

East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2023

Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

In attendance:

Brian Farless, Superintendent for East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project (EMMCP) and Suffolk County Mosquito Control Project (SCMCP). David Henley, Administrative Coordinator for EMMCP and SCMCP. Doug Bidlack, Entomologist for EMMCP. Chris Gagnon, Operations Manager for EMMCP. Representing the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission (EMMCC) is Lenny Izzo, chair, Wellesley; Heidi Porter, Bedford; Wesley Chin, Belmont; Roland Lankah, Brookline; Christine Mathis, Burlington; Wendy Robinson, Cambridge; Tony Kiszewski, Concord; Bill Murphy, Framingham; Joanne Belanger, Lexington; Fred Mansfield, Lincoln; Ivan Kwagala, Maynard; MaryAnn O'Connor, Medford; Kyle Simpson, Newton; Vivian Zeng, Sudbury; Michael Delfino, Waltham; Larry Ramdin, Watertown; Julia Junghanns, Wayland; Rich Sullivan, Weston; Jen Murphy, Winchester. In attendance for the Suffolk County Mosquito Commission is Julien Farland and Sam Lipson. Also in attendance is Sigalle Reiss, Melanie Dineen, Robin Williams, Bethany Yates, Alicia McCartin.

1. Call to order

Brian Farless called the meeting to order at 1:05.

2. EMMCC to review and approve minutes from the May 18, 2021 meeting.

Lenny Izzo made a motion to approve the May 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Christine Mathis seconded and there was no further discussion. By roll call vote, the minutes were approved.

3. Reorganization of the Executive Committee of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission.

After discussion, Larry Ramdin made a motion to nominate Lenny Izzo to an elected position, expiring June 30, 2025 and to nominate Christine Mathis to an elected position, expiring June 30, 2024. Tony Kiszewski seconded and there was no further discussion. By roll call vote, the motion passes.

4. Update from the Superintendent on mosquito control operations, facilities and the FY24 budget.

Stoneham joined East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project in December of 2022 and started services on April 1, 2023.

The drought during 2022 highly influenced mosquito populations during 2022. Adult mosquito control spraying ended on July 27, 2022 due to the drought. The drought will also result in our most abundant mosquito, *Coquillettidia perturbans*, to be lower during 2023 due to much of its habitat being dried out during 2022.

Larval Control – About 1800 acres were completed on April 20, 2023. It was a successful day with minimal wind. Post application surveys showed great control from the application. We weren't able to hire as many seasonal staff as we wanted due to lack of applicants. We wanted 5 seasonal employees but we currently only have 2, and 1 will start during the second week of July. Catch basin applications started on May 15, 2023. Crews have been out larviciding in wetlands by foot since early April.

Ditch maintenance – The mild weather has allowed crews to perform ditch maintenance most of the fall, winter and spring. The excavator is in good shape and we have all of the hands tools that we need. We had to turn in our 1-ton dump truck due to more than \$17,000 of maintenance needed. The truck was useful to have but we didn't

use it a lot. More often than not, we collaborate with municipal DPW departments while digging, and they use their dump trucks to haul away spoil.

Mosquito surveillance – Doug started trapping on May 16 and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health will start accepting mosquito samples for EEE/WNV testing in mid-June. Doug just finished teaching at the 5th annual mosquito identification workshop called Mosquito MayHem. The workshop was held at Cape Cod Community College. This has been a great program to help train mosquito control staff to identify mosquitoes.

As the mosquito season approaches and we start receiving phone calls and emails, Brian gave reminders on public messaging such as eliminating standing water from around one's property and to wear EPA approved mosquito repellants. Brian also summarized some common myths that are widely believed.

Drones – During the summer of 2022, Mosquito Control Districts submitted a request to EEA to use drones for photography. There has been no response to the request.

FY24 Budget – The EMMCP is requesting \$870,174.61. No big changes or purchases are planned for FY24. This past spring, the Office of Vehicle Management took vehicles from the mosquito control districts after they labeled certain vehicles as being underutilized. Since a big part of the EMMCP involves using seasonal workers to conduct catch basin applications to combat West Nile virus, there are 3 vehicles used seasonally. We don't need the seasonal vehicles 12 months out of each year, but we do need the vehicles during the summer to help protect the health of the public. East Middlesex had one vehicle taken. DCAMM signed a one-year lease for East Middlesex at the beginning of 2023. The real estate market is still hot and far too expensive for us to sign a new 10-year lease.

5. Update from the Operations Manager on the ditch maintenance program.

Chris Gagnon gave a summary of ditch maintenance activities done over the past year.

6. Update from the Entomologist on the mosquito surveillance program.

Doug Bidlack gave a summary on mosquito populations, weather and disease from the 2022 mosquito season. Doug compared 2022 to historical data and summarized what was being found in mosquito traps so far during 2023. Mosquito populations were above average at the beginning of the 2022 mosquito season (May) and by late July, all species were well below average due to the drought.

7. New business – no new business

8. Public comment – no members of the public in attendance

9. Adjourn

Michael Delfino made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Joanne Belanger seconded, no further discussion. By roll call vote, the meeting adjourned at 2:17.