

Meeting Minutes
Regular Board Meeting
July 24, 2023

I. Call to Order:

Board Trustee Thomas Groom called to order the Benton County Mosquito Control Board of Trustees meeting at 7:00 PM on July 24, 2023.

II. Roll Call:

The following members were present: Thomas Groom, Bill Moore, Brad Beauchamp, and Jessica Wadsworth (remote). Cynthia Gray and Richard Bloom were excused.

III. Approval of Minutes for the June 26, 2023, Regular Meeting:

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Bill Moore and seconded by Brad Beauchamp. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Guest Agenda Items:

There were no Guest Agenda Items.

V. Financial Report:

District Manager Angela Beehler provided an overview of the January through May 2023 Year-to-Date report, June 2023 Revenue report, and Account Trial Balance for June of 2023. Angela reminded board members that the fiscal documents provided in their meeting packets are through the previous month. Angela uses the reports to track expenditures and assessment revenue for the year. She pointed out that we would expect to have 60% of assessments received by end of June and typically will receive the remaining 40% in October. The Revenue report shows that as of the end of June, the Benton County Mosquito Control District has received 58.66% of assessments.

VI. Correspondence:

The Benton County Mosquito Control District (BCMCD) received a license renewal notice and invoice from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). Initially, the mosquito districts charged the federal agency for mosquito control work completed on Corps property. There was a change in Corps policy that sought to align expenditures and activities more closely to the mission of the Corps. As a result, a permit or license to conduct work on Corps property is now needed. The new process shifts mosquito management and control decision making from the Corps to the

mosquito districts that are party to the license. The initial permit license took six years to develop. The license renewal period is five years. There were no substantial plan changes associated with this renewal. The license renewal cost of \$5,100 will be shared between Benton County, Franklin County, West Umatilla and Columbia Mosquito Control Districts.

VII. Manager's Report:

Angela Beehler began the Manager's report by noting that West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected at Grandview Sewage Lagoons, Byron Ponds and Jubilee (Kennewick area). WNV typically peaks this time of year, so detections are not unexpected. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and door to door notifications and handouts in the immediate area of positive detections have already occurred to make the public aware of the presence of WNV in mosquito pools and to advise residents to apply mosquito repellents to avoid mosquito bites. Angela indicated that the 2023 budget for aerial spraying is \$90,000. BCMCD has spent \$78,000 on aerial spraying of mosquitoes to date. At this point, efforts are focused on larviciding rather than adulticiding since larviciding is both more effective and less costly. Jasmine Che, the BMCMD Vector Ecologist, will provide more detailed information on WNV in her presentation.

An overview of the implementation of Washington Cares Long Term Care Act (WA Cares) was provided by Angela. WA Cares implementation began July 1, 2023. A premium tax of 0.58% will result in approximately an additional \$10 tax deduction in employee checks. Employees would pay into the system for ten years and then be eligible for a \$36,500 lifetime benefit.

Angela then discussed gas prices and vehicle usage. Gas prices are expected to remain high due to Washington's Climate Commitment Act implementation. Last year, the budget for gas was increased from \$30,000 to \$45,000 and will likely need to remain at this higher level for the 2024 budget. It was noted that right hand drive vehicles, which are used for storm drain work, are no longer being made. The District is considering purchasing electric bikes and evaluating their use in storm drain control work.

Implications of drought was the next topic. Angela said that drought is often associated with higher incidents of West Nile Virus; Culex species prefer hot, dry conditions; and star grass proliferates when river levels are low, creating mosquito breeding habitat. She also noted that there are new requirements related to heat protection for employees.

The final topic of the Manager's report was a surveillance presentation by Jasmine Che, Vector Ecologist for the BCMCD. Angela introduced Jasmine and then briefly covered the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) maps on detections of West Nile Virus across the United States. She pointed out that the maps were dated from July 18, 2023, and some changes have already occurred since that date. Jasmine discussed WNV detections in the state of Washington, noting that the Department of Health's detection maps are also dated from July 18, 2023. There are now 15 detections, 14 in Yakima

county and one in south Richland. Discussion with the Board centered around historical levels of WNV, state and federal sample processing timelines and onset of human cases expectations.

Jasmine provided a detailed overview of an upcoming field trial in early August to test the efficacy of a new adulticide product called ReMoa-Tri, a Valent BioSciences product, that has a triple mode of action containing three active ingredients that work together synergistically against pyrethroid-resistant mosquitoes. She provided detailed information on how field trials are conducted and then fielded questions about contributions and involvement of Valent BioSciences in the August field trial.

The next topic of Jasmine's presentation covered trapping, describing CO₂ and gravid traps. CO₂ traps use dry ice as an attractant. They attract and capture all females, regardless of whether they have had a blood meal and are looking to lay eggs. Gravid traps attract females that have already taken a blood meal, potentially from a bird infected with WNV, and are seeking a water source on which to lay their eggs. Gravid traps are made by adding rabbit feed pellets to water and allowing the mixture to ferment. Female mosquitoes, attracted to the trap, are sucked into the trap by a fan. Twenty gravid females are needed to run sample tests for WNV. The current gravid trap design does not trap enough mosquitoes for testing. Kevin Shoemaker, Assistant District Manager, and Jasmine are working to modify the trap to improve the trap's suction, improving the trap's capture numbers.

VIII. Old Business:

There was no old business.

IX. New Business:

There was no new business.

X. Payment of Bills and Signing of Documents:

Following review by the Board, Bill Moore moved, and Brad Beauchamp seconded the motion to approve and sign warrant numbers 10763 through 10818, direct payroll deposits, and tax payments for a combined total of \$171,132.25.

The motion passed by the following roll call vote:

Bill Moore (Aye), Tom Groom (Aye), Brad Beauchamp (Aye), and Jessica Wadsworth (Aye).

XI. Adjournment:

Hearing no further business to come before the Board, Richard Bloom adjourned the meeting at 7:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Angela Beehler
District Manager

ATTEST: Cynthia Gray
President

ATTEST: Richard Bloom
Secretary