



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
STATE RECLAMATION AND MOSQUITO CONTROL BOARD



**NORTHEAST MASSACHUSETTS MOSQUITO CONTROL
AND WETLANDS MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

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Operations

Barry Noone: *District Director*
Kimberly A. Foss: *Entomologist*
Robyn A. Januszewski: *IT Coordinator / Biologist*
Katelynn E. King: *Wetlands Project Coordinator*

Commissioners

John W. Morris, CHO: *Chair*
Vincent J. Russo, MD, MPH: *Vice Chair*
Paul Seigny, RS, CHO
Joseph T. Giarrusso, Conservation Officer
Rosemary Decie, RS

Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District (NEMMC)
Commissioner's Meeting October 20, 2022.

Pursuant to an Order Suspending Certain Provisions of G.L. c. 30A, § 20 issued by the Governor on March 12, 2020, amended on July 16, 2022. This meeting is being held in-person with public Zoom access.

In attendance: Chairman John Morris, Commissioners Vincent Russo, Joseph Giarrusso and Rosemary Decie. District Director Barry Noone, Budget Adviser John Moak (via Zoom), IT Coordinator Robyn Januszewski, Entomologist Kim Foss, Wetlands Coordinator Katelynn King, Office Manager Jennifer Sforza, and public (via Zoom).

1. Call to order - Meeting called to order by John Morris at 9:02 AM
2. Review and approval of June 9, 2022, minutes
 - a) Motion: Joseph Giarrusso
 - b) Second: Vincent Russo
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent
3. District Updates – Seasonal Recap
 - a. The northeast remained in a significant drought.
 - b. Entomologist, Kim Foss explained that collections were down 59% than last year. 30% decrease in melanura and may decrease further should the drought continue. Staff will still go out this winter attempting to locate more areas/crypts.
 - c. Three WNV hits in our district- Lynnfield, Haverhill, and Rowley. No human cases.
 - d. No target sprays were needed this year.
 - e. EEE was found in NY which was the closest to our area.
 - f. Chairman Morris asked for any EEE predictions both District Director Noone and Ms. Foss explained NEMMC will be ready for whatever may come. Furthermore, we may have a better idea in the spring in looking at the birds. If no birds, there is less chance of virus. No birds carrying or to be bitten means no virus to transmit.
 - g. Mr. Russo inquired on the salt marshes. Ms. Foss explained that the salt marsh does not usually carry virus. Typically, the marshes set off smaller hatches throughout the summer, this year we saw a few large hatches with the higher tides. Mr. Noone stated the District conducted three full aerial larvicide applications in June, July, and August. The tides have changed compared to previous years, now we tend to see high tides that are higher and for longer durations. This causes the larvae to be moved around,

- Committed to a partnership of the principles of mosquito control and wetland management -

changing the way we operate, now treating just before the highest tide. We will continue to adapt as the tides change.

- h. Ms. Foss explained further the brackish mosquito, salinarius, was decimated this season, we saw very few.
 - i. District Director Noone went over operations. The entire staff were all included in completing catch basins and greenhead traps. The barrier treatment season was mostly completed before schools were in session. 50% increase in resident larviciding/site inspection requests this year. The updated website and simpler online service requests aided in this area.
 - j. Wetlands Coordinator King recapped our tire collections, a total of 8 more events this year. Outreach to the municipalities has been well received.
4. Update and Discussion of EO 594/Fleet Rightsizing/ EV First Acquisition Policy
- a. Chairman Morris asked if the above will work for NEMMC. Mr. Noone explained in short, no. However, SRB, MCDs and OVM/OSD have been meeting regularly to be able to abide by EO 594. MCD Directors have drafted a document with supporting information with the hope of being granted an exemption. Main points on the document include, current EVs not meeting our needs, DCAMM leases and charging stations/grant funding. Legal from SRB and OVM will be meeting to discuss the concerns and questions from the Directors, a follow up meeting will be held afterwards.
 - b. Our new truck came in a couple months ago, this was ordered in 2021. The fleet upgrades are slowed due to EO 594 as well as availability.
5. Discussion on District Pay Scale- Adding an Additional Step
- a. Mr. Morris stated that the Board requested the pay scale to be reviewed. Mr. Noone went over the proposed changes to the pay scale.
 - a) Adding a year 2 step – 1.5% above year 1, step 3 will remain unchanged.
 - b) Director's steps have been moved 1 step to line up with year 2, due to the starting point when hired. The Office Manager's will also line up, both changes to end 'leap frogging' around steps and lining up where each should be.
 - c) Mr. Morris inquired on the BOH Liaison, confirmed this is still listed on the pay scale. Chairman Morris stated to NEMMC employees if there are questions or feel the scale could be reviewed further, do your homework, and present it to the Commissioners. Mr. Giarrusso confirmed that the changes are step increases. Each employee was not met with to discuss the addition of step 2. District Director Noone explained that we are working out "being upside down" and salary heavy. We have a younger staff with lots of room to grow. The fringe and Essex County Retirement percentages are one of the highest and forecasted to steadily increase each year. NEMMC needs to have sound financial planning remaining reasonable for the district.
 - d) Motion: I move that we adopt a new salary scale effective November 1, 2022, that reflects the changes listed below:
 - a) Additional step at year two.
 - b) Director's salary, to shift one column to the left reflecting the initial hiring step.
 - c) Office Manager's year two increase will be 3% to reflect enhancements of duties and responsibilities.
 - a) Moved: Vincent Russo

