

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD

Mosquito Control District

July 31, 2008

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

Members present: John Latsha, Chairman
Joan McKibben
Alfred Raccio

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Latsha called the roll: All members were present.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

MUNICIPAL PEST MANAGEMENT

Mr. Michael Morrison, Municipal Pest Management Services, came forward to discuss the work he has been doing in July and a preview of the work he will be doing in August.

Mr. Morrison said that the permission slips to be signed by residents are going very well. He said he likes the wording so much he is using it in other towns. There are 59 permission slips and 39 still out there; 19 have been sent back and only one resident said no. If people are not home, they leave a doorknocker and a message. Mr. Morrison said that if any one wants to call him or email him, to please do so.

He said he did meet with Joan to view some wetlands as discussed at the last meeting.

Mr. Morrison: It is quite a unique wetland. She also sent me some information. I did dip it for mosquito larvae and it is not really a habitat that would produce larvae in my judgment. There are a lot of other insects and tadpoles and things like that in there and usually a situation like that the mosquito larvae are kept in check. We also visited a pond near by and it was strange because the seepage marsh was low but the pond near by was very high and tree shrubs were dying on the edge. I just thought that was unusual hydrologically. The big pond is definitely not a site I would worry about. The edges were shallow but it was one continuous body of water so any minnows or anything else in the water would keep them in check. I also visited Mr. Ruutilla at his organic farm

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(Nesenkeag). I was very impressed. He services restaurants and things like that. He did show me a stream, a large stream, that might have mosquito larvae but not usually. I did say we would check that.

Talk ensued. Mr. Raccio asked that the entire Board be copied on the findings of the organic farm status.

Mr. Morrison said they have been collecting mosquitoes and sending them to Concord for testing. He said mosquitoes this spring were down because the thundershowers help to keep them in check but there is a concern with the catch basins because they do not dry up as easily. Mr. Morrison said they contacted the Litchfield Highway Department and they were provided a map showing all the catch basins and culverts under the roads. The catch basins are all numbered which he thought was amazing. They expected there were about 300 catch basins but there are actually 1,000. They have to check all of the catch basins to see if they are flowing. He does expect to find mosquito larvae in most of the catch basins and he will identify the positive ones and report back to the Board. They also identify the species in the basins.

Mrs. McKibben: What is your prerequisite for putting BTI into a catch basin?

Mr. Morrison: It is a preventative also. All the mosquito species we found in other towns are either associated with EEE or West Nile. They are dominated by culex and a new mosquito johndekinia. Almost every mosquito program in the Northeast has a catch basin program as a priority. The larvae do not have any chance in running water; they drown because they have no arms or legs...most basins have traps in them and they collect sediment and it is really so the sediment won't move and hide in the pipes and become a problem. One thing thundershowers do is flush the basins and the larvae die but it also means the water will go down.

Mr. Latsha asked what happens if you treat the catch basin and you have a downpour of rain and it flushes it out, does it have to be reapplied?

Mr. Morrison: The corn particles sink to the bottom and hang around the trap. Even if the water goes up and down, they still do their job but they only have 30 days they can last in the basin so every month we survey for larvae and then reapply the bacteria. We worry when the water goes down and it gets really hot then the females will lay eggs and we get a whole new batch of larvae. The thundershowers have been flushing fairly regularly and that is to our advantage.

He said they have just about completed all of the catch basins except the ones that have flowing water. Talk ensued as to the testing process. Mr. Levesque asked if the French

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drains along Route 3A, which are State owned, are shown on the maps provided by the Highway Department. He was told that some of them are shown on the map. Mr. Morrison said some of the catch basins are very deep and that is good because they do not produce mosquito larvae. Most basins are shallow and can support larvae. To this, Mr. Raccio suggested modifying the ordinances to account for deep catch basins in the road projects as they go through the planning approval process. Mr. Morrison: It might make them more difficult to clean but I suppose if they just have longer hoses.

Mr. Morrison talked about the virus. Mr. Raccio asked if there is a correlation between migratory habits of birds and populations here because of the seasons. Are they coming up with any clues, trends and are they tying it to anything?

Mr. Morrison: That was looked at originally and that is what was thought. Certainly migratory birds are coming in with all kinds of viruses and certainly West Nile and EEE too probably but they still do not know where it is in the wintertime. Is it brought in by migratory birds each year? They sample birds in southern part of the migratory flight range and there is no virus there.

Mr. Morrison went on to talk about the diseases. Mr. Latsha asked about the perturbans mosquito that bite mammals and people and where is that on the scale from melanura.

Mr. Morrison: Perturbans is a cattail mosquito and only found in cattail marshes. They are capable on feeding on anything so they will feed on birds and mammals. They are a good bridge vector for both EEE and West Nile so they are a risk, and a major concern. They come out once a year at the end of June, early July...they over winter as larvae under the ice and snow. They hatch out as adult flies at the end of June, early July. They are a dominant mosquito. They are tough for us because those mosquitoes do not come to the surface and are difficult to collect.

Mr. Latsha asked about testing Darrah Pond and other areas where people congregate. Mr. Morrison said they could test but every one is at the same risk; it is a regional thing. It might not be a good spot to collect a lot of mosquitoes. Mr. Raccio asked about the cost of a light trap and then suggested purchasing a trap or two at \$150 each and "thus with your information and the town's desire, we could augment the traps at a specific area without interfering with the collection from the CDC."

