

Anastasia Mosquito Control District of St. Johns County

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Gayle Gardner, Chair Person
T.J. Mazzotta, Vice Chair
Tim Burton, Secretary/Treasurer
Anthony Timis, Commissioner
Gina LeBlanc, Commissioner



DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Dr. Rui-De Xue

Thursday, December 11, 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, December 11, 2025, at 5:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance:

Mr. Anthony Timis, Commissioner
Ms. Gayle Gardner, Chair
Mrs. Gina LeBlanc, Commissioner
Mr. Tim Burton, Secretary/Treasurer (arrived late due to traffic)
Mr. T.J. Mazzotta, Commissioner (absent)

Also in attendance:

Dr. Rui-De Xue, Director
Ms. Lawsikia Hodges

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Gardner noted all Commissioners were present except Commissioner Burton, who arrived late.

- Attorney Ms. Hodges reported that she has been in contact with Commissioner Mazzotta regarding his resignation and subsequent withdrawal. She is awaiting confirmation and guidance from the Commissioner of Agriculture's office. Once that information is received, she and Dr. Xue will provide the Board with a final status update on Commissioner Mazzotta.

Chairperson Gardner called the meeting to order.

Commissioner LeBlanc led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

- A member of the public encouraged proactive intergovernmental relations with St. Johns County regarding overdevelopment, mosquito habitats, and public education. He suggested workshops and restoring intergovernmental relations functions.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

- A. A motion was made to approve the Agenda as presented.
 - Motioned by: Commissioner Timis
 - Seconded by: Commissioner LeBlanc
 - VOTE: Accepted by all Commissioners
 - **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 except for Item #7, which was moved to New Business #3
- Motioned by: Commissioner LeBlanc
 - Seconded by: Commissioner Gardner
 - VOTE: Accepted by all Commissioners
 - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Consent Items ~ APPROVAL OF:

1. Treasure's Report
2. Vouchers/cancelled Checks
3. Chemical purchases and inventory
4. Board Meeting Minutes of October 9 regular meeting
5. Policy amendment for consent agenda (remove chemical inventory/purchase & Treasurer's report/ cancelled checks to report, information & attachment based on the Board direction from last meeting, and effect from 2026 January Board meeting after approval)
6. Switch 2026 January 8's Board meeting to January 15 due to holidays
- ~~7. Board meeting schedules in 2026 and board meeting time change from 5:00pm to 5:30pm from January 2026~~
8. One year extension of the exploratory collaboration agreement with Mosquito Mate on the new biopesticide (Wolbachia-infected male mosquitoes)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Item 1: St. Johns County property value and tax perspective ... Mr. Eddie Creamer, Property Tax Appraiser, St. Johns County (15min)**

Mr. Creamer provided an overview of the 2025 tax roll, explaining the office's independent role in appraising property, calculating assessed and taxable values, and administering exemptions.

- Reporting a total market value of \$90.3 billion, including \$88 billion in real property and \$2.4 billion in tangible personal property. Assessed value was \$69 billion, with a taxable value of \$59.2 billion across approximately 181,000 parcels. Homestead properties accounted for \$53.7 billion in market value and \$30.6 billion in taxable value, while commercial properties totaled \$7 billion and non-homestead residential \$19.5 billion.
- Mr. Creamer discussed proposed Florida property tax reforms, including potential elimination or increase of homestead exemptions (up to \$200,000) and possible reductions of county revenue by 50%, which could impact local millage rates.
- Board members discussed possible responses, including adjusting millage rates, and emphasized the importance of monitoring legislation, engaging with state representatives, and preparing for potential budget impacts.

A. No Motion was made

Public Comment:

- Mr. Slavin addressed the Board regarding corporate income taxes in Florida, noting historical context from 1971 when a corporate income tax was approved by referendum. He expressed concern that potential property tax reforms could limit local taxing authority, suggesting that revisiting corporate income taxation could help offset revenue losses.
- Legal counsel clarified the three designated public comment periods under the Board's policy and emphasized that public comment is allowed at specific junctures during the meeting.

