

Pasco County Mosquito Control District

2308 Marathon Road, Odessa FL 33556

Minutes of Regular Board Meeting

September 18th, 2024

Call to Order

Chairman Evans called the Pasco County Mosquito Control District Board meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Evans led the Pledge of Alliance to the Flag.

Roll Call

Commissioner Evans called the roll. Chairman Evans, Secretary Abbott and Treasurer Cox were present.

District Staff: Executive Director Rogers, Nick McFaul, Edwin Martinez, Jose Freundt, Karen Mojica, Maria Johnson, Lindsay O'Reilly, and Luc DeWolf

Additional attendees: Lina Castro, Jana Paulk, Dan Tipton, Adam Horn, Matt Kelly, Robert Coggins, Gary Joiner

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the agenda; all approved.

Consent Agenda

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

Public Comment

Commissioner Evans called for public comment.

Gary Joiner

Mr. Joiner stated that he objects to some of the items in the budget because he feels they are not necessary at this time due to the economy. Commissioner Cox asked Mr. Joiner if they could agree to not allow criminals to be associated to their campaigns. Mr. Joiner replied that he was not aware of any criminals associated to his campaign. Commissioner Cox provided a campaign contribution document as evidence that Mr. Joiner received campaign contributions from a convicted felon and asked him to denounce it and return the money or donate it to charity. Mr. Joiner denied having any knowledge of that and stated that he would not return the monies.

New Business

A) District Banking Services Discussion

Executive Director Rogers informed the Board that the solicitation for banking services resulted in proposals from five institutions: JP Morgan Chase, SouthState, Truist, ServiceFirst, and TD Bank. The committee is currently reviewing these proposals and will meet during the week of the 23rd to finalize a shortlist. The selected vendors will be invited to present in person on October 3rd, and the committee intends to make its recommendation at the October regular Board meeting.

Commissioner Abbott inquired about the previous challenges with the current banking provider and asked for an update on their performance. Director Rogers responded that while many of the issues have been resolved, communication remains a concern. She noted that opening the solicitation was a positive step, as the new proposals offer better rates than the current provider. Commissioner Cox agreed. Commissioner Abbott also reminded the Board that the last time the district switched banking providers, the process was time-consuming for staff.

B) FY 2024-2025 Chemical Bid Summary and Vendor Selection

Executive Director Rogers informed the Board that the solicitation for chemical services resulted in proposals from seven vendors: Azelis (also known as Adapco), Vesperis (formerly Univar), Clarke, Target Specialties, OPTERRA Solutions Inc., Nutrien, and Red River Specialties. The chemical bid analysis worksheet, including recommendations for each vendor, was provided to the Board. When selecting chemical providers, the key factors considered were product cost, delivery timeframe, and vendor relationships. Commissioner Cox noted that pricing was requested for three new chemicals. Director Rogers explained that the RFP requested multi-year pricing for certain products, as shown on the bid document. Some vendors offered a flat rate for all three years, while others prorated prices year over year. The budget has been updated to reflect the new chemical costs. Although the overall budget amount remains unchanged, individual line items have been adjusted accordingly. The final awards for all chemicals are listed below.

- Malathion @ \$78.00/gal from Vesperis
- Permethrin @ \$80.00/gal from Vesperis
- Naled @ \$295.63/gal from Azelis/Adapco (>120 gallons) \$310.41/gal (year 2), \$325.93/gal (year 3)
- Merus 3.0 @\$415.04/gal from Clarke
- 2,4-D Amine @ \$15.95/gal, Imazamox @ \$190.00/gal, and Glyphosate @ \$23.00/gal from Opterra Solutions, Inc
- Altosid P35 @ \$20.05/lb 40# bag and \$19.60/ 1000# bag from Vesperis & Target Specialties
- Altosid XRG Ultra @\$10.05/lb 40# bag and \$9.95/lb 1000# bag from Target Specialties
- Censor @ \$3.83/lb from Clarke
- FourStar Bti CRG @\$15.75/lb 40# bag and \$15.70/lb 1000# bag from Clarke

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the chemical bids as the staff has recommended. Motion passed unanimously.

C) Board Packet Composition Discussion

Director Rogers is requesting approval to post the Board packet online in an effort to provide more transparency to the public. She acknowledged the idea came from a citizen, Cathy Julian, and mentioned that this a prime example of a way to impart impactful, meaningful change between the District and the public. The Board was provided a new sample of the future Board packet for review.

Commissioner Cox recommended adding an extra layer of checks and balances by having the Commissioners sign off on the financial information each month. Currently, the Commissioner responsible for signing checks each month reviews and approves the financial activity. He proposed that during the first week of each month, a different Commissioner who did not sign checks the previous month, should also conduct a review and formal approval in writing. Commissioners Evans and Abbott concurred. Director Rogers clarified the intended process, and Finance Director Jose Freundt noted that the review would occur in arrears, covering the recently closed financial period.

Commissioner Abbot requested that District staff provide a breakout of licenses and subscriptions in the financial reports.

