

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Those present from the District were Chairperson Evans, Treasurer Cox, Secretary Abbott, Executive Director Rogers, Nick McFaul, Michele Donagrandi, Edwin Martinez, Jose Freundt, Stelios Kalimnios, Karen Mojica. Lina Castro and Jonathan Moore from InVision Advisors were also present.

Approval of Agenda:

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Before the Approval of the Consent Agenda, Executive Director Rogers wanted to clarify an item on the credit card statement with Truist Bank on the Financial Report, informing the Board that Truist Bank recently consolidated 3 separate banking platforms into 1 and there were numerous issues with the transition. Commissioner Cox also noted that the Investments have earned \$51,579 last month.

Commissioner Cox motioned to approve the consent agenda; all approved.

Public Comment:

David Wallis:

-Mr. Wallis stated that he had a question for clarification on the new campus. He stated that it had come to his attention that there is an archaeological site on the campus that required extra permitting procedures. He wanted to know how the permitting procedures are progressing. He understands it is not holding up the project but there are requirements for the FAA and the DOT.

Cathy Julian:

-Ms. Julian posed questions to the Board. She stated that she met with Jose Freundt, the District's Finance Director this morning and mentioned he was a great hire. She saw something concerning though, which Jose addressed and also explained to her that he was doing massive cleanup. She questioned why the Commissioners just approved the budget on the Consent Agenda. She stated that she was curious what kind of time they are spending looking at the budget. She then proceeded to state that she feels as though it should be addressed at a meeting and not hidden. Ms. Julian also stated she had sent a request asking about the Notices from the State. She stated that she contacted the State and there were quite a few, however, she has not had a chance to really go through and digest them. She proceeded to say that with Jose here now, we will be getting another TRIM notice this year. Ms. Julian continued by stating that the State asked our local Tax Collector not to give us our money next year. She continued to state that it "seems like it should raise some freaken huge red flags and should have been worthy of some kind of conversation at a meeting at some point," but then stated that she hasn't heard it. She then said that "it's just an observation."

-Commissioner Evans responded to Ms. Julian by stated that it was addressed at prior meetings.

-Ms. Julian stated that the report that was filed had items that violated State Law. She stated that seemed like a major issue to her.

-Commissioner Evans responded by stating, "they were corrected."

-Ms. Julian responded back by saying the fact they were corrected doesn't negate the fact that they happened. She then said "they shouldn't happen and people getting huge raises, and being raved about, shouldn't be making those kind of figures."

-Commissioner Cox also stated that we were not the only public entity that letter goes out to.

-Ms. Julian responded, by saying that she has no idea. She stated that she asked for the information from our organization. Then she went to the State.

-Commissioner Cox stated that "the fact of the matter is that the letter was received by the District in early October. It was corrected by the end of October." He continued to say that the tax bills go out November 1st and that's when the revenue starts coming in, which is after the correction had already been made with the state. Commissioner Cox shared there was no money for the Tax Collector to withhold because the issue was corrected before the funds were collected in the budget year.

New Business:

Quarterly All-Star Award Presentation

Commissioner Evans presented the Quarterly All-Star Award to Stelios Kalimnios, Larvicide Supervisor. He noted, "Stelios exemplifies dedication, innovation, and commitment to excellence. He is always ready to lend a helping hand to colleagues and offer support where it's needed. He consistently brings a positive attitude and thirst for learning into his work. Over the past year he has grown into a supervisor and looks up to others for advice, help and training. Stelios is a true asset to our team and we are proud to name you our Quarterly All-Star employee." Commissioner Evans, Commissioner Cox, Commissioner Abbott, and Executive Director Rogers congratulated Stelios and presented him with an award.