- b) Second: Joseph Giarrusso
- c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

6. Job Description Revision for Office Manager

- a. Mr. Noone explained Ms. Sforza has been part of the staff in the field, acquiring her CORE license bringing more to the table. Over the winter months we will be working on revamping job descriptions to meet District goals going forward, to include all staff being licensed to cover shortages etc. to meet the needs of the municipalities. Mr. Russo noted that this will allow flexibility and allow time off with everyone being licensed.
 - a) Motion: The Office Manager responsibilities, authorities, requirements, and duties are as outlined in the job description accompanying this motion. The salary scale for this position shall be as listed on the NEMMC Salary Scale under the title of Office Manager.
 - a) Moved: Vincent Russo
 - b) Second: Joseph Giarrusso
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

7. Longevity Compensation for Employees Tenured 10+ Years

- a. Board requested NEMMC to come up with compensation plan for employees tenured 10+ years, as the salary scale ends at the 10-year step.
- b. Mr. Noone went over the proposal:
 - a) Payments would be a one-time amount of \$5,000
 - b) Payable at 15, 20, 25, and 30yrs of permanent continuous employment.
 - c) Anniversary date for determining years of service would be calculated from the onset of the employee contributing into Essex County Retirement (or current plan) as a permanent employee.
 - d) Milestones for this compensation will be upon approval and will not be payable retroactively.
- c. Discussion on annual vs milestone payments, other ways to figure longevity including percentages of salary paid out annually. Pros and cons to retroactive payments vs payable at next milestone. Current payouts for retirement 20% of total sick time (no cap) and 100% vacation time.
- d. Mr. Moak noted that longevity would be for incentive and appreciation. Also, reminder that in 2019/2020 there was a heavy increase in salaries. Mr. Noone echoed stating we need to keep an eye on what the next few years will bring financially and remain financially responsible,
- e. Motion to table this topic allowing NEMMC to put together and review other options then bring back to the table in the next three months. Mr. Noone and Mr. Moak will research further and look at what others are offering. Note made that other MCDs, not all, payout \$100s not \$1,000s as incentives.
 - a) Moved: Joseph Giarrusso
 - b) Second: Vincent Russo
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

8. Proposed CDL-A Stipend Increase

- a. Current stipend is \$3,000 per year, proposing increase to \$4,000. Increase to incentivize other staff to obtain the license. We currently have one licensed operator, District Director, the District needs at least two.

- b. Mr. Russo asked if the increase is enough. Mr. Noone explained yes, we need to be fiscally responsible, and this is a good starting point. Mr. Morris asked what other CDL-A operators make. Mr. Noone used the City of Newburyport as an example, where an employee with a CDL-A makes what our Assistant Field Techs make a year. Chairman Morris asked if the employees were polled to see what amount would be an incentive for someone to obtain the license? Employees were not polled. Commission agreed to pass the motion as written and leaving open to revisit.

a) Motion: The stipend to an employee holding an CDL-A license will be \$4,000 annually beginning on November 1, 2022. Eligibility must include:

a) An agreement to utilize the license for the benefit of the District. Assignments will be made by the District Director and/or the Field Crew Supervisor.