D) FY 2024-2025 Strategic Plan Discussion

Executive Director Rogers reminded the Board that new legislation passed in the last year now requires independent taxing districts conducting mosquito control applications to post their goals and performance measures online starting

October 1st of each fiscal year. The strategic plan was provided to the Board for review, with a note that some minor formatting changes were still being finalized. Executive Director Rogers highlighted that although the original plan was to hire a consulting firm to assist with the creation of the Strategic Plan, the district saved \$15,000 by completing the plan in-house. She emphasized that it was a collaborative effort involving all staff and thanked the commissioners for their input and feedback. The Commissioners expressed appreciation for the team's work and the final product.

Commissioner Cox challenged the staff to translate the goals and measures into a business plan that ensures execution, transparency, and accountability to the public in tracking progress. He stated that in conversations with Rogers, he understood that is the direction the staff are moving. Executive Director Rogers requested the Board's approval to finalize the plan and post the document on the district's website. Commissioner Abbott motioned to adopt the 2024-2025 Pasco County Mosquito Control District Strategic Plan, and the motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

A) Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Draft

Executive Director Rogers informed the Board that the final budget now includes updates to the two outstanding items from the preliminary budget hearing—chemical costs as a result of the solicitation and general liability insurance—both of which have now been finalized. Despite these updates, there is no change to the overall budget. Commissioner Cox confirmed that the new millage rate reflects a 12% reduction from the exiting rate, and Director Rogers affirmed this.

B) Board Composition Discussion

Director Rogers requested clear guidance on how the district should move forward regarding the composition of the Board. She asked whether the Board should transition to a 3-member districted structure or expand to a 5-member districted Board. Once a decision is made, Director Rogers will collaborate with the county's GIS department to gather data and recommend equitable boundaries for the seats. Additionally, the district's attorney will be consulted to draft the necessary proposal. Commissioner Evans shared that in his conversations with Representative Maggard, they had discussed maintaining the Board at 3 members to avoid adding "more government." Commissioner Abbott suggested exploring both options, noting that since a change is required, it's worth considering all possibilities. He pointed out that the Board has operated with at-large seats since the 1950s, which has worked well as it allowed everyone an opportunity to run for office. Commissioner Evans added that boundary lines could change with every census. Commissioner Cox expressed support for equal representation and proposed putting the decision to a public referendum, as the Board had previously discussed. He recommended having the district's attorney contact the supervisor of elections to determine when it could be added to the ballot. Commissioner Abbott inquired about potential costs, and Commissioner Cox clarified that if the referendum is held during a regular election, there should be no additional fees. Director Rogers mentioned that in her research with the county GIS department, it is more logical to use residential addresses versus the census because they are updated more timely and not reactive. Director Rogers cautioned that the district is under a time constraint to finalize this decision and requested the Board's direction on how to proceed. She recommended that we have the attorney propose both options and contact the Supervisor of Elections and that way we have all the information so that a decision could be made at the October Board meeting.

General Information

A) New Campus Update, Invision Advisors

Lina Castro reported that they have submitted the final comment revisions to Spring Engineering, and those changes are currently in progress. They also received updated elevations, which the district and InVision reviewed and approved, allowing Spring Engineering to move forward in remaining edits required to construction documents. InVision expects to receive the final design package by September 30th, after which there will be a review period before issuing the invitation to bid for those contractors who prequalified for the campus project.

Additionally, six contractor submissions were received for the pre-qualification phase. Four contractors have been pre-qualified, while two are pending as InVision works to address clarifications in their pre-qualification packages. Over the next month, InVision will be preparing the drawings and the invitation to bid package. Commissioner Abbott inquired about the status of the two pending contractors and whether they remain interested in continuing the pre-qualification process. Director Rogers noted that all six submissions had some irregularities that needed to be resolved, and each of them have been communicating with InVision to determine the requisite information required. Commissioner Cox commented that this is a common occurrence in the process.

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

Executive Director Rogers informed the Board that district staff have started a public health networking coalition called "Pasco One Health Alliance" – POHA. The intent of this alliance is to bring together key stakeholders from various sectors, including human health, animal health, environmental and emergency services to address the interconnected health challenges the community faces. The inaugural meeting will be held on October 18th at the PCMCD office. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Michael von Fricken, Director of the One Health Center of Excellence at the University of Florida. He will be providing insight and a foundational understanding of the one health concept which emphasizes the value of collaboration and multi-sectoral strategies to contribute to improve overall health in the community. Director Rogers feels that this alliance is crucial as we are addressing the challenges posed by a rapidly increasing human population, changes in our landscape and environmental conditions, and increased vector-borne disease transmission. She emphasized that this year has been particularly active for mosquito-borne disease not only in Pasco County, but state and worldwide. The idea was built from a conversation with members of the health community who because of their role should have been aware of the mosquito-borne disease concern. However, they were not and that brought to light that there is a breakdown in communication and messaging. She stated that our goal is to collaborate with these sectors and discuss how we can improve those outcomes in Pasco County. The district's role will be vital in implementing and promoting the one health strategy. Commissioner Cox asked how deep we are going into the health community. Director Rogers noted that the invitees include representatives from the Pasco County Department of Health, Emergency Services, the Pasco County Sheriff and Fire Rescue, animal and veterinary services, area hospitals, the Tallahassee Health Department, and the Florida Department of Agriculture. The Commissioners praised the idea, which was proposed by Maria Johnson, the Community Engagement Director, and expressed their support for the public health initiative.

Director Rogers has also been invited by the Pasco County Health Officer to participate in a Regenerative Leadership in Public Health program, which consists of a series of modules over the next six months. The program requires a capstone project, and Director Rogers and her team plan to use the POHA initiative as the project, as it aligns well with the program's goals.

Executive Director Rogers stated that as of September 17th, the Florida Department of Health has elevated Pasco County's arbovirus status to a *Mosquito-Borne Illness Alert* due to 2 locally acquired cases of Dengue virus in the Moon Lake area. One case that was previously attributed to Hillsborough County case, is being reclassified to Pasco County because of some interaction in the affected area. There is concern that there could potentially be more cases. This *Alert* status is the highest level of concern for mosquito-borne disease transmission.

Director Rogers described the comprehensive integrated response to the alert stating the district issued a press release and posted informational videos on social media, significantly increased surveillance to monitor for *Aedes aegypti*, the primary vector mosquito species for Dengue virus, and conducted both ground and aerial larvicide and adulticide treatments in the affected area. The district established 11 teams of two to carry out door-to-door inspections and educate residents on mosquito-borne diseases, prevention methods, and symptoms to watch for. She informed that the district is working closely with the Department of Health, which is also conducting door-to-door surveys to identify residents showing symptoms of the virus, such as headache, muscle, bone, or joint pain, nausea, vomiting, pain behind the eyes, swollen glands, and rash. Executive Director Rogers stated that the dedication of PCMCD staff in protecting public health is truly commendable and deserves recognition.

Commissioner Evans asked if we have traps set in the area. Director Rogers replied, upon first suspicion of a potential virus, we perform our standard disease response protocol, which includes heightened surveillance for the specific mosquito species of concern, in this case BG Sentinel traps were used, which specifically target potential Dengue vectors. She continued by informing the Board that staff have already had a full week of surveillance and are now in their second week of activity in the impacted area. Sentinel chickens are not effective in monitoring for Dengue because the virus does not show up in avian populations.

Commissioner Abbott pointed out that Executive Director Rogers has extensive previous experience with Dengue from her time working in the Florida Keys and asked her if the protocols we are using in Pasco County were the same as used in the Keys. Director Rogers explained that the protocols are, in fact, the same and are designed to locate and reduce the specific mosquito species, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, which are responsible for spreading Dengue virus. It is critical to educate the public about their personal responsibility in eliminating the habitats (containers that hold water) where these mosquitos like to breed, as they have an affinity for human habitation and the items discarded or placed around dwellings. Director Rogers noted that despite differing opinions recently presented to the Board, it is her professional opinion that urbanization specifically now occurring locally in Pasco County, but also across the globe, is a significant contributor to the increase in mosquito-borne disease activity.

C) Community Outreach and Education Report, M. Johnson

Maria Johnson provided an update on community engagement and outreach activities. Highlights included a tour with members from the Pasco County Parks and Recreation Department, as well as a public tour. Director Rogers and Maria also attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Florida Department of Health, celebrating their partnership with Premier Community Healthcare to open a new dental office. Additionally, the Communications Manager from Lee County Mosquito Control visited to exchange ideas and learn about our operations and community education and outreach efforts. In response to the recent Dengue outbreak, the district has been handling a multitude of press inquiries and conducting interviews to educate the public on mosquito prevention and self-protection. Staff also participated in a Resource Fair at the Land O' Lakes Library and are preparing to resume the 5th-grade classroom outreach starting in October.

Commissioner Cox thanked staff members, Karen and Maria for helping the team by setting traps in addition to their normal duties while the district has been combatting the aftermath of a hurricane and recent dengue virus detections. Commissioner Abbott noted that the tone of the media attention on the district has shifted from a political tone to a message of public health and safety, the true mission of the district.

D) Safety Report, N. McFaul

Nick McFaul reported no safety or incidents this month.

E) Arbovirus Report, A. Prasuskas

Executive Director Rogers provided a summary of the arboviral activity throughout the state and within Pasco County.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Evans praised the staff for their excellent work in managing all activities and effectively communicating important messages about public health and safety.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Commissioner Evans reported on dates of upcoming meetings as part of the Agenda with the following:

Regular Board Meetings (9:00 AM unless otherwise noted)

- September 18, 2024 – Final Budget Hearing at 5:01pm

- October 8, 2024
- November 12, 2024
- December 10, 2024

Events

- FAPMS Annual Meeting – October 7-10, 2024
- Columbus Day Holiday – October 14, 2024
- Larvicide Resistance Monitoring Workshop – October 15-16, 2024
- FASD Certified District Manager Certification – October 21-25, 2025
- FMCA Annual Meeting – November 4- 7, 2024

Meeting Adjournment

Commissioner Evans motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 P.M.; all approved.

Meeting Adjourned.

Date: 11/12/2024
Attested: 