

Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District
Regular Meeting of September 11, 2024
Approved Minutes

Attendance:

Board Members: Jeff Whiting, Paul Vaczy, Olya Hopkins, Wayne Rausenberger, Jeff Schumann, Doug Perkins, Brad Lawes, Lynne Peck, Bruce Baccei, Albert Wenta, Ben Lawton, Steve Belcher

Public: Richard Russ, Will Mathis (OCW), Kerry White (OCW).

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm, the Chair noting a quorum and representation from all the Towns.

The agenda was approved.

Public Comment:

Richard Russ had questions about the District response to the reports of EEE virus in local mosquitoes. Will Mathis answered, defining limits of OCW involvement; Steve Belcher also noted some recent news stories on TV and cited a statement from Patti Casey at the AAFM.

Approval of Minutes

July 10: Doug Perkins offered further corrections to the Amended Minutes. On a motion by Albert Wenta, the corrections were approved.

August 14: approved as amended.

Operations Coordinator Report.

A busy couple of weeks. Some statistics.

Call-ins: Brandon 54; Leicester 67; Salisbury 17; Goshen 2; Pittsford 18; Proctor 5; plus others

Total: 238

Last Season: Brandon 92; Leicester 125; Salisbury 80; Goshen 9; Pittsford 84; Proctor 16; other: 9.

Total: 415

No-Spray Requests:

Brandon 17; Leicester 13; Salisbury 27; Goshen 6; Pittsford 15; Proctor 12

Total: 90

Last Season

Brandon 23; Leicester 16; Salisbury 28; Goshen 9; Pittsford 13; Proctor 15

Total: 104

Larval Samplings

Brandon 54; Leicester 44; Salisbury 20; Goshen 3; Pittsford 13; Proctor 6

Total: 140

Last Season Total: 155

CDC Light Trapping

Brandon 25; Leicester 15; Salisbury 5; Goshen 1; Pittsford 16; Proctor 19

Total: 71

Last Season Total: 220

He listed the names of species in the OCW traps that are carriers for West Nile and EEE, and later listed species found in the State sampling outside our District.

Adulticide Spraying this season:

Proctor: July 9, two routes (one incomplete because of mechanical failure)

August 30: East and West Routes

Brandon SW route: July 27

NW Route: Sept. 2

North: Sept. 4

Pittsford Center: Sept. 1

Leicester East and West Lake: Sept. 6

Leicester Center: Sept. date not noted

Salisbury: Trapping at North end of Lake did not meet the threshold for treatment

He reviewed the status of the vehicles; some have been inspected; others need work and are scheduled for inspection.

He reported that Clark Parmelee had requested the maps recording activity; he has been sending them in every week. The tracking equipment is working fairly well and allows drivers to go faster (the flow increases with the speed). There is a problem with the software that requires a 'static IP address;' the OCW system through Verizon works with a 'dynamic IP address' that changes every week, requiring updating of the system. There was a discussion of other providers and costs.

He reported egg rafts sent to Cornell for resistance testing, but the samples did not survive the transit. He is not sure of finding new samples at this point in the season and anticipates push-back from the State but does feel the effort was made.

He has looked at a few trucks but has not found anything suitable. The sprayer-motor that failed has been repaired and returned but has not been installed. The bill will be paid when the sprayer has been tested. Among his final points, he described the work the crew does on vehicle maintenance at the shop.

Brad Lawes had a question about an area by the Leicester school.

On a motion by Jeff Whiting, the report was approved.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer had sent out a statement of the cash-on-hand and also a profit-and-loss statement by email before the meeting:

Cash on Hand as of today:

Bar Harbor Checking:	\$39,183.11
Legal & Audit Account:	\$914.26
Equipment Replacement:	\$27,474.18
Debit Card:	\$593.41

Leicester payment	\$25,997.00
Pittsford payment	\$9,710.75
Total:	\$103,872.71

Wayne Rausenberger had questions about the placement of the ‘air gas’ item. He had a question about the truck insurance, that is now fully paid for the year. He questioned the division of audit and legal line items. Finally he questioned the amounts in the Equipment/Capital Improvement fund and the documentation of the transfers from.

Will Mathis requested a motion for Jeff Whiting to purchase an OSHA-standard containment system for flammable liquids, in the range of \$600-1,000. Jeff is currently negotiating a purchase on behalf of the Goshen Roads Department and would like to purchase them both at the same time so they can go in one shipment. Jeff Schumann moved that the cost be approved, up to \$850, and the motion was approved.

Albert Wenta had a question about the details of the communications bill, that includes the answering service and the Verizon account. Doug Perkins described options for trimming the expenses. He requested W-4s – Board members who plan to take their stipends will need to submit them as well. He has explored options for reducing the insurance bills, with little success to date. One question that came up was liability for pollution.

On a motion by Ben Lawton, the report was approved.

Chair’s Report

He is still learning about operations and activities; he had a very constructive conversation with Craig Zondag at Lemon Fair. He has received questions from reporters about EEE, and referred them to the State guidelines; he also received questions referred by Board Members, and reminded Board Members that they answer to their Select Boards, not the Chair, and that they are the spokespersons for matters pertaining to their towns.

Committee Reports

Audit Committee: Jeff Whiting would like to get another member assigned. He would like to examine the flow of billing, approval, and payments.

New Business

Town Payments

After reviewing the Agreement among the Towns, and consultation with the former Parliamentarian of the District, the Chair determined that the motions approved at previous meetings to bill quarterly and to change the payment date to the start of the quarter violated the Agreement, that clearly stipulates that the Board shall present an assessment to the Towns, and the Towns shall determine the schedule and manner of their payments. The previous motions are therefore invalid. There were no objections. The Chair directed the Treasurer to prepare a letter to be sent to all Towns informing them of this change.

Framework for the Draft Budget

After some explanatory remarks, Doug noted that the budget cannot be increased by more than 5% without the consent of the towns. He then explained some of the elements. Labor categories have been divided into seven functions: Operations coordination, office administration, Adulticiding, Larviciding, Building maintenance, Vehicle maintenance, and marking no-spray

zones. Expense categories are divided: Overhead, Adulticiding, Larviciding. The budget will depend on staffing levels to be determined by the Board, and here the Finance Committee is departing from the previous practice of using a 5-year moving average of such costs. At a later point he asked for guidance on the budget level; when introducing the item, the Chair had specified that there would be no vote on actual figures at this meeting. The consensus of the Board was to keep the budget level at last year's figure of \$248,145. The draft budget will be sent to the Board before the October meeting, for discussion; a revised budget will be sent out before the November meeting at which final approval is expected.

He then handed over explanations of the algorithm to Jeff Schumann. The three categories (Overhead, Adulticiding, Larviciding) are based on different metrics. For Overhead, the Board looks to the 'Equalized Education Grand List Values' for the Towns. For Larviciding, the Board looks at the acreage of Class-2 wetlands in each town. Adulticiding is based on a combination of two measures: the miles of road sprayed and the number of dwellings.

American Mosquito Control Association

The OCW received an invitation to sign on to a letter from the AMCA to Members of Congress requesting attention to and funding for mosquito control; there was a deadline falling before the next meeting and Jeff Schumann was authorized by the Chair to sign on to the letter. The OCW Board retroactively approved that authorization, and delegated Jeff Schumann to attend the AMCA meeting. Funding for attendance at the Northeast MCA had already been approved in last year's budget.

The Board then went into Executive Session, ca. 8:52 to discuss personnel matters. The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:42 and took no further action.

The Board then adjourned at 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Belcher
Secretary/Chair