

BLSG Board Meeting Minutes 2-21-19

Present: Stephen Belcher, Michael Blaisdell, Rick Enser, Brad Lawes, Ben Lawton, Will Mathis, Wayne Rausenberger, Jeff Smith, Kerry White, Jeff Whiting, Paul Vaczy.

Guests: Bruce Baccei, James Goodwin, Tom Hogan, Russell Jones, Jay Michael, Jeff Schumamen.

Ben Lawton called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

1. Introduction of guests.

Motion to change the order of the agenda as follows: Move agenda item number 6 to number 9, Move agenda item number 9 to number 7, Move agenda item number 7 to number 8. (Moved by J.Whiting 2nd by W.Rausenberger) Approved.

2. Minutes from 1/10/19 approved (Moved by J.Whiting 2nd by B.Lawes).

3. Treasurer's Report:

- a. General Checking balance is \$63,368.06
- b. Equipment Replacement & Capital Improvement Checking has a balance of \$4,975.43.
- c. Total available funds are \$68,343.49.
- d. Motion made to make Brad Lawes a secondary signer on the checking account in the event that Jeff Whiting or Ben Lawton are unavailable. Discussion about the topic. Both the treasurer's report and the motion to make Brad Lawes a secondary signer on the checking account approved with B.Lawes abstaining. (Moved by W.Rausenberger 2nd by S.Belcher).

4. Ben circulated the article "Combating the increasing threat of Vector-Borne disease in the United States with the National Vector Borne Disease Prevention and Control System" (The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene). Discussion

5. Articles: Rutland Herald and Front Porch Forum discussion. J. Whiting, B.Lawton and W.Mathis will discuss and respond accordingly.

Public Notice and Town Meeting. M.Blaisdell and S.Belcher prepared a handout for the board. Discussion about the handout. B.Lawes requested that information be included about where the funding for larvicide comes from. The larvicide component is a State program not our program. J.Whiting asked Mike to remove the mineral oil application to water because he is concerned about misinterpretation. Discussion about the pros and cons of adding contact information to the handouts. Discussion about the opt-out process and why some driveways are sprayed and why some are not. Questions and discussions about spraying private property. B.Lawton discussed an insect control district in CA that has the same acreage as the BLSG, however they have a five million dollar budget compared to our budget. Ben is working to find additional funding. There has been media discussion that compares the BLSG to LFICD. The two areas are geographically different. LFICD *population density is less than BLSG and their population centers to the west of swamps combined with westerly winds, their mosquitos are carried into the BLSG district. BLSG has historically used more than the \$70,000 of larvicide grant money with what the state called a "Rainy Day Fund" this fund is apparently depleted.

6. Pittsford residents are telling our representatives that the spraying last year has made a significant difference and they have been able to enjoy being outside during the summer months.

7. Kerry handed out a Public Relations document that she would like the board to look at and answer questions about the board member's goals and objectives so that PR materials can be prepared with a clear and concise message.
8. The Salisbury informational Town Meeting is March 2nd 2019 from 2:00 to 5:00PM. There is usually a table for presentations, Ben asked Kerry if she will contact the town to inquire about our participation. Kerry is willing to attend the meeting however, not without another board member who can answer questions from the residents of Salisbury. The Town of Salisbury will have a separate vote to determine if they will contribute to the legal fees that the BLSG has and will incur.
9. Discussion about the article that B.Lawton shared with the board members <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/19/11/pdfs/13-0768.pdf> during the 2012 West Nile virus outbreak in Texas there were approximately 1900 cases of West Nile virus, including 844 west Nile neural invasive cases ,and 89 deaths. 47 million dollars was spent on medical and rehabilitation costs for those individuals who survived. Aerial adulticide was conducted. W. Rausenberger commented that when two people died from EEE in 2011 the State approached BLSG to do the spraying. BLSG asked the State of Vermont to cover for the cost of insurance to conduct this level of adulticiding and the state declined to pay. The State of Vermont paid for aerial adulticiding instead. The cost to provide adulticide application per route is \$1,500. B.Lawes inquired about last season's adulticide usage. Will provided the following data: 291 gallons of Permethrin in Rutland County, 160 gallons of Permethrin in Addison County, 9.1 gallons of Malathion in Rutland County and 11 gallons of Malathion in Addison County.
10. Status of TAC Lawsuit
 - a. B.Lawton presented an outline of the status via powerpoint presentation. Discussion about the sequence of events and the issues raised. During the negotiations with TAC the BLSG was under a gag order, the TAC chose to stop negotiations the BLSG is not sure why. The powerpoint presentation was prepared by the BLSG legal counsel. The BLSG was close to an agreement with TAC, BLSG agreed to reduce the use of Malathion and to abstain from using it for one year. TAC wanted the BLSG to eliminate all use of Permethrin unless there was an emergency. The TAC wanted Methoprene a growth regulator used as a larvicide to be stopped. We used 22 pounds in 2018 in stagnant water such as catch basins. There are new larvicide products with combined Methoprene and BTI that distributors are currently selling. They are more expensive but longer acting reducing the need for multiple treatments. In addition, BLSG had agreed to work with the University of Cornell and the CDC to test pools for insecticide resistance. BLSG has ordered the kits and currently waiting to receive them.
 - b. Questions about how many aerial treatments would the BLSG need to do and what are the costs. The amount of precipitation and rapid snow melt typically dictates when and if the BLSG will need to treat with larvicide. The BLSG needs to survey all flooded areas to determine if mosquito larva is present and if larviciding is necessitated. The BLSG uses two different helicopter companies one is \$14/acre and the other is \$22/acre, multiply this by 7,000 acres and then add the cost of the product, materials and labor and the aerial costs can be determined.