2. Item 2: Discussion and approval of health, dental, and life insurance renewal ... Mr. Don Lohr, Herbie Wiles Insurance Agency (15min)

Mr. Don Lohr of Herbie Wiles Insurance addressed the Board regarding the renewal of employee benefit programs effective January 1.

- Mr. Lohr reported a 6.11% rate increase from Florida Blue. Mr. Lohr explained that his team shopped the market and presented multiple options to the Insurance Committee.
- Following in-person meetings and detailed discussions, the Insurance Committee recommended remaining with the current providers for all lines of coverage, including medical, dental, and life insurance. This recommendation was included in the Board packet.

A. A motion was made to approve the contract

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

Item 3: Quarterly Budget Analysis ... Mr. Scott Hanna, CFO (5 min)

The Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Hanna, presented the fourth-quarter budget analysis and year-end financial summary. He reviewed actual revenues and expenditures compared to the final amended budget.

- Mr. Hanna reported actual revenues of approximately \$8.3 million versus an original budget of approximately \$8.2 million, representing 101.6% of budgeted revenue and 96.52% of the total levy, consistent with prior years and TRIM guidelines.
- Mr. Hanna noted several expenditure categories came in under budget, including Tax Collector and Property Appraiser commissions. He identified potential areas for future budget adjustments, including aerial emergency spraying, entomology supplies, fuel, and operating expenses.
- Chemical expenditures were reviewed, with an ending inventory of approximately \$930,000 as of September 30, which Mr. Hannah stated is consistent with District practice and influenced by a DACS grant.
- In response to Commissioner Timis' questions, Mr. Hanna explained that revenues exceeding budget is generally attributable to TRIM calculations, fewer foreclosures, and tax sales. He reported an unaudited

surplus of approximately \$417,433, which rolled forward to future capital outlay, and stated the District currently has approximately \$5 million in carryover funds to be re-budgeted in the next fiscal year.

Public Comment:

- A member of the public addressed the Board regarding the resignation status of a former commissioner, stating his belief that resignations under Florida law are irrevocable. He questioned whether the former commissioner continued to receive compensation and requested clarification from legal counsel.
- Legal counsel advised that she is awaiting guidance from the appointing authority before providing a final determination and stated that additional information will be shared with the Board once received.
- The speaker expressed concern regarding delays in resolving the matter and requested consideration of a forensic audit, citing concerns related to financial oversight, procurement practices, and board vacancies. He concluded by urging greater accountability and transparency from the District.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Item 1: Update and progress report about the MGT's study on compensation ... HR Generalist, Mrs. Sheila Rivera (15min)

Ms. Sheila Rivera, HR Generalist, provided an update on the District's classification and compensation study being conducted with MGT. The purpose of the study is to ensure equitable, competitive, and legally compliant pay practices, including review of job classifications, and salary structures.

- Ms. Rivera reported that the kickoff meeting with MGT occurred on November 4, all employees completed and submitted their job analysis questionnaires by December 8.
- A market survey was issued to comparable agencies on November 18, with a December 19 deadline; nine agencies have responded to date. Employee interviews are scheduled for January, followed by preliminary findings presented to management in February. A final report and recommended classification and compensation plan are expected to be presented to the Board in April.
- Ms. Rivera noted the study includes market comparisons, tenure considerations, and recommendations for compensation adjustments. Legal counsel confirmed base salary adjustments are permissible under Florida law. Employee interviews will generally include incumbents for each position, with multiple participants for multi-employee roles.

A. No Motion was made

2. Item 2: Board members for the FMCA Dodd short course (Commissioner Caucus, Gainesville, January 29, Thursday), Tallahassee legislation day (Feb 3/Tuesday), American Mosquito Control Association meeting (Portland, March 23-27, Monday -Friday), AMCA Washington DC Legislation meeting (May 11-14, Monday to Thursday) ... Dr. Xue (15 min)

Dr. Xue provided an overview of upcoming training, legislative, and association meetings for Commissioners in 2026. He encouraged participation in the Commissioner Short Course beginning January 29, noting travel and lodging options

- A Florida Mosquito Control Association legislative meeting in Tallahassee is scheduled for February 3 to discuss tax issues and lobbying strategies, with emphasis on property tax legislation and engagement with state representatives.