Mr. Raccio proposed the Board evaluate the budget to see if it can afford the purchase of traps. Mr. Morrison to provide an estimate for the traps and other materials such as dry ice. Mr. Morrison said it is a great idea. Mr. Raccio suggested the schools might also want to procure some traps for their playgrounds, soccer fields, etc. He will talk to the lab in Concord to see how many specimens can be sent up for testing.

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Mrs. McKibben mentioned that a citizen called her to ask about spraying and she told her the Town is not spraying. She said the word had been mentioned to her. It may have been the person that was handing out permission slips. Mr. Morrison said that he would speak to his people.

Mr. Raccio asked Mr. Morrison from his view as to what the program is going to look like for 2008-2009 budget year. The Board needs an estimate of what the program will be and in a very similar context to last year. This was discussed. Mr. Raccio asked Mr. Morrison to provide the information by August 22, 2008, so the Board can review it at their next meeting on August 28, 2008. Mr. Raccio further talked about the budgets and lack of expenditures of line items. Mr. Raccio: In your estimation could you provide this Board with any potential scale of economy from the existing program this year. We kind of started late but as we see in your billing there is give and take here everywhere but if you could provide an estimation of how you think we are doing and what your expenditures may or may not be will help us show the town that we are conscious of their dollar...

Mr. Raccio then talked about the bid process and he will take the action to check if this service has to go out to bid again. If the ordinance says it has to go out to bid, it will have to be re-bid.

Mr. Latsha asked about the reimbursement form from the State to apply for the 25% reimbursement program. The program has to do with control not surveillance. This was discussed. Mr. Morrison said he can help provide the information needed for the submittal. The due date is November 1, 2008.

On another matter, Mr. Morrison agreed to meet with the Board of Selectmen on August 25, 2008 to give them an overview of what he has been doing in Town. Mr. Raccio talked about the new right-to-know law dealing with communications, etc.

Mr. Raccio: We need to pull away from personal email addresses and provide Mr. Morrison with contact .gov to become compliant with audible and traceable public record as well as the new laws.

With this, Mr. Morrison left the meeting.

MEMBER RE-APPOINTMENT

Mr. Raccio talked about his re-appointment to the Board. He sent communications to the Selectmen at their last meeting requesting re-appoint. At that meeting, Mr. Latsha spoke on behalf of Mr. Raccio and made a recommendation for his reconsideration. Mr. Raccio said the Board of Selectmen voted to appoint him to a three (3) year term.

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2009 BUDGET

The 2009 draft budget will be discussed at a work session on August 28, 2008. It was said that the Board next year will not have to go before the Selectmen to spend its budget. The first year it had been presented to the townspeople that the expenditures would be approved by the Selectmen before expending money.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public comment.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Slide Presentation - Mrs. McKibben talked about some slides being shown on Cable TV. She does not know where the slides originally came from but slide #10 states that people should put mosquito eating fish in their ponds. That is fine for a plastic garden pond that is not out letting to anything. It is not a good idea to put fish in naturally formed wetlands, or vernal pools because vernal pools do not have fish in them. She explained that vernal pools have no inlet or outlet, it has no fish, and it can't support fish because vernal pools dry up in the summer time. Talk ensued. She suggested to pull #10 from the slides. Mr. Raccio stated it may not be able to be pulled because it is public access. Mr. Latsha believes it was Mr. Peeples who put the slides on the Cable and it ran all last summer.

Mr. Raccio said if the MCD finds that it is not in line with the current philosophy of this commission, then the Board to send an action to the Board of Selectmen and recommend that it be pulled. Talk continued. All in all, Mr. Raccio will find out the source of the slides and ask Mr. Pentheny (Cable Committee Chairman) to temporarily suspend the package.

Bat Boxes - Mrs. McKibben talked about having seniors and sophomores at Campbell build bat boxes as a project. She feels there is a need to educate people that there are more things out there besides mosquitoes. Messrs. Latsha and Raccio had no problem with the proposal.

District update - Chairman Latsha said the computer, Municipal Pest Management and recording secretary have been paid. He talked about getting some of the advertisements to the school for posting in the lobby. Mr. Latsha said that he has printed about 700 copies of the advertisement and distributed them to various businesses. Talk went on as to getting supplies such as boots, paper, ink cartridges, etc. Mr. Raccio said he will bring it up under other business at the Selectmen's meeting to expend the money under minor tools and supplies, and office supplies.

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Video Purchase - Mr. Latsha said there is a video that cost \$35 and runs for ten minutes, and illustrates mosquito biology, disease, prevention techniques, research, etc. The other video he had wanted to purchase cost \$65 and runs for 27 minutes. Mr. Raccio said it could be purchased under film and supplies that was intended for cameras. It is an educational video. The Board needs to review the budget to see what line item the video would be paid out of. He will talk to the Selectmen.

August Agenda - Mr. Raccio said to limit the August 28, 2008, meeting to discussions on the budget and election of officers.

Camera - Talk went on about purchasing a digital camera. Mr. Raccio said there is only a limited amount of money to purchase a camera and related items. He recommended purchasing a digital camera body this year and then purchase the lenses later. He will do the research for a digital camera.

Foreclosures - Mrs. McKibben talked about an abandoned house and she is concerned about the swimming pool. The cover is filled with water and is a good habitat for mosquitoes. It was said that the Health Officer has the ability to go on the property. It was suggested contacting the Health Officer to investigate as to what steps could be taken.

Video - Back to the video purchase for \$35. The video would have to be viewed by the Board before it is put on the Cable. Mr. Raccio will discuss this with the Board of Selectmen.

There being no further business, Mr. Latsha **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. McKibben seconded. Motion carried 3-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Lorraine Dogopoulos
Recording Secretary