

Minutes of Board Meeting
Pasco County Mosquito Control District
2308 Marathon Road, Odessa, FL 33556
May 14, 2024

Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at the District office on May 14, 2024 at 9:00 A.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call

Those present from the District were Chairperson Evans, Treasurer Cox, Secretary Abbott, Executive Director Rogers, Michele Donagrandi, Jose Freundt, Edwin Martinez, Quetzal Vazquez, Karen Mojica, and Maria Johnson, all representing PCMCD.

Lina Castro from InVision Advisors, Shawn Foster from Sunrise Consulting, Inc., and Stephen Booth were also present.

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Cox motioned to approve the Agenda; all approved.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Commissioner Cox motioned to approve the consent agenda; all approved.

Public Comment:

Cathy Julian

Ms. Cathy Julian expressed her concern regarding recent articles in the newspaper, particularly one highlighting a negative budget figure of negative \$18,000,000 as reported to the State Government office as of 24 of last month. She emphasized that such a portrayal of the budget is disconcerting and unlikely to accurately reflect discussions held within the County.

Ms. Julian speculated that the recent change in personnel within the District might be a contributing factor to the inconsistencies. However, she stressed the importance of ensuring that budget figures are accurate and align with the financial documents being utilized for decision-making. Ms. Julian emphasized that such discrepancies represent significant sums of money and raises further concerns.

While Ms. Julian expressed confidence in the District's efforts regarding mosquito control, she admitted her lack of expertise in scientific matters. She commended District staff's work based on her observations of their efforts. However, she expressed concerns regarding the discrepancies in financial matters.

Gary Joiner

Mr. Joiner expressed deep concern regarding the budget figures and expenditures, describing them as alarming, without addressing which items he had concern over. He conveyed his shock at the discrepancies and other irregularities found in the financial records, expressing that they are "beyond his comprehension." He continued to state that "despite consulting with CPAs, who themselves were unable to fully understand the situation," he remains "uncertain about the appropriate course of action and is awaiting their advice."

New Business:

A. Discussion of Live Local Tax Exemption Opt-Out with Stephen Booth:

Mr. Steve Booth of Booth and Cook, Attorneys at Law, discussed with the Board the Live Local Tax Exemption, new legislation currently sitting on the Governor's desk for approval. After discussion by the Board, Attorney Booth, and Shawn Foster, Commissioner Cox made a motion to ask Attorney Booth to draft a resolution expressing their position on the matter to "opt out" once the Governor has signed off on the bill; all approved.

B. Proposed Standard Operating Procedure for the Purchase Order Process, A. Rogers

Executive Director Rogers shared the Purchasing Process draft policy. The purchasing process was in need of refreshment so additional measures could be put in place for better accounting practices and increased transparency. The draft policy language had been reviewed by the District's independent auditing CPA firm to ensure best practices. Commissioner Cox and Commissioner Abbott had several questions and suggestions. Executive Director Rogers and Finance Director Jose Freundt responded and answered their questions. Commissioner Cox thanked everyone for updating the policy and increasing accountability in purchasing. Executive Director Rogers also commended her staff for working on the document. Commissioner Cox motioned to approve the proposed purchasing policy, providing that language was added to further defined the prerequisites for Vendor approvals as discussed; all approved.

Unfinished Business

A. Legislative Update - Shawn Foster, Sunrise Consulting, Inc.

Mr. Foster informed the Board that the 2024 Legislative Session had ended in March. Of the approximately 2000 Bills that were filed, very few would impact the District. One that may potentially impact the district was discussed.

General Information

A. New Campus Update, InVision Advisors

Lina Castro, with InVision Advisors presented an update on the campus project. She shared a big progression this month as the architect has completed the construction drawings and they are actively being reviewed by IVA and District staff. She also informed that site permit comments are being worked through by Spring Engineering, Inc. and the County and they anticipate full response by the end of this month. Regarding FDOT, there is a right of way construction agreement draft for offsite roadway improvements and utilities currently under review. Ms. Castro provided updates on additional items and discussion ensued.

B. Director's Report and District Operations, A. Rogers

Executive Director Rogers reported that on April 26, 2024, PCMCD was notified of an Emu flock, located in the Central portion of the County, that had several birds die from Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus. That is the biggest item District staff have been focusing on since last Board meeting. Mrs. Rogers shared that when she received the call from The Department of Health, the PCMCD Management team were all together for a non-related meeting and as soon as she hung up the phone, she was able to address the staff and immediate action was taken to formulate a response. Execution and arbovirus response plan was in place within 30-45 minutes which allowed boots on the ground within the hour. Treatment methods included larval surveillance and ground larviciding in the area, helicopter larvicide applications that day and an aerial adulticide application that same evening. Several consecutive nights of ground ULV adult applications in the area were conducted along with additional aerial adulticide missions. She further reported that treatments continued as well as adult mosquito collections for monitoring for virus in mosquito pools. Of the mosquito pools collected, all the potential vector species were submitted for testing for the virus to State laboratories and they have found **no** detections in any of the mosquito pools submitted. Executive Director Rogers also shared that the area of concern was a 5-mile radius from the affected site, which is based on the flight range of vector species, extended down into a portion of Hillsborough County, District staff have been working closely and communicating our efforts with the mosquito control staff to our South. At the time of the meeting, it was now 3 weeks out from the first bird that became infected with virus and so we will continue monitoring and performing necessary control efforts this week and into next week. If there is need beyond that, then efforts will continue. Executive Director Rogers also shared that Emus and EEE might sound like something new, however it is not new to the Director, as she was the State's Medical Entomologist serving at the Department of Agriculture in 2018 when there were several emu flocks impacted by this mosquito-borne disease. Therefore, she had the expertise to know how to respond quickly & appropriately. Mrs. Rogers also explained to the Commissioners the high level of virus Emus can carry and that they can actually transmit the virus to each other via bodily fluids. It can be transferred to humans if it were to go into any bodily orifice. Complete, full head-to-toe personal protective equipment required for all staff visiting the property. Executive Director also reported that Polk County had a horse die from EEE virus. She shared that media interviews have been given with the main focus of the message for this virus detection is really urging people to limit their exposure to mosquitoes and time spent outside during dawn and dusk, wear appropriate clothing; long sleeves and pants, use EPA insect repellent, and make sure you dump and drain standing water. Executive Director Rogers reminded the Commissioners it is very early on in the season for detection of EEE. Typical EEE transmission occurs in late summer and fall, except under drought conditions, which we are currently

facing. Mrs. Rogers also addressed some of the misinformation being spread by members of the public and former Commissioner in the room on the helicopters. She stated the current aircraft are capable of handling all District needs especially that of recent public health concern. She stated that District staff have treated more area in less time with one AirBus helicopter than they could have with all four aircraft the District previously owned combined. There was further discussion on District response to disease threats.

C. Community Outreach and Education Report, M. Johnson

Ms. Johnson provided an update on community engagement and outreach activities.

D. Safety Report, N. McFaul

In absence of Nick McFaul at the Board meeting, Executive Director Rogers provided the safety and training report.

E. Arbovirus Report, A. Prasauskas

In absence of Agne Prasauskas at the Board meeting, Executive Director Rogers provided an update on the arboviral activity throughout the state and within Pasco County.

Good of the Order:

Commissioner Evans thanked District staff for all they do to protect public health in our community. He recognized things are getting busy and appreciated staff handling the emergency response so timely and efficiently.

Meeting Adjourned:

Commissioner Cox made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:17am; All approved. Meeting Adjourned.

Date: 18 JUNE 2024

Attested: 