

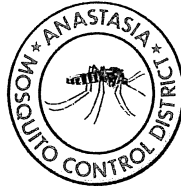
Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Gayle Gardner, Chairperson
T.J. Mazzotta, Vice-Chairperson
Tim Burton, Secretary/Treasurer
Trish Becker, Commissioner
Gina LeBlanc, Commissioner



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Dr. Rui-de Xue



Thursday, June 12, 2025

Thursday, July 10, 2025 – 5:00 PM~ Regular Meeting

MINUTES

The regular Board meeting for the Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County was held on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at 5:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Mrs. Trish Becker, Chairperson
Mr. T.J. Mazzotta, Secretary/Treasurer
Ms. Gayle Gardner, Commissioner
Mrs. Gina LeBlanc, Commissioner
Mr. Tim Burton, Commissioner

Also in attendance:

Dr. Rui-De Xue, Director
Ms. Lawiskia Hodges, District Attorney

Chairperson Becker called the meeting to order.

Commissioner LeBlanc led the invocation and pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Becker noted ~ that all were present

CEREMONY:

- Tim Burton was sworn in as the new commissioner for the Anastasia Mosquito Control District. The ceremony included a recitation of the oath of office, administered by the district's attorney. The new commissioner pledged to support and defend the US and Florida Constitutions, and to perform the duties of the position faithfully. District officials welcomed Burton and expressed excitement about the renewed five-member board. Finally, the audio concluded with an announcement inviting the public to participate.

PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

- Mr. Ed Slavin emphasizes the importance of upholding oaths of office and adhering to rules and regulations, particularly regarding the Anastasia Mosquito Control District's operations. They cite a past instance where the district violated its own rules and state law in purchasing a helicopter without competitive bidding. They highlight the potential for current actions to repeat this error by suggesting a resolution that has seemingly been misinterpreted, leading to the possibility of more violations. He emphasizes the importance of a properly constituted auditor selection committee that complies with both the board's resolution and state law. Mr. Slavin also personalized the issue by recounting family experiences with mosquito-borne diseases, emphasizing the district's crucial role in preventing such suffering. He advocates for prioritizing the selection of a qualified accountant to prevent future misinterpretations and legal breaches.

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

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

- Motioned by: Commissioner Mazzotta
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
- VOTE: Accepted by all Commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

A. A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda, with moving consent item #8 to New Business #1.

- Motioned by: Becker
- Seconded by: Mazzotta
- VOTE: Accepted Unanimously by all Commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Consent Items ~ APPROVAL OF:

1. Chemical Purchase and Inventory
2. Minutes: May 8, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
3. Adjunct Volunteer Appointment (appoint Dr. Florence Fougue to replace Dr. Stephen Dobson due to a conflicting interest)
4. Surplus Items
5. Dr. Xue, Vice President of SOVE, & Dr. Qualls, invited to give a Presentation at the 9th International Conference of SOVE, Greece, 12th-17th October, 2025
6. Dena Olivia visits Salt Lake City Mosquito Control District, June or July 2025
7. Treasure's Report and Approval of Cancelled Checks
8. Provide & install Three Replacement Gates & Gate Controllers

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Item 1: Discussion and Approval of the New Auditor Recommended by the Auditor Selection Committee ~ Commissioner Mrs. Trish Becker

- The Anastasia Mosquito Control District is selecting a new auditor. A call for residents to join an auditor selection committee was issued in September/October, but no applications were received. Consequently, the board, composed of Commissioner Mazzotta, Gardner (chair), and Becker, served as the committee. They reviewed proposals from three auditing firms: Malden & Jenkins (93.7 score), James Moore (89.3 score), and D.G. Perry (66.3 score). Malden & Jenkins, based in Bradenton, was recommended due to its high score, extensive experience with various government agencies (including over 700), and significant size. James Moore, from Daytona, was considered impressive but slightly more expensive. D.G. Perry, from Zephyrhills, was not chosen due to a lack of CPA certification for the primary contact.
- Mr. Slavin questioned the process, citing concerns about potential conflicts of interest. He argued that the process was rushed and did not fully comply with applicable state laws. He suggested tabling the vote until July, citing the need for more time and alleging potential corruption.
- Ms. Hodges responded to Mr. Slavin's statements regarding the District's auditor selection committee procedures and stated that the District's was in compliance with Section 218.391, Florida Statutes, governing special district auditor selection committee procedures, and the District's own auditor selection committee policy. Ms. Hodges noted that in the District's regular May meeting, the District voted to waive the more stringent committee membership/eligibility requirements due to a lack of citizen volunteers and approved three District members to serve on the auditor selection committee.

