

Minutes of Board Meeting
Pasco County Mosquito Control District
2308 Marathon Road, Odessa, FL 33556
January 9, 2024

Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at the District office on January 9, 2024 at 9:01 A.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Those present from the District were Chairperson Cox, Treasurer Abbott, Secretary Evans, Executive Director Rogers, Nick McFaul, Agne Prasauskas, Michele Donagrandi, Karen Mojica, and Maria Johnson, all representing PCMCD.

Approval of Agenda: Executive Director Rogers informed the Board that the Standard policy required finalization and asked for this item to be added to the agenda under *Unfinished Business*. Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of Standard Discussion to *Unfinished Business*; all approved.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the consent agenda. After discussion by Commissioner Abbott; all approved.

Public Comment:

Cathy Julian –

Julian stated she finds it odd the helicopters were flying yesterday and questioned how to see the tests results that are making PCMCD want to put the helicopter up. Because, according to Ms. Julian, PCMCD said it's very expensive to fly & it doesn't seem like mosquito weather right now. She also stated at the last meeting PCMCD said they were placing a 2.0 milage cap on the milage rate but she feels it's a little crazy and says that's 8x's the milage rate is right now, and that anything near that amount would be a taxpayer revolt. She claimed to have heard from a lot of people and they are not happy. She continued to state that she has been recording PCMCD meetings and publishing them and there is a lot of interest in mosquito commission and there are a lot of views on their channels. Commissioner Abbott asked if she was posting positive stuff about the PCMCD and why there are so many views. She said she didn't know because they don't get many comments. Julian stated she got attacked pretty well last week about how stupid she was. She mentioned a Bob Miller and said she didn't know him, and he didn't speak well, and that it was comical. She then said that she gets personal messages from people. Julian stated it was good PCMCD was publishing / recording the meeting and asked if PCMC was putting it up on YouTube. Commissioner Cox stated he was using his personal phone to record the meeting. Ms. Julian stated she was just recording for personal use and that if they wanted to see any of the footage on the last meetings, they have the recordings on the Rumble channel. Lastly, Julian stated the video that was out last week about the lab and there was a mold problem, that the lab was across the road/across the hall. She continued by asking if there is a mold problem, then why was there not a mold problem here? Julian then stated she sent in a few information requests which were not responded to, and she requested them again, but she hasn't gotten any information yet.

Emily Madison –

Madison stated her biggest concern is that several years ago, 2.5 million GMO mosquitoes were released in the Everglades, yet, PCMCD sends people to destroy mosquitoes. She said that was a disconnect to her. She continued by saying the mosquitoes that she sees at her house are the weirdest things she has ever seen. She hasn't seen anything like that before! Madison said none of the things she put on them worked in the past that repelled them is working and that the only thing working is to burn citronella and have a fan blowing to circulate to keep them away. She said she didn't understand this. She asked why her gardens aren't producing fruit when she's getting beautiful plants, but getting no vegetables whatsoever and never had trouble growing vegetables before. Madison then stated that she doesn't understand why all these chemicals are being sprayed around while we[PCMCD] purposely released mosquitoes. Madison then asked, "does that make sense? Am I was missing something?" Commissioner Abbott stated if she didn't understand she should seek out the best source. She stated she thought Mosquito Control Board would be one of the best sources. Commissioner Abbott stated the best source is the Florida Department of Entomology at University of Florida. He suggested that she would go to the website to start and commented that GMO mosquitoes were released in the Florida Keys not the Everglades. Stated the mosquito control district there would be a good source of information.

Madison then asked why are we building a brand new building. Commissioner Abbott responded, "to protect you." Madison then stated she "wasn't buying it."

New Business:

- A. Commissioner Position Change: Executive Director Rogers stated it was Commissioner Cox's turn to pass the gavel to Commissioner Evans as the Chairman of the Board. Commissioner Cox is now the Treasurer & Commissioner Abbott is Secretary.
- B. Campus Finance Option Review: Mr. Jon Ford with Ford & Associates, Inc. updated the Board regarding the potential for financing a new campus facility. Mr. Ford responded to Commissioners and Executive Director Rogers' comments and questions. Commissioner Evans suggested having Mr. Ford back to continue discussions at the following meeting. All Commissioners agreed. Mr. Ford will follow up with some options and cost comparisons at the next Board meeting, February 14, 2024.
- C. Review and update of Employee Handbook: Executive Director Rogers updated the Board on making improvements to internal processes. After questions and discussion with Ms. Donagrandi, Mrs. Rogers, & Commissioners regarding the policy drafts, Commissioner Cox motioned to approve the updates in the employee handbook, Commissioner Cox and Commissioner Evans approved. Commissioner Abbott opposed. Motion approved.

Unfinished Business:

- A. Standard Life Insurance Policy: Executive Director Rogers stated the Commissioners needed to decide when we wanted a new policy to become effective so draft language can be provided for their review and implementation. Further discussion with Commissioners, Ms. Donagrandi, and Executive Director, Commissioner Cox motioned to adopt a policy that will no longer cover any employee with life insurance that retires with a hire date after January 1, 2024, and current employees hired before January 1, 2024, will continue to receive the benefit upon retirement. After further discussion, Commissioner Cox and Commissioner Evans approved. Commissioner Abbott opposed. Motion approved.

General Information:

- A. Campus update: Lina Castro, with InVision Advisors presented an update on the campus design, stating that the site construction documents have been submitted to Pasco County for permitting. She then discussed options for wetland mitigation. Commissioner Cox motioned to utilize the mitigation bank credit purchase of \$20,000; motion approved. Castro Also updated on general work in progress.
- B. District Operations: Executive Director Rogers wished the Commissioners a Happy New Year and proceeded to provide a report of District operations. One major item she reported on as the unusual weather in December, with increased rainfall. She stated aerial operations were continuing through the holidays and well into January already. This is unusual because these months have historically been very dry and thus, mosquito populations are typically lower than what is currently being experienced. Rogers warned that the mosquito season is lengthening and soon, PCMCD may find ourselves in a position where they are no longer able to focus on typical "off-season" tasks, as the rain continues. Rogers then provided an update on new positions allotted this fiscal year. She also informed the board of staff travel for conferences and continuing education that was upcoming.
- C. Ms. Johnson provided an update on community engagement and outreach activities.
- D. Safety Report: Nick McFaul provided an update on safety concerns and upcoming training.
- E. Arbovirus Report: Agne Prasauskas reported the 2023 year-end totals for arbovirus detections in Florida.

Good of the Order:

- A. Commissioner Evans thanked Commissioner Cox for his leadership as Chairman last year. He then commented that the Christmas party for staff was a great way to end the year. He loved the Christmas parade we participated in and then commended Executive Director Rogers for doing a great job over the past year. He stated "we are heading in the right direction, fine tuning and getting policies done that were neglected. Director Rogers has had a huge burden to fix everything. It's not over, but we are getting there with her leadership. I am happy to be a part of all of it!"

Meeting Adjourned:

Commissioner Cox made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:29 A.M., all approved. Meeting Adjourned.

Date: 2/14/2024

Attested: 