

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD

Mosquito Control District

October 25, 2007

The Mosquito Control District held a meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Members present: John Latsha, Chairman
Alfred C. Raccio
Joan McKibben

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Latsha: This District Committee is here to gather information and make a recommendation to the Selectmen who will either accept or deny this Committee's recommendations. I wanted everybody to know that; that this District Committee is to gather information and to make a recommendation to the Selectmen who will either accept or deny this Committee's recommendations.

MINUTES

Mr. Latsha **MOTIONED** to table the approval of the October 11, 2007, minutes until the next meeting to be determined at a later date. Mr. Raccio seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

PEST CONTROL PROPOSALS

Mr. Latsha reported that Municipal Pest Management Services, Inc. gave a presentation to the Board on September 13, 2007. Dragon was very hard to contact and did not make the meeting and said they would send a proposal. They were supposed to meet with the Board this evening but again they were unable to make it.

After reviewing the proposals, Mr. Latsha said he noticed that Dragon did not provide the labor hours per month and cost per month, as did the proposal from Municipal Pest Management. Municipal has it in chronological order; the labor hours per month and the cost per month.

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Mr. Raccio: Mr. Chairman, if I may, point of order: until we make a declaration, sir, of whether we are concluding negotiations and taking bids, it would be improper to discuss any inefficiencies, deficiencies or preferences regarding any existing proposals that we have. Mr. Chairman, if you are prepared to make a motion to close consideration for additional costing purposes which would in effect close our solicitation for anybody coming in with this type of service, at that point we would then be free to discuss the solicitations that have been presented to this Board. Until then, sir, we run the risk...or we run the risk of a challenge to the proposals.

Mr. Latsha: Now, from what I understood there are only two companies that do this type of work and we have the two companies right here in front of us.

Mr. Raccio: I agree with that. Are you prepared now, sir, to make a motion to close any further solicitation or fact-finding regarding potential services to the Town of Litchfield that we would be recommending?

Mr. Latsha: Yes.

Mr. Raccio: Then you should motion accordingly, sir.

Mr. Latsha **MOTIONED** that we consider these two proposals. As I stated before, these are the only two companies that we know of that do this type of work. Both proposals are here in front of us and I would like to make a motion that we consider these two proposals. Mrs. McKibben: I second it. I think it is fair that we close considerations since there are only two companies in the State that we know of that do this type of work. I do not know where we would get a third proposal from. All were in favor. Motion carried 3-0-0.

Mr. Latsha went on to say that the Dragon proposal states the program runs from April to October and Municipal from March to November. Also, Dragon has included with their cost estimates the spraying in high use areas from July to October; meaning schools, recreational facilities being soccer fields, football fields. He did not see that in Municipal's proposal. Did you see that Al? I did not see it.

Mr. Raccio: The Municipal's proposal spoke to applications for high utilization per application basis as needed. While the service was offered, no funding was discussed regarding that and basically I have discounted in my assessment the added emergency adult services that Dragon had applied that Municipal Pest Management Services did not apply in order to try to balance apples to apples comparison between the two. So, in my

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assessment, I have discounted that service but I am fully aware that both companies provide that service.

Mr. Latsha: Now, I am just using this as an example: If we accept the proposal for that particular figure and we have to spray just say somebody in Town gets EEE, could we actually go to the Board of Selectmen for contingency because it is an emergency situation? How would we go about doing that?

Mr. Raccio: Well, first and foremost, the State of NH has allocated at the State level emergency funds for that application. So, the first place this Committee should consider going is for federal help first, state help second, county help third and finally to the Town if all else fails. The Board of Selectmen has at their discretion a number of mechanisms which they could apply emergency funds to. How the Board of Selectmen would decide to do that would be their decision but we have a lot of alternatives to recommend first as they fall through the process of determining where that additional funding may come from.

Mr. Latsha: You talked, Al, about federal funding, many, many months ago. I got in contact with Judd Gregg U.S. Senator in regards to how come the federal government isn't helping New Hampshire as far as EEE is concerned because there was a number of instances people have died. He sent me this letter this week in regards to that.

The letter was reviewed.

Mr. Raccio: This is consistent with the information I have.