A. A motion was made to approve Mauldin and Jenkins as the new auditors for AMCD.

- Motioned by: Commissioner LeBlanc
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
- VOTE: Accepted by all Commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Item 2: Update on New Draft Budget~ Dr. Xue

- Dr. Xue discussed the proposed budget for fiscal year 25/26 and noted that this is a first draft based on employee needs, board approval of staff increases, and cost-of-living adjustments. He noted that the budget aims for a millage rate of 0.16, the same as the current rate of 0.16. Dr. Xue explained the budget process, including how employee needs are considered and how the budget is structured to cover personnel costs (such as salary and benefits), as well as operational expenditures. He mentioned that expenditures include seasonal staff, interns, auditor fees, chemicals, gasoline, legal fees, and travel. Budget justifications are included as attachments to the draft budget book, outlining the reasons behind the proposed spending. Dr. Xue also noted projected yearly increases, often estimated at 10%, but these will be adjusted based on inflation and market fluctuations.
- Mr. Slavin raised concerns about the lack of detailed justifications in the budget, criticizing it as resembling "rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic." He argued for more accountable procedures and transparency.

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

3. Item 3: Budget Amendment (helicopter engine repairs and three new trucks) ~ Mr. Scott Hanna

- The Florida Department of Agriculture's mosquito control districts need a budget amendment of \$291,724. This amendment is necessary to cover essential expenses, including repairs to a helicopter (\$100,000), improvements to gate systems (\$55,000), and the purchase of three new Ford F-150 trucks (\$X, anticipated to be impacted by projected price increases in the upcoming year). The amendment is being presented because the District's initial budget allocation did not account for these increased costs. The process involves securing approval from the Florida Department of Revenue, and excess revenues and grants offset a portion of the amendment. The department's expenditure and revenue figures are now connected through amendments, unlike previous practice when exceeding the budget for revenue was permissible. The presentation was intended to explain the necessary expenditures and their rationale to the governing body for approval.

A. A motion was made to approve the Budget Amendment as presented.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Mazzotta
- Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
- VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all Commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Item 1: Provide & Install Three Replacement Gates & Gate Controllers ~ (Consent Agenda Item #8 moved to New Business #1)

- Dr. Xue recommended awarding a \$54,501.47 contract for replacing three damaged gates and controllers. He noted that the project was initially estimated to be under \$35,000, but when quotes were received, they exceeded the projected amount, triggering a different bidding process. Dr. Xue noted the bidding review committee recommended SWI Fence due to superior warranties, demonstrated understanding of the specifications, and local presence.
- Ms. Hodges stated that a contract is necessary to legally enforce the terms of service for such a significant expenditure. She suggested that the final motion must include language to ensure a contract is drafted and signed before any work begins, including insurance, indemnity, and scope-of-service requirements.

- A. A motion was made to approve the repair of three electric fences by SWI Fencing for \$54,501.47 with the ability for Ms. Hodges to draft a contract.
- Motioned by: Commissioner Mazzotta
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
 - VOTE: Accepted unanimously by all Commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Item 2: New Commissioner Statement~ Mr. Tim Burton

- Mr. Burton expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with the audience, acknowledging the complexity of the task ahead. He pledges to do his best, emphasizing the need for patience and offering future clarification sessions. Mr. Burton noted he is looking forward to future engagements.