Unfinished Business:

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Draft

Director Rogers stated only a couple items have changed since the first Draft was presented to the Commissioners in June. Mrs. Rogers stated the Property Appraisers Office has Certified their portion of the Department of Revenue forms which gives us our specific information related to what funding we can expect, based on the mileage rate the Board chooses to set. From this, the rollback rate was able to be calculated for mileage which is 0.2360 and that is reflected in the new draft of the budget. She asked the Commissioners to recall the first draft showed the mileage rate set at the same rate as current fiscal year's rate of 0.2545, as a place holder to begin budget discussions. Executive Director Rogers stated that the rolled-back mileage rate was now reflected on the 2nd page of the Draft Budget. She then informed the Board that the overall reduction to the budget by taking that rollback rate of 0.2360 is roughly \$1,995,000.

Commissioner Cox stated he would like to challenge District staff to go back and actually lower our tax rate, rather than taking the rolled-back millage rate so that the District would have a tax reduction for the citizens. He continued by stating that given the trajectory of the County and it's growth, the District should really be good financial stewards and actually lower taxes.

Commissioner Abbott also asked District staff to communicate with vendors to ask that they reduce their fees for goods and services to the District. This will help offset costs when trying to reduce the tax rate.

Further discussion among the Commissioners and questions were answered by Executive Director Rogers.

General Information:

- A. Campus Update: Jonathan Moore, with In-Vision Advisors stated that he was in full support of the Commissioners efforts to reduce the budget. He stated they are prepared to reduce their service fee by 15% until construction starts in the project. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Moore for being a great partner of the District and volunteering this reduction in cost. Lina Castro then presented an update on the campus design. She then described the process for obtaining a general contractor for the project. She stated that the Request for Qualifications to pre-qualify general contractors for the project will be finalized and published. The second step of selecting a general contractor for the work is to invite those pre-qualified bidders to present a hard bid for construction of the campus. There was discussion on the possibility of phasing the project if the need should arise. Jonathan Moore stated that IVA will work with staff to figure out how the project could be potentially phased. Mr. Moore also spoke on the statement made earlier in the meeting during public comment regarding the Archaeological permits. He asked if there was a permit number to reference in response to comments made by Mr. Wallis. Mr. Wallis shared that he would have to get permission from the author of the email he received and will forward the email to Executive Director Rogers. Commissioner Abbott asked Mr. Wallis "has someone been trespassing?" Mr. Wallis replied "no." Mr. Wallis stated he may have been misinterpreting the information,

he would like to clarify, it may be a misunderstanding, he's just looking at some information and asking a question that he does not know about. Executive Director Rogers asked for him to forward that information so IVA and District staff could review to gain a better understanding of what he was referencing.