Mr. Raccio's assessment of the two proposals: "In comparing the two proposals, services from each are similar in nature; however, Municipal did take the time not only to articulate the various phases and by the way they do run a program from December to December in all phases of preparation, planning and actual activities with regards to surveying, regards to trap setting and monitoring and continued mapping of the various wetlands, manholes and other collection agencies. When we look at the actual figures provided by both Municipal as well as Dragon, the services appear to be similar in nature...but there is very little rationale from the Dragon proposal regarding the number of hours that would be applied as you stated earlier in your discussions and to me that leaves a very big hole in being able to provide rationale to the Board of Selectmen on exactly where the funding and the services for dollars are justified. Clearly, when we make our recommendation to the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Selectmen will consider that and then move on the consideration. Ultimately, it is not the Board of Selectmen that will authorize the funding or not; it will go to the Budget Committee

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should it pass the Board of Selectmen and from that point the Budget Committee will begin to analyze it.

Mr. Latsha: And they will be looking for exact things as far as labor hours, costs.

Mr. Raccio: Exactly and that is one of the reasons we asked Municipal to account for the hours and make sure that they break the hours down according to the various bits and pieces because we may determine the first year we may only go with mapping of the wetlands and surveying and benign traffic in order to better understand what is going on in our Town as opposed to the full proposal. That is yet to be discussed by the Board. The other issue we find is that Dragon's proposal, when we discount the emergency spraying, we find that Dragon's proposal rolls out to about \$29,000 which is still much higher than the base proposal of Municipal at \$24,000. There is actually a small ambiguity; his written proposal says \$24,300 but when you go through the line item it is \$24,500. So, even if we said \$24,500 against \$29,000, for comparable services, we see very quickly the Municipal proposal provides a better cost for the dollar with regards to services than does the Dragon proposal. The fact that the Dragon proposal has not had representation in order for them to clarify or adjust their statements so that we could have an opportunity to discuss with them in similar fashion, leaves me to believe two things: the Dragon organization for one reason or another may be extremely busy, tied up or does not have the real interest of Litchfield in mind or they would have had a representative here. Conversely Municipal did take the time to break out their proposal; took the time to account for the hours and obviously took the time to do the survey of the town just in preparation for the proposal. So, in those aspects Municipal has scored highly with me regarding their value for the dollar; scored highly with me for technical content exactly what are they doing, exactly when are they doing it and why are they doing it which then allows us to determine whether we want to do that or not without logically destroying or minimizing the effects of what we choose to do and the example cited earlier the ability to survey, test, map and get the final report may be what we decide to do. When I look at the cost of a totally benign service; no pesticides involved, nothing, but information and I look at the cost of executing the entire program which does not involve aerial spraying and the times when they propose to actually apply the larvacide after identifying the species, I find to be very pleasing and logically flow. It will become this Board's decision on again picking and choosing from the various components and or recommending the full program. If we look at just cost, the cost for the program for everything \$24,500 over the population again of about 8,500, or you could use 8,000 and you break down the \$24,500 you are looking at less than \$3.00 a person a year. Now, even if we consider a full program and get the funding that does not mean we have to implement the full program.

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Mrs. McKibben: If we put a budget amount in how do we control what the program is?

Mr. Latsha: Is that done with the Health Officer?

Mr. Raccio: No. This Committee does not go away once we do this.

Mrs. McKibben: Before I feel comfortable voting on anything, I want to know how this will be controlled down the line.

Mr. Raccio: First and foremost the Board of Selectmen control the budget in Town. Whatever the Budget Committee decides to fund, the Board of Selectmen is ultimately responsible for maintaining a budget with regards to the budget for Mosquito Control. If this Committee and or the Board of Selectmen decide to embed this budget in the Health Officer's budget under a different series, it will be this Committee's responsibility to keep the Board of Selectmen informed on what actions may or may not be occurred based on this Committee's input and then it will be the responsibility of whoever's budget this is embedded into to execute to the Board of Selectmen's direction.

Mrs. McKibben: Who is going to determine whether it is embedded into a budget or a warrant article for this year?

Mr. Raccio said this had been discussed with the Board and it was suggested it be put into the Health budget. He researched this and a lot of towns have it in their Health budget.

Mrs. McKibben said she could see that after it is established but what about the first time.