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

3. Item 3: Objective, Goals, and Measures Updates for FY 2025/2026 website~ Dr. Rui-De Xue

- Dr. Xue stated that the District needs to establish performance goals, centered around measurable outcomes for various programs. He highlighted key performance areas and goals, such as; customer service, mosquito surveillance/control, public relations and engagement, applied research, administration personnel/facilities, standardized public records, employee rights, and public notice procedures. Dr. Xue emphasized the need for concrete, measurable goals and standards regarding service delivery, safety, scientific rigor and employee/community engagement.

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

4. Item 4: Chairperson Presentation~ Commissioner Becker

- Commissioner Becker highlighted the district's operations, challenges, and accomplishments. The presentation highlights the critical role of mosquito control in public health, emphasizing the potential for rapid spread of diseases, particularly in a tourist destination like Florida. Overall, Commissioner Becker's presentation emphasizes the proactive and preventative approach of the Saint John's County Mosquito Control District to mosquito-borne illness and highlights the importance of collaboration and public awareness in mitigating the risks of these diseases.

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

5. Item 5: New Office Elections (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer) ~ Commissioner Becker

- Commissioner Becker is moving out of state and, therefore, can no longer hold the position of chairperson. Rules were cited prohibiting Mr. Burton and Mr. Mazzotta from becoming chair, as per policy in the Commissioner handbook, which requires Commissioners to serve on the AMCD Board for at least a year to be eligible for nomination as chairperson. Commissioner Gardner was nominated and elected as the new chairperson. The previous vice chair, Mrs. Gleason, resigned, necessitating the appointment of a new vice chair. Mr. Mazzotta was nominated and elected as the new vice chair. Finally, Mr. Burton was nominated and elected as the new secretary-treasurer. The board clarified the roles and responsibilities of each office, with particular emphasis on the chairperson's role as spokesperson and document executor.

A. A motion was made to nominate Gayle Gardner as Chairperson

- Motioned by: Commissioner Leblanc
- Seconded by: Commissioner Mazzotta
- Accepted by all Commissioners
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. A motion was made to nominate T.J. Mazzotta as Vice-Chairperson

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

- Accepted by all Commissioners
- MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

C. A motion was made to nominate Tim Burton as Secretary/Treasurer

- Motioned by: Commissioner Mazzotta
- Seconded by: Commissioner Becker
- Accepted by all Commissioners
- MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Item 6: Recognized and appreciated Mrs. Becker for her last 7 years of service~ New Chairperson

- Commissioner Gardner presented a recognition vase to Commissioner Becker, expressing appreciation for her hard work and dedication to the District from 2019-2025.

- NO MOTION WAS MADE ON THIS ITEM

REPORTS:

Director ~ Dr. Xue expressed gratitude for the success of AMCD's mosquito control program. He highlighted the absence of human cases of mosquito-borne diseases so far, despite past outbreaks of mosquito populations, and attributed this to public health education efforts, which have been particularly successful in teaching people to empty containers and adopt prevention methods. Dr. Xue commended the dedication of staff and the former commissioners, emphasizing the program's impact on the community and their role in it. Furthermore, he noted the high volume of visitors to the organization's education center and the positive recognition received. Dr. Xue also mentioned the upcoming National Mosquito Control Awareness Week and the importance of educating on the prevention of disease transmission.

Attorney ~ Mrs. Hodges gently reminded the Commissioners about completing the state ethics form (Form 1) by July 1st and confirmed the process for approving the auditor selection firm contract, including reference checking, and will return a document for final approval.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Gardner ~ thanked everyone.

Commissioner Mazzotta ~ thanked everyone.

Commissioner LeBlanc ~ Thanked everyone for their hard work.

Commissioner Becker ~ thanked everyone.

Commissioner Burton ~ thanked everyone.

ATTACHMENTS: ~

ADJOURNMENT: Chairperson Gardner adjourned the meeting at 7:30 P.M.

ATTEST

 
Chairperson, Commissioner Gayle Gardner, Secretary/Treasurer, Commissioner Tim Burton

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.