

Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District  
Regular Meeting of the Board  
14 February 2024

Board Members: Jeff Schumann, Doug Perkins, Brad Lawes, Sharon Stearns, Jeff Whiting, Bruce Baccei, Lynne Peck, Paul Vaczy, Steve Belcher

Others: Wayne Rausenberger, Richard Russ; on Zoom: Will Mathis, OCW Operations Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm; the Chair noted a quorum and that all towns were represented.

Public Comment: Wayne Rausenberger noted that according to the By-Laws, with a change of Treasurer and Bookkeeper there should be a Year-end Report and a statement of Profit and Loss. He asked if the State would issue the adulticiding permit before the resolution of the Notice of Violations. He observed that one of the products used by the District will no longer be permitted and asked how it would be replaced. He noted that the Board used to receive a report after members had attended a convention, and asked for clarification on the permit mentioned for larviciding (it was the permit for aerial spraying; see below).

Richard Russ asked about the products now allowed.

Minutes of Previous meeting

Steve Belcher offered a correction to the Minutes of the Jan. 10 Special Meeting, and the amended Minutes were approved.

Finance Report

Lynne Peck noted that she is still learning about OCW past practices and working through six boxes of documents. The balances stand as follows:

General Checking	59,253.55	
Equipment/Capital	14,338.36	
Legal		894.26
Debit Card		91.41
Total funds available:	74,577.58	

She had given the Chair a Profit and Loss statement to the end of 2023, and noted that no further funds were expected until September.

Jeff Schumann reported on a visit to the Bank; they were very helpful in arranging accounts to avoid fees. New signature cards will be needed.

Lynne Peck had questions about the cell-phone bill, that identified three lines (cell-phone, wifi, and the answering service).

Jeff Schumann requested a motion to change the names on the Signature Cards. Sharon Stearns

asked about specifications: two signatures are needed for amounts over \$500. Jeff Whiting noted that the Bank has said it will not police such a practice; Doug Perkins noted that this would be a matter for the Audit Committee. No motion was made.

#### Audit Committee – Jeff Whiting

Jeff has been waiting to meet with Lynne when she is ready; the committee plans a statistical review, rather than examining every transaction, and the goal is to consider efficiency.

#### Operations Report

Will Mathis noted that he had spent time with Parmelee on Jan. 26, going through records and data. He is working to get three trucks ready, and is planning maintenance on the sprayers.

Sprayer upgrades will cost around \$30,000.

The Operation Report was approved, and Lynne Peck made arrangements for delivery of mail that had come in.

#### Public Relations – Steve Belcher

Nothing to report.

#### Executive Committee

Jeff Schumann noted that he had been keeping the lines of communication open with the State and with the Vendors; he is trying to define the level of technology upgrade needed to satisfy the State.

#### Permitting Committee

Doug Perkins said the adulticide permit had been submitted. The aerial permit is on hold; Patti Casey wants to change the form to include UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles). There has been a change of heart on the subject in the Agency for Agriculture. Brad Lawes noted that this is a national push to approve UAV uses, and that it could result in significant economies: \$38,000 for a drone vs. \$400,000 for a spray rig.

Doug also noted that we list three products in the Adulticiding Application. Approval of that application is presently doubtful.

#### Old Business

Jeff Schumann requested that we remove the Shed and Wastewater items from the Agenda and leave them to the Executive Committee that will report when there is action.

#### New Business

##### Meeting Times

The Board agreed to continue to meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Brandon Senior Citizens Center.

##### Anti-Degradation Rules

Doug Perkins reported on proposed rules coming from the State on water-quality that will strictly limit adding any substances to water (cheese-makers are excepted) and requiring exhaustive studies to be performed by a professional organization. These rules could affect the District's activities; however, authorization is issued through a General Permit and so the District may be covered by our Pesticide General Permit.

There is to be a hearing on Tuesday Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>; a motion for the Vice-Chair to attend was approved. Zoom information was later distributed to Board members. The Public Comment period is open until February 27.

The Board then voted to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing legal matters relating to the Notice of Violation and the Assurance of Discontinuance. The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:50 and approved four motions:

One: That the Chair would communicate with the state and verify their approval of the equipment for the upgrades required for the sprayers;

Two: That the Chair should approach the LDFLA about securing \$30,000 as a loan or a grant to finance the upgrades;

Three: That the Chair should notify Select Board Chairs about this issue, as it may trigger a request for a budget increase of over 5% in the next cycle.

Four: That the Executive Committee be authorized to obtain and spend the funds, up to a maximum of \$30,000, for the equipment approved by the State.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 7:00 pm March 13 at the Brandon Senior Citizen Center on Forestdale Road.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Belcher