

Otter Creek Watershed Mosquito Control District
Board Meeting
19 July 2023
Unapproved Minutes

Attendance

Board: Doug Perkins, Kyle Bearor, Jeff Whiting, Bruce Baccei, Tom Hogan, Sharon Stearns, Ben Lawton, Steve Belcher. On Zoom: Jeff Schumann and Paul Vaczy

Other: Will Mathis (OCW), Kerry White (OCW), Wayne Rausenberger

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. The Chair noted a quorum and that all towns were represented.

Steve Belcher offered an addition to the agenda involving the allocation of the Proctor buy-in funds that was approved under ‘new business.’

Public Comment

Wayne Rausenberger requested a copy of the signed State Grant agreement, that had been sent out. (The Grant Agreement, without changes from the past year, had been signed and sent to the State). He had a further question about Board policy should the State Grant funds be used up; there is no such policy.

The Minutes of the Board Meeting of June 15th were approved with one correction.

Treasurer’s Report

In the absence of Brad Lawes, the Chair presented the Treasurer’s Report. Figures had been sent out by email prior to the meeting. The financial statements as of July 18 are:

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|--|-----------|
| General Checking (5020) | 59,074.13 |
| Equipment Replacement & Capital Improvement (7510) | 14,348.36 |
| Legal Account (7660) | 964.26 |
| Debit Card (1303) | 347.61 |
| Total funds available | 74,734.36 |
| | |
| Current Balance of 2023 Grant | 41,930.66 |
| Invoice 2023/12 | 2664.91 |
| Invoice 2023/13 | 3,452.04 |
| Total unpaid invoices | 6,116.95 |
| | |
| Unused 2023 Grant Balance | 35,813.71 |
| | |
| Current Balance of 2024 Grant | 70,000.00 |
| Invoice 2024/1 | 1,737.38 |
| Available 2024 Grant Balance | 68,262.62 |

Jeff Whiting asked if anyone but Brad was reviewing the bills. The question led to a discussion about reporting expenses. The Chair noted that any payment over \$500 required two signatures. Review of the bills has a history: bringing the bills to the meeting, sending out (huge) email files with scans of the bills. Sharon Stearns suggested that a statement from the check register should be enough. The Chair promised consultation with the Treasurer and the book-keeper.

The District has ended the year without using all the State Grant funds (with some unpaid invoices). Tom Hogan asked how much the Lemon Fair district had returned (probably nothing).

Operations Report

Will Mathis reported that he had sent out the data sheets on mosquito counts. The rains brought flooding; lots of pupa counts (beyond the stage of effective larviciding), matched by data from Lemon Fair. We may expect a new hatch. The District is considering an aerial application of larvicide.

The trucks have passed inspection. One truck presents problems, and the repair costs are not yet determined. The Chair put the question to Select Board members whether ARPA funds might be used to replace a vehicle; the general response was negative.

Chair's Report

An initial text had been sent out by email. The significant change was that the LDFLA, having received private donations, was now prepared to fund adulticiding on private roads in Salisbury. There were additional requests from the camps on Lake Dunmore.

Jeff Whiting raised the question of adjusting the spray-route maps to reflect the new limitations in Salisbury. This question looks to informing the public (will they be sprayed) and the drivers (where to spray/not spray).

The issue, raised by the State, of the rate-of-spray, remains open: drivers should shut off the sprayers under 7.5 mph to avoid delivering too concentrated a dose of the adulticide. The District is exploring systems to regulate the flow, but faces the obstacles with some technology of uncertain GPS coverage on the routes (the spray would shut off on loss of signal), or the use of older technology measuring the vehicle speed.

Old Business

Shed/Water waste

Brad Lawes has reported that Brandon has committed to extending their water service to the OCW shed, but without any time commitment.

The Chair noted that in 2022, the Board had paid for plans for a well and waste-water system, estimated at a cost of \$55-60,000, from which the cost of the well might now be deducted. The issue of mound vs. tank system, viewed against a 20-year cost analysis, favored the mound system. There were questions about the rate of usage and the cost for emptying the currently-used Port-a-Potty.

On a query from the Chair, the Board consensus was for the mound-system. This led to the question of paying for the work. The Board has a line-of-credit; Sharon Stearns suggested a municipal bond. Members described past funding operations: the State had provided 50% of the funding for the Argo. There was uncertainty about the qualifications for the District for municipal funding.

Art Doty Memorial

Ben Lawton reported that the materials are ready for presentation. The question of the ceremony to dedicate the memorial arose: for date, deferred to late September. Publicity to be determined. Location: the plaques will be housed in the Shed, but any public event there requires preparation and some care.

Zoom Option

The Zoom was working that evening. In part, this requires coordination with the staff of the Brandon Senior Citizens' Center (the computers must be on). Any decision can wait until December, the renewal date for the subscription. Paul Vaczy promoted the idea of an 'Owl' (a device with video and audio, connected to the Zoom computer, that turns automatically towards the speaker), noting that it was used at Salisbury Select Board meetings. Zoom access will help with meeting a quorum. Zoom remains on the agenda as the Board explores the technical aspects.

New Business

LDFLA funding for aduaticiding

At the last Board meeting, this possibility had been raised, and the question of how to cost the service came up, with specific reference to the labor-rate: base or blended (i.e. including the cost of benefits). The Chair complimented Sharon Stearns on how close her estimate had been to the to actual blended rate. The adjusted presumption is for an 11-week season this year with the total aduaticiding costs on the defined roads through June 30, 2024 being \$9,400. The funds come from private sources.

EPA Vulnerable Species Pilot Project

The EPA is working to identify the most vulnerable species in light of pesticide/herbicide usage. They are concentrating, in the pilot project, on 21 of the 1,700 most vulnerable. None of the 21 are present in Vermont. The comment period on their proposal ends on Aug. 6. The American Mosquito Control Association has offered to consolidate comments from member districts. Sharon Stearns commented, citing a newly passed law about land conservation that in her opinion would lead to increased mosquito breeding habitat and mentioning other perceived threats.

Proctor Buy-in

The Board approved a motion offered by Steve Belcher (at the request of a member of the public) to allocate the Proctor buy-in funds to the Capital Improvement fund.

The Chair then informed the Board that the question of the assessment algorithm would appear on the Agenda for the next meeting. The ensuing discussion was cut short by the observation that it was out of order.

The meeting was then adjourned, ca. 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
stephen belcher
Secretary