b) Unwillingness to use the license for the benefit of the District will nullify eligibility for the stipend.

c) The District will issue up to (3) three stipends per fiscal year for those that qualify.

a. Stipends will be determined by the length of service as a qualified CDL-A operator.

b. A waitlist will be established based on the date of submittal.

i. Moved: Vincent Russo

ii. Second: Joseph Giarrusso

iii. Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

9. Proposed 2023 Supplemental COLA Stipend for Employees

a. Mr. Noone states we are proposing a one-time COLA stipend due to current conditions. A one time \$1,000 payment to fit into the budget. Looking back at this calendar year there were 1.5% COLA increases on January 1st and July 1st. The \$1,000 proposal will be a total of roughly \$33,000. Chairman Morris would like to see the COLA higher but understands financially this is okay. Mr. Giarrusso voiced concern about this possibly being hung up in Boston. Discussion on keeping the amount as proposed to hopefully not be kicked back. Commissioner Decie agrees at keeping at the 1.5%.

b. Mr. Moak stated we feel at this point all employees could benefit from a COLA stipend. We could look at a higher amount but increasing all salaries is very significant to our budget. Which is why the COLA stipend was presented this way. We can afford this year due to vacancies, helping staff now and not hurting our budget. Brief discussion on scenario of State granting an increase, NEMMC would have to absorb it.

a) Motion: All NEMMC staff receive a supplemental one-time 2023 COLA stipend in the amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) payable on the November 10, 2022, pay date.

a) Moved: Rosemary Decie

b) Second: Joseph Giarrusso

c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

10. J. Greaney – Promotion to Field Technician Upon Completion of Required Licensing.

a. Mr. Noone explained Mr. Greaney completed the required testing this week however since the exam was proctored virtually there is a four-business day wait on results. The board agreed to approve the motion subject to the successful passing of the required license.

- a) Motion: To appoint Jake Greaney to the position of Field Technician effective November 1, 2022, with a salary of \$66,861.70 annually, as listed on the Salary Scale for FY2023. Contingent upon a passing score for the Category 47 pesticide license.
 - a) Move: Rosemary Decie
 - b) Second: Joseph Giarrusso
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

11. K. King, Wetlands Coordinator – 3-year Step Increase

- a. Motion: That Katelynn King be approved for her three-year salary step increase effective October 27, 2022. Compensation shall be \$84,975.80 annually as listed on the Salary Scale for FY2023.
 - a) Move: Joseph Giarrusso
 - b) Second: Rosemary Decie
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

12. K. Liakos, Field Technician – 7-year Step Increase

- a. Motion: The Kelsey Liakos be approved for her seven-year salary step level increase effective September 30, 2022. Compensation shall be \$76,721.01 (\$44,740.80 prorated at 24 hours per week) annually as listed on the Salary Scale for FY2023.
 - a) Move: Joseph Giarrusso
 - b) Second: Vincent Russo
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent

13. Continuation of Hybrid Commission Meetings

- a. Motion: The continuation of hybrid Board of Commissioner's meetings for all future dates. Hybrid to include in person with a Zoom (remote access) option.
 - a) Move: Joseph Giarrusso
 - b) Second: Vincent Russo
 - c) Vote: 4 yes 1 absent
- b. Meetings tentatively will be held in April, June, October, and November. Months coincide with the seasons for NEMMC.
 - a) Meetings scheduled for
 - a) October 13, 2022
 - b) November 10, 2022
 - c) 2023 meeting dates will be decided at the November meeting.

14. Other Business

- a. Ms. Foss questioned the Board about the weekly epi reports she sends out. Are they helpful? Mr. Giarrusso states indeed they are helpful and the reports clear confusion.
 - a) Clarification that the epi reports Ms. Foss send out are not the same as the State reports. Our report is specifically regarding our district not the rest of the state. Commissioner's request Ms. Foss's weekly epi reports continue to be forwarded.
- b. Mr. Noone explained the second quarterly Commission report will be coming soon and sent out as a newsletter. The newsletter, we are hoping, to be fun and interactive with clickable links.

15. Public Comment/Input- None

16. Meeting adjourned at 9:54am

- a. Next meeting 9:00am November 10, 2022 - held in person at NEMMC with public Zoom access.