Mr. Raccio replied: The first time it would not be a warrant article but the Committee would come in to the Selectmen and make a suggestion that an x number of dollars be distributed in the Health budget under the same construct of the company of choice that gives it the itemized break down for the various services. So, if we go in for the \$24,500 as a not to exceed or the line items in the budget are articulated to the line items in the rationale, then we make those recommendations. So, for example, in April if the survey comes back and say there isn't a larvae to be found in the Town of Litchfield...then we would go back to the Selectmen and inform them we do not want to implement the larvicide in section...because the report says we have no larvicide. Obviously, the Selectmen would consider that; they may say preventative maintenance, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, do it or they may say we will take the opportunity to save the townspeople \$3,000 and will omit May's larvicide but then he gives us the opportunity to test some more and reevaluate larvicide again. This time we may come back in July and say we have tens of thousands of larvacide and we need to. So, I believe

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because we asked these two companies to break down the logical flows and dollars we, this Committee, can micro-manage the challenge in the task and make monthly recommendations to the Selectmen; quarterly recommendations to the Selectmen. We may choose to let the Board of Selectmen manage their own affairs and not have any input at all but you have a lot of control here no matter what company you pick and no matter what service you pick because of the way we basically collected the information. If the Board recommends a warrant article, I think that would be extremely dangerous because no means no and if it fails, we won't be able to do squat.

Back to the proposals, Mr. Raccio: Municipal has demonstrated the most cost effective and rationale to the services to go forward with and his recommendation is Municipal to fund the entire program for \$24,500 and be able to go to the Board of Selectmen with the rationale that speaks to the individual units and how we can logically maneuver through these units and take cost out when not needed.

Mrs. McKibben: That is the concern I have and you listen to the man from Raymond and they came up with one mosquito that tested for EEE and they were larvaciding...I have a real concern with that. If you come up with one mosquito, not to say that there aren't more.

Mr. Latsha: You have to look at during the larvicide process how many mosquito have they killed that might have had EEE.

Mr. Raccio: That is the part I could not get out of them. Did they come up with one before they started treating or after they started treating?

Mrs. McKibben: Right, we do not know but we will know in our case.

Talk continued. Mrs. McKibben: You then have to weigh the risk assessment here before we spend \$24,500...the mapping, surveying and trapping. I think we should know what we have. How do we have control where they are putting the BTI?

Mr. Latsha went on to report on various newspaper articles regarding EEE. He further stated that a lot of surrounding towns are taking measures to combat EEE.

Mrs. McKibben asked who would control this month by month. Mr. Latsha said the Health Officer. She wants to make sure they stay out of the endangered species areas and asked how will they know where those areas are located. Mr. Raccio said by the survey. This was discussed. Also, Mrs. McKibben stated they have to consider the beekeepers and the organic farm. It was said that the gentleman said he would stay away from these

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areas. Mr. Raccio said that once they come back for a final interview, the Committee can put through the conditions and also inform the Selectmen all of the concerns the Committee has regarding this matter.

At this time, Mr. Latsha spoke about a situation at the Solid Waste Facility regarding tires. At least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the tires have water. The water in the tires adds to the increased costs to dispose of them and is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Mr. Latsha discussed the matter with Mr. Mellen, Facility Manager, and he is in favor of building a 16x16 shed to house the tires. There is concern about the neighbors near the incinerator, the workers and residents with the standing water. It was said that this needs to be corrected as soon as possible.

Mr. Thomas Levesque, Sr., Conservation Commission Chairman, observing the meeting suggested a rental unit for now instead of building a shed. Talk continued.

Recommendations to Selectmen

Mr. Raccio **MOTIONED** that this Committee recommends Municipal Pest Management Services, Inc. to fund their entire program for a total sum of \$24,500 for the actual service. That being said the budget that would also be associated with the recommendation needs to be considered as well. That budget would be for secretarial services and all of the incidentals the Committee may need: minor amounts of postage, \$45 for an ad, at least a line item that can cover one notification at a minimum. Also need to consider any resources this Committee may need. Gas is not getting any cheaper, we will be going to various facilities, so, consider personal mileage and tolls, consider asking for utilization of one of the town vehicles in lieu of mileage and tolls. I also believe the first six to eight months we will be engaged in a lot of travel to understand where the sensitive areas are as well as going out into the field and watching how the sampling is done, where the traps are placed...may also consider compute assets; things like funding for web site development. At the moment, we do not have provisions to build a proper web site so if part of the Committee's charter is not only to make recommendations but similar to Pelham's web site information across the web is cheap...so, the small amount of funds that may be necessary to develop your core infrastructure for the Mosquito Control District is pennies against a recurring costs of having to make films, slides and presentations. So, in your budget considerations you may consider a small amount like \$800 to fund your web site development. The computer assets for the Town. The Town server is about two weeks away from being put on line...and we will have quite a bit of access. So, if you do not get it into the budget now, and do not establish the line items now, they will get harder to justify and harder to change after the initial input. So, when you make these considerations you should do so with a little forethought for the

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upcoming year and the succeeding years because granted most of the cost is in the actual service; however, the fundamental structure that we are chartered to put together the first three years will lay out the rest of the program until the Committee is dissolved.

