respect to even reply. She asked Chris if he would consider giving us a ballpark figure for next year since it is an election year; Chris said he would be more than glad to help us with that; she thinks we should continue to go after state money so that all St. Johns County taxpayers do not have to holster the entire financial burden. We may even be able to get it out of the health department appropriations money, much like John Smith gets it out under the health department. Smith has gotten it out of the AIDS budget for \$750,000. He works several counties up in the panhandle to do surveillance and AIDS has nothing to do with mosquito control so she thinks we can pick another line item out of the health budget to ask for that money. Asked Rudy to please make sure everybody has the correct zoom information for the March 17th FMCA meeting; only the chairs of the committees are on the board so only the chair itself of any of the committees will have a voice at any of the meetings and they are the only ones who will have a vote; the only time the members get to vote on anything for FMCA is in the November election; she promised you will be seeing a change in how the sustaining dues and the independent or individual memberships are. Thanked the staff for all of their hard work.

ATTACHMENTS: ~

1. 2020 annual program report (draft)

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairperson Moeller adjourned the meeting at 7:05 P.M.

ATTEST



Chairperson, Commissioner Jeanne 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.