

## **MCTF Local Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 12 16 21**

### **Minutes for the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century (MCTF) Task Force Meeting**

#### **Subcommittee Meeting: Local Engagement**

December 16, 2021, 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

#### Meeting Topics:

- Meeting opening, roll call, welcome (chair)
- Housekeeping notes (EEA representatives)
- Meeting purpose and agenda (chair and facilitator)
- Approve meeting minutes (if available in advance)
- Identify any additional overlap from other subcommittee and Task Force meetings
- Continue discussion of recommendation ideas and outline(s) developed
- