

Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District
Regular Board Meeting
13 March 2024
Unapproved Minutes

Attendance

Board: Jeff Schumann, Doug Perkins, Paul Vaczy, Lynne Peck, Jeff Whiting, Bruce Baccei, Tom Hogan, Albert Wenta, Steve Belcher

Others: Will Mathis (OCW Operations); Wayne Rausenberger, Richard Russ.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. The Chair noted a quorum, and that not all towns were represented (no one from Brandon).

The Agenda was approved without change

Public Comment

Wayne Rausenberger informed the Board that Sharon Stearns was now the only Brandon Representative. He had a question about the products used in adulticiding, since the State does not allow Malathion; he felt the presentation in Salisbury was a good job, but noted the persistence among the public of misinformation on membership in the District; he recalled the occasion in 2012 when the State approached the District (following deaths from mosquito-borne diseases); he raised questions about the selective treatment, through private funds, in Salisbury, putting it as a question of the haves and the have-nots. He also reproached the Board for failure to abide by the Open Meeting laws, and also mentioned Roberts' Rules of Order.

Rich Russ had a question about the adulticide products permitted. Doug Perkins explained that the District lists four products for use. Three of them are pyrethroids (i.e. in the same family of chemicals); the fourth, Malathion, is not currently permitted. The risk in using one family of chemicals is that resistance could develop; alternation of chemicals reduces that risk.

The Minutes of the Feb. 14 Board meeting were approved.

Operations Report

Will Mathis noted little activity at this time, but preparations for future activity: sending out the sprayers for re-calibration and updates. He raised the question of a new truck, that he considers urgent.

Doug Perkins noted the need to publish the 'Notice of Intent' materials relating to spraying.

Treasurer's Report

Lynne Peck is still absorbing information. The Account figures are:

General Checking	\$65,745.36
Equipment/Capital	\$ 4,338.36
Legal	\$ 884.26
Debit Card	\$ 72.41

The available balance on the State Larviciding grant is \$59461.65, by what she has found.

There was some discussion of the procedures for the State Larviciding Grant: essentially, the OCW fronts the costs and awaits reimbursement. Much of those costs involve employees rather than products.

A question was raised about the Lemon Fair ICD practices; they do no adulticiding. Will Mathis noted that almost all their work was in the lab: identifying the mosquitoes.

Audit Committee

Jeff Whiting has been working with the Treasurer. The Committee has received the final version of the Audit performed last year and will share it with the members. The Board can then discuss distribution of the report. Thate audit identified some weaknesses (not major).

Permitting

Doug Perkins reported participating in a public meeting on the 'Anti-Degradation Implementation Rules' being proposed; it was a small group. On the key question for the OCW, the answer was clear: the Pesticide General Permit excludes the OCW from the possible new requirements. An Antidegradation review will be part of the permitting process when the PGP comes up for renewal in three years.

The Permitting Committee will be working on the permit for aerial application of larvicides.

The Permit for adulticiding has been posted by the State for public comment, to end on April 7; there may well be negotiation with the State on permitting conditions.

Public Relations

There is nothing to report on local activity.

Jeff Schumann reported on the American Mosquito Control Association conference that he had attended. He, Patti Casey (State) and Dave Huber (State) attended a session on drones; State policy may change. Jeff and Patti spent some hours with vendors exploring the options for the new State requirements on flow-meters. He brought back a glossy magazine, *Wing Beats*, published by the Florida Mosquito Association. That issue was devoted to efforts in Texas.

The question of Social Media came up. Will Mathis noted that the District has been in operation for 30+ years and there is still a great deal of misinformation out there.

Executive

The Chair noted that he had not been able to meet with all the Select Boards, and expressed condolence at the sudden death of the Proctor Select Board Chair.

The Executive Committee met with Lynne Peck in an effort to align the budget categories with the Quick-Book (accounting software) categories. How to collect which data was an issue; time-sheets may need revision.

The Chair reported that he is now a member of the AMCA Regulations Committee; on his return trip from Texas he ended up sitting next to Rebecca Balint (our Congresswoman in Washington) on a flight and may have been able to bend her ear a bit.

Ticks entered the conversation, as a possible expansion of ICD activity.

New Business

2024 Season: Equipment etc.

The question of the sprayers and the status of the trucks was central. The District needs at least four functional trucks. The sprayers mounted on them must be sent out for refitting and equipping with new electronics. The Argo is functional; supplies of larviciding product are adequate. For adulticiding, there may be a new product but it has not yet been cleared in Vermont

For staffing: Will has a crew of three, with one in training, and Doug Perkins and Jeff Whiting for back-up.

Doug Perkins suggested that given the need for funds to pay for the sprayers, the District should delay the purchase of a truck.

Will Mathis disagreed, and described the current inventory.

Doug Perkins made a motion to rescind the previous approval of the expense, up to \$10,000, for the purchase of a truck. Lynne Peck commented on cash flow and the need to have enough to pay the employees. It was noted that the newest truck is 2006.

The motion to rescind permission to purchase a truck passed, with the understanding that should an irresistible bargain turn up, the Executive Committee could approve the purchase at short notice.

Adulticide Equity

In the past mosquito season, the State required a schedule of treatment from the District. The consequence, given weather variables, was that many parts of the District did not get treated in timely fashion; the District was not allowed to adjust the timing of treatments to cover the areas that some time before had experienced rain or other conditions that did not permit spraying. In its current permit application the District has removed all mention of a fixed spraying schedule to ensure flexibility in the face of unpredictable weather.

Bridport

It was noted that the town of Bridport has undertaken the first steps towards withdrawal from the Lemon Fair Insect Control District.

The Board then went into Executive Session at 8:20, on a motion to discuss the legal issues pertaining to the Assurance of Discontinuance.

Coming out of Executive Session at 8:57 pm, the Board approved a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the Assurance of Discontinuance.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

The next regular Board meeting should take place on 10 April, 2024, at the Brandon Senior Citizens Center on Forestdale Rd.

respectfully submitted,
Stephen Belcher