- c. The BLSG has about 100 gallons of Malathion left.
- d. A 1991 study concluded it was more harmful to non-target organisms, however newer studies recognized by the EPA have determined it is safe for non-target organisms (EPA>GOV).

11. Other:

- a. Opt-Out questions. Last spring some residents wanted to know why they needed to send in their opt-out requests prior to May 1st each year. This is just to ensure that they are not sprayed if they wait to send in their request. They can send their request in at any time, but if they send it in before May 1st a BLSG representative can visit with the land owner if needed and stake the property with no spray stakes prior to the first treatment of the year. Discussion about what the process is for determining no sprays when there was a no spray in prior years. Will said that he typically contacts the landowners in the beginning of the season who have not submitted their “No Spray” request to see if they are still considered a no spray. There was some discussion about how many no sprays exist district wide and if the select board members or BLSG Town Reps within the towns can help the BLSG to contact the no spray individuals from prior years to determine if they want to opt-out and if so to encourage them to contact BLSG. Discussion about whether the opt-out list is public or not and if assistance from the select board members would be a benefit to the BLSG.
- b. The board asked Will if there are issues for the upcoming season? He said funding.
- c. Some members are concerned that the Attorney General should be re-engaged regarding this legal issue because the lawsuit is actually with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) but we are incurring the costs. The BLSG will discuss this during executive session.
- d. Proctor Select Board was present to inquire about pricing for larviciding in Proctor. Will is working with Proctor to formulate a plan.
- e. Russell Jones from the Reporter asked “If money was not an option what would the treatment needs be? The response was that it depends on precipitation both spring melt and rainfall later in the season. There has been a consistent increase in precipitation and warmer temperatures over the prior years. Jones asked how many larvicide treatments would it take all year? Again, this depends on precipitation and whether we are experiencing enough larva to make a treatment. There are longer lasting larvicides, but these products are substantially more expensive. Two years ago the district spent almost \$400,000 in larvicide treatments. The State of Vt. requires more sampling and identification since 2012. How many tests sites do we go to? There are about 69 sites that we monitor regularly. However certain sites will require additional attention when there is a mosquito grievance, or we determine it is needed. This does not include Proctor.

- f. Jay Michael had some suggestions for the board around Public Relations. He also noted that the menu button on the webpage is still being obscured by advertisements. A motion was made to allow Will Mathis to acquire a new website not to exceed \$500 (Motioned by M.Blaisdell 2nd by S.Belcher) Approved.
- 12. Motion to enter executive session under open meeting law at 8:45PM to discuss the ongoing legal issues with TAC (Motion by J.Whiting 2nd by B.Lawes) Approved.
- 13. On a motion by (W. Rausenberger, 2nd by J. Whiting) the Board came out of executive session at 9:35 pm.

No actions were taken.

- 14. On a motion by (S. Belcher 2nd by J. Whiting) the meeting adjourned at 9:36 pm

Prepared by: Kerry White