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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE RECLAMATION & MOSQUITO CONTROL BOARD

**EAST MIDDLESEX MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT
SUFFOLK COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT**

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**East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission, Executive Committee
Suffolk County Mosquito Control Commission
Meeting Minutes**

January 7, 2025

Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

In attendance:

Brian Farless, Superintendent for East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project (EMMCP) and Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project (SCMCP). Representing the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission (EMMCC) is Lenny Izzo, chair, Wellesley; Sabrina Firicano, Everett; Bethany Yates, Framingham; and Erin Carelo, Melrose, Stoneham, Wakefield. Representing the Suffolk County Mosquito Control Commission (SCMCC) is Julien Farland, Leslie Karnes and Sam Lipson.

Brian Farless called the meeting to order at 1:03.

1. EMMCC and SCMCC will review minutes from the June 20, 2024 meeting. Vote required.

The group reviewed the minutes for the June 20, 2024 meeting, and for East Middlesex, Bethany made a motion to approve the minutes, Lenny seconded. There was no further discussion and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

For Suffolk County, Sam made a motion to approve the June 20, 2024 minutes, Julien seconded. There was no further discussion and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

2. EMMCC and SCMCC – consideration of extending the MOA between East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project and Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project, making valid through December 31, 2025. Approve Superintendent Brian Farless to sign the amendment. Vote required.

Brian reviewed the recent changes on the MOA which involved adding in the Administrative Field Supervisor position with each EMMCP and SCMCP paying 50% of the total costs for wages, eligible benefits, and all other costs associated with this position. Both commissions discussed the MOA and decided to extend the MOA through December 31, 2025.

For EMMCC, Lenny made a motion to extend the MOA through December 31, 2025, and to approve Brian to sign the amendment, Bethany seconded. There was no further discussion and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

For SCMCC, Julien made a motion to extend the MOA through December 31, 2025, and to approve Brian to sign the amendment, Sam seconded. There was no further discussion and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

The commissions had a discussion regarding completely merging EMMCP and SCMCP. The MOA currently allows both Projects to share administration, but each Project has separate budgets, field staff, office, equipment, etc... Merging the Projects would allow for both Projects to be more flexible and share resources. Brian will prepare information for a more in-depth discussion on merging for the next commission meeting.

3. Step raises for eligible employees. Vote required.

Brian presented pay scale information and work performance history for three employees that are eligible for step raises over the next couple of months.

After discussions, Lenny made a motion to award an EMMCP employee, Allison Rittweger, a step increase, moving her to Skilled Equipment Operator, Grade 2, Step 2, retroactive to her anniversary date of 8/28/24. Bethany seconded. There was no further discussion and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

After discussion, Bethany made a motion to award an EMMCP employee, Cam Kelley, a step increase, moving him to Skilled Equipment Operator, Grade 2, Step 6, effective on 2/17/25. Lenny seconded, and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

Under the MOA, Tim Barrows works for both EMMCP and SCMCP, with each Project paying 50% of Tim's salary. Both Commissions discussed Tim's work performance and decided to award Tim a step increase.

For EMMCC, Bethany made a motion to award Tim a step increase, moving him to Skilled Equipment Operator, Grade 1, Step 2, effective on 3/11/25. Lenny seconded, and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

For SCMCC, Sam made a motion to award Tim a step increase, moving him to Skilled Equipment Operator, Grade 1, Step 2, effective on 3/11/25. Leslie seconded, and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

4. Approve seasonal positions. Vote required.

For 2025, the target number of seasonal employees for East Middlesex is 6, and 4 for Suffolk County. In the past, there has been an option for seasonal employees to get a full pesticide license or a catch basin permit. Employees with a pesticide license would make a slightly higher hourly rate than if they had a catch basin permit. The study materials and test are much shorter for the catch basin permit, and most employees choose to get a catch basin permit instead of a pesticide license. Having the pesticide license allows an employee to apply pesticides outside of catch basins. Over the recent past, there hasn't been a need for a seasonal employee to apply pesticides outside of catch basins. Brian suggested that we only hire employees at one rate, and all employees will get the catch basin permit instead of having the option to get the full pesticide license. After discussing, the commissions decided to only have permitted

catch basin applicators this season. The commissions decided to pay \$21/hr to catch basin applicators for the 2025 season.

For EMMCC, Bethany made a motion to hire 6 catch basin applicators for the 2025 season, and pay them \$21/hr. Erin seconded. There was no further discussion, and by roll vote, all were in favor.

For SCMCC, Sam made a motion to hire 4 catch basin applicators for the 2025 season, and pay them \$21/hr. Julien seconded. There was no further discussion, and by roll call vote, all were in favor.

5. Operational updates.

With the end of 2023 and beginning of 2024 being fairly wet, there were very large mosquito populations during the 2024 mosquito season.

EEE was found in MA in mosquitoes during late summer of 2023, and being that there were high numbers of EEE vectors at the end of 2023, and a lot of water leading into the 2024 mosquito season, everything was in place for the potential of EEE being found in 2024.

In MA, EEE was first found in mosquitoes during early July of 2024. EEE was found in mosquitoes in the EMMCP during early August. Overall, EEE was found in mosquitoes in three of the EMMCP towns. No EEE was found in the SCMCP. 4 people in MA got EEE during 2024.

Fairly average levels of WNV were found in MA. A total of 18 people in MA got WNV. More people tend to get WNV when it's hot and dry, and July-September was hot and dry, but, MA had an average number of people to get WNV.

We've been in some level of drought since July 2024. As of today (1/7/2025), we're still in a drought. If it stays dry through the winter and spring, mosquito populations may suffer. A lot of mosquito habitat is already very dry.

After a couple of years of being held up by DCAMM's legal department, EMMCP and SCMCP's leases have been finalized. EMMCP had a 49.5% increase and SCMCP had a 16% increase.

6. New Business.

There was no new business.

7. Public comment.

Nobody from the public was in attendance.

8. The meeting adjourned at 1:56.