Mr. Raccio reaffirmed his motion for Municipal Management Pest Services, Inc. for \$24,500. Mr. Latsha seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0.

Mr. Raccio said he sent Mr. Latsha budget information to use as a guide. Mr. Latsha will prepare a budget and the Committee will review it at its next meeting on Thursday, November 1, 2007, at 6:15 p.m. to approve the budget. Then it will go to the Board of Selectmen on November 5, 2007, and the Budget Committee on November 8, 2007.

At this time, Mr. Raccio reported on his interface with Raymond's Town Manager and the Raymond Board of Selectmen. Mr. Raccio: As you know, there was some serious accusations floating around from the previous meeting that two days after that letter flew as soon as I was made aware of it, I contacted the Town Manager and asked him for a hearing in order to explain our position. I informed the entire Board of Selectmen of the situation and informed the Chairman that I would be taking responsibility of the situation as a Selectman, not as a Mosquito District member. As it translated to a Town official directing his duties and being less than professional at the meeting. When I discussed the issue with the Town Manager, I presented the issue in a fashion in which I was looking to understand what mistakes were made and if there were apologies due I would certainly be giving them and that, by no way or means, was this to be meant as a derogatory attack on the gentleman, the Health Officer from Raymond, and actually commended to the Town Manager on the job that he did and hoped that in his writing where he refused to go back to additional towns, that would be in fact travesty; that the man has a great wealth of knowledge that should be shared around. Consequently, I received another communication from the Town Manager the next day. The Town Manager explained to me there were a number of issues and misunderstandings and that indeed there was no misconduct. At that time, I still requested a hearing with the Board of Selectmen given the magnitude in which this issue flew around town and the number of communications I have received about it, I felt compelled that this type of issue does not occur again whether it is inadvertent or not. Town employees, especially department heads, need to understand that there are methods and protocol involved and that character assassination is not a preferred method; not only by our Board of Selectmen, the Raymond Town Manager and I hope to believe the Raymond Board of Selectmen. In the meantime, a letter was sent from the Raymond Health Officer to Mr. Latsha which basically did not go to the Board of Selectmen, did not go to the Raymond Town Manager, did not go to the Raymond Board of Selectmen and clearly did not come to me that offered some state of apology

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Mr. Latsha: This letter here.

Mr. Raccio: That would be the one.

Mr. Latsha: I sent it to you.

Mr. Raccio: I am sorry, Chairman Latsha, you sending it to me after an hour of you explaining to me how horrific this issue was, did not quite cut the mustard.

Mr. Latsha: Can you clarify that for me?

Mr. Raccio: I do not know how much clearer, Chairman Latsha, the accusations that were in the initial letter were directed at me. The initial letter was not even sent to me.

Mr. Latsha: Yes it was.

Mr. Raccio: Not from the sender.

Mr. Latsha: Right, by me.

Mr. Raccio: So, on the onset from the word go, the communication was to you about me and not to the Board, or maybe he was addressing the Board through you. Nonetheless, the issue was open, the issue was aired, the issue was made public on both fronts; so, essentially all I am doing is closing the details and just making sure that none of our townspeople get subjected to this type of acquisition without due process.

Mrs. McKibben: Did you meet with the Raymond Selectmen?

Mr. Raccio: Not yet.

Mr. Raccio further stated that Raymond has a new town manager and he was impressed with the gentleman; he was very polite, and very responsive. "That is where I left it as a board issue".

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Raccio: I just want to let the public know, as well as the Board, I am not responsible for the operation of the Cable TV system. Dick Pentheny and a fine group of individuals are responsible for airing, taping and all of the duties associated with the meeting minutes. I found it to be a challenge to try to keep up with the vast amount of changes

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occurring with the hardware and the issues that the Town has with the cable service and cable provider. So, in order to minimize any type of confusion or operation technical errors, I will not be held responsible nor will I take credit for the operation of the cable system. We have lost a lot, we have gained a lot but I want to make that perfectly clear. I have some knowledge how the system operates but I will not be responsible for the airing and taping of the Board of Selectmen or the Mosquito Control District meetings.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

There being no further business, Mrs. McKibben **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Raccio seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Lorraine Dogopoulos
Recording Secretary