- B. District Operations: Executive Director Rogers began her report by stating she wanted to address the statements being made regarding staff allegedly not providing records that have been requested. She said "it's simply not factual." Mrs. Rogers informed that "it's paramount for individuals who are asking for records be very clear with the records that they are requesting." Continuing that the District provides the exact records that are requested. She proceeded to state that the Department of Revenue does not issue reprimands to District staff and it's important that those seeking records make clear, specific requests so that the records they are seeking can be provided appropriately. Director Rogers proceeded with sharing that the fourth Maverick hybrid truck ordered by the District has finally arrived and it will be integrated into the fleet. She further noted that they have been working on the RFQ for new banking services and finalizing the review and edits on that to get it posted. The goal is to have the selected banking service in place for the start of the fiscal year. She then noted they have started the draft for the chemical bid for next year. Commissioner Cox asked a few questions regarding the chemical bid and Executive Director Rogers responded. Rogers reported on the usage of the H125 helicopters as there have been false claims that the District is not using the helicopters and that they are not going to be useful for use in the future. Mrs. Rogers provided data to the Commissioners on the number of acres treated by District aircraft over the last 10 years to compare to the usage for Jan. – June of 2024. The data shows that each year since the purchase of the aircraft, the acres treated has increased significantly. She also informed of the difference in treatment methodology now being conducted versus that of the past. This includes moving from just a couple of swaths around a treatment site merely on the peripheral edge or the interface of the home and expanding to complete coverage of that entire body of water. This makes for overall increased reduction in the entire mosquito population within that water body, in its entirety. She stated that it is congruent with best management practices in the mosquito control industry and reduces the likelihood of contributing to resistance development in the mosquitoes located within that treatment area. This translates to a large expansion of coverage which results in greater mosquito population reduction. Commissioner Evans pointed out that he sees we have nearly doubled our larvicide treatments. She said the District is using this aircraft to its full potential, as the H125's are a utility ship and very efficiently treat large parcels of land effectively. Mrs. Rogers also shared how the District supplements UAS/Drone applications into the aerial program, stating that drones will not replace District helicopter operations, but drones allow access for treatment of areas that are not safe to fly with a helicopter. The timing of mosquito control applications is crucial. If mosquitoes hatch off on Saturday morning because there is a tide or rainfall on Friday night, for example, the window for use to make an effective control application is very short this time of year. A mosquito can progress from egg to adult in as little as 3 to 5 days in the heat of the summer. If there is a delay in treatment until Monday and the site is 500-acres it would take approximately 4.5 days to effectively make an application covering the entire site. Unfortunately, within that additional 4.5 days, the mosquitoes will have hatched off by that point. She reminded them of the benefits of going after the mosquitoes in the larval stage versus the adult stage. If you wait until mosquitoes hatch off as adults, the treatment for control is more costly, the products used are harsher, you're now having to target a larger area because mosquitoes have dispersed by flying around, and most importantly, the mosquitoes have by then become flying and biting adults, creating a large nuisance which now have the potential to spread disease. This is congruent with current best management practice for mosquito control. Rogers also showed the Commissioners the list of aircraft owned by mosquito control programs throughout the State of Florida. This helps show how Pasco County Mosquito Control District's aerial program compares to the other mosquito control programs in FL with their own aircraft. When there is a hurricane or mosquito-borne disease presence, two helicopters are needed, where at least 1 aircraft is functional at all times. Commissioner Abbott shared that having an in-house aerial program sets a mosquito program apart. He then said that in Florida, we have more aerial programs than any other state. He stated the purchase of the H125's was hands down the best purchase the District has made in the history of mosquito control in Pasco. Commissioner Cox asked to identify which of the mosquito control programs with their own aviation program are independent Districts versus county-run programs. Rogers identified the independent taxing Districts on the list. Lastly, Rogers shared the service requests for the month of June and compared them to the prior year's June requests, which, as the data showed, provided an overall reduction. Also presented were the trap counts for the month of June last year and the month of June for 2024, showing a reduction as well. This shows that the operational changes in

methodology and optimization of the aircraft have resulted in positive impacts to reduce the mosquito pressure. Commissioner Cox pointed out that coupled with how wet the month of June was this year compared to last year, you would think it would be the other way around. He stated that's the direct impact of the program, and that it is working!

- C. Community Outreach: Karen Mojica provided an update on community engagement and outreach activities. Executive Director Rogers commended Karen in all her efforts as she has added a lot of school programs and summer camps over the past year and has taken on a higher work load, educating more of Pasco's youth. Each Commissioner thanked Ms. Mojica for all her hard work as well.
- D. Safety Report: Nick McFaul provided the Safety Report and trainings held with staff. Mr. McFaul also shared that he has been working closely with the Entomology Department to provide the staff fun-facts and a "mosquito of the week" refresher for staff. He shared that this is now being implemented in our morning meetings. Staff will also have a safety video shown weekly. .
- E. Arbovirus Report: Agne Prasauskas provided an update on the arboviral activity throughout the state and within Pasco County.

Good of the Order:

Commissioner Evans shared that he appreciated all that the staff do, pointing out the pilots and ground crews have been working hard with the helicopters and thanked Executive Director Rogers for all she takes care of and the many hats she wears to accomplish the mission. He thinks the District is doing a great job in keeping Pasco safe and appreciates all of their efforts.

Meeting Adjourned:

Commissioner Cox made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 A.M.; all approved. Meeting Adjourned.

Date:

13 August 2024

Attested:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Randall", written over a horizontal line.

