

## **East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission Meeting Minutes**

**May 28, 2024**

### **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; Natasha Waden, Arlington; Heidi Porter, Bedford; Wesley Chin, Belmont; Sigalle Reiss, Brookline; Christine Mathis, Burlington; Wendy Robinson, Cambridge; Sabrina Firicano, Everett; Bethany Yates, Framingham; Joanne Belanger, Lexington; Tricia McGean, Lincoln; MaryAnn O'Connor, Medford; Erin Carelo, Melrose, Stoneham, Wakefield; Victor Peiroten, Newton; Vivian Zeng, Sudbury; Michael Delfino, Waltham; Julia Junghanns, Wayland; Rich Sullivan, Weston; Jen Murphy, Winchester. In attendance for the Suffolk County Mosquito Commission is Julien Farland, Leslie Karnes, and Sam Lipson. Also in attendance is Kaylee Abato, Joshua Hunter, Shelby Purracchio, Molly Graham, Norma Loehr, Amelia Sellitto, and Michelle Boralessa.

#### **1. Call to order**

Brian Farless called the meeting to order at 1:04.

#### **2. Review and approve minutes from the May 25, 2023 meeting (vote required).**

For EMMCC, Joanne Belanger made a motion to approve the May 25, 2023 meeting minutes. Michael Defino seconded, there was no further discussion, and by roll call vote, the motion passed.

SCMCC didn't have a quorum at the May 25, 2023 meeting.

#### **3. Reorganization of the EMMCC. Vote required to fill one vacant elected seat.**

Joanne Belanger made a motion to nominate Erin Carelo to the vacant seat, which is a two-year term and expires on June 30, 2026. Chistine Mathis seconded and there was no further discussion. By roll call vote, the motion passed.

#### **4. The Entomologist will provide an update on the adult mosquito surveillance program.**

According to NOAA, 2023 was the warmest year recorded for Middlesex County since records began in 1895. Last winter was also the warmest ever recorded, spring was very warm (10<sup>th</sup> warmest of last 129 years) and summer was warm (26<sup>th</sup> warmest of last 129 years).

Precipitation over the entire year was the second wettest ever recorded (16.44" greater than average from 1895-1983). The winter of 2022-2023 was wet (15<sup>th</sup> wettest of last 129 years), the spring was close to normal (61<sup>st</sup> wettest of last 129 years) and the summer was the second wettest ever recorded.

The total mosquito population was well above average for 2023. It was close to average in spring and very high the rest of the season. We had expected low mosquito populations in 2023 due to the drought of 2022 but the high rainfall late in 2022, the wet winter of 2022-2023 and the exceptionally wet summer of 2023 led to a very difficult mosquito season.

#### **5. The Operations Manager will give an update on the ditch maintenance program.**

The Operations Manager provided a summary on the ditch maintenance program for the past fall/winter/spring.

#### **6. Update from the Superintendent on the FY25 budget, mosquito control operations and facilities.**

For FY25, EMMCP's FY25 estimated budget is \$885,658. SCMCP's proposed budget is \$298,555.96. These budgets will be presented to the State Reclamation Board on June 12, 2024.

The EMMCP lease went out to bid in January of 2024 and two proposals were received. We are planning to stay in our current facility.

The SCMCP lease went out to bid in November of 2023 and one proposal was received. We are planning to stay in our current facility.

For EMMCP, around 1,800 acres had larvicide applied in April of 2024 by our helicopter vendor. EMMCP employees continued to larvicide by foot throughout April and May. Catch basin applications started in mid-May. We have 4 seasonal catch basin applicators and 1 seasonal assistant entomologist. We wanted more seasonal help but didn't have enough applicants.

For SCMCP, larval control started in wetlands in early April and has continued to present day. Catch basin applications have begun. One seasonal catch basin applicator was hired. We wanted more but didn't have more applicants.

Since EEE was found in MA in late summer of 2023, and being that there are healthy populations of *Culiseta melanura* and healthy populations of bridge vectors are expected, EEE could be an issue during the 2024 season. If EEE starts being found in the state, we're prepared to trap and test for disease more aggressively than normal.

Starting in mid-June, both EMMCP and SCMCP will be dropping off samples to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) on Wednesdays of each week, and results will be available by Thursday afternoon.

MDPH is a great resource for messaging. Their website has fact sheets, brochures, and other educational materials. They have information on EEE/WNV and keep updated risk maps throughout the season. You'll find mosquito-borne disease prevention information, FAQs about mosquitoes in MA, and information on mosquito repellents.

#### **7. New business.**

No new business.

#### **8. Public comment.**

No public comments.

#### **9. The meeting adjourned at 1:59.**