- He also discussed federal-level meetings in Washington, D.C., including coordination with the American Mosquito Control Association, CDC, NIH, and USDA, focusing on budget, funding, and research collaboration for mosquito and tick control programs. He highlighted the decreasing participation from USDA to workshops and the importance of continued federal cooperation.
- Additionally, the Florida Mosquito Control Association annual meeting is scheduled for November 9–12, 2026, in Ponte Vedra. Commissioner Phil Goodman will be a featured speaker, providing updates on mosquito control and related economic data at 21st workshop, March 3-6, 2026. Commissioners were asked to indicate which events they plan to attend so registration and accommodations can be arranged.

A. No Motion was made

3. Item 3: Discussion and approval of Board Meeting Time Adjustment

- Commissioner Timis requested that future Board meetings be moved from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. to make attendance more accessible for the public, noting that many residents work typical business hours and a later start time would facilitate participation.
- Commissioner LeBlanc opposed the change, citing employee convenience, potential safety concerns due to darkness during winter months, and the desire to avoid extending the workday for staff.
- The Board discussed public comment procedures, with clarification provided by legal counsel regarding the three designated public comment periods outlined in the recently adopted policy. Public comments were received emphasizing that the proposed time change would not harm employee operations, stressing compliance with Florida's Sunshine Law, and advocating accessibility for residents and stakeholders.

A. A motion to approve the time change for Board meetings to start at 5:30 p.m.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Timis
- Seconded by: Commissioner Burton
- VOTE: Accepted by Commissioner Timis, Burton, and Gardner
- VOTE: Rejected by Commissioner LeBlanc
- **MOTION PASSED 3:1**

B. A motion to update the District handbook to reflect the new meeting time of 5:30 p.m.

- Motioned by: Commissioner Timis
- Seconded by: Commissioner Burton
- VOTE: Accepted by Commissioner Timis, Burton, and Gardner
- VOTE: Rejected by Commissioner LeBlanc
- **MOTION PASSED 3:1**

REPORTS:

Director ~ Dr. Xue

Dr. Xue provided an update on vector surveillance and public education activities.

- As of 2025, the District reported two positive cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis and 15 positive cases of West Nile Virus in the Sentinel Chickens. One human case of West Nile Virus was identified through

blood donation testing in June, and one travel-related dengue fever case was reported; no locally acquired dengue cases were recorded.

- Dr. Xue also reported on District educational outreach, including participation in the Florida Mosquito Control Association meeting, where five presentations were delivered and three students received awards. Since the opening of the Disease Vector Education Center in March 26, 2024, approximately 12,000 visitors have attended, with 73% being first-time visitors from multiple counties and states. DVEC continues to provide public education on mosquito biology, control, and disease prevention.
- Holiday scheduling was noted, with operations continuing throughout the two-week period except for Christmas and New Year's closures. Staff were commended for their dedication, and Dr. Xue extended holiday greetings to the Board.

Attorney ~ Mrs. Lawsikia Hodges

- Ms. Hodges reminded the Board of the annual ethics training requirement under state law, noting that all members have completed the training for the calendar year.
- She also reported that any updates regarding Commissioner Mazzotta will be communicated to the Board via one-way correspondence prior to the next meeting.
- Ms. Hodges extended holiday greetings to the Board.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner LeBlanc ~ Thanked staff and wished everyone a Merry Christmas

Commissioner Timis ~ Provided an update regarding the spending cap imposed in September 2024 on the Disease Vector Education Center, noting a \$10,000 donation and confirming that expenditures remain within the established limit. He stated that a presentation on projected spending and closeout costs is expected at the next meeting.

Commissioner Burton ~ No comments

Commissioner Gardner ~ Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairperson Gardner adjourned the meeting at 6:18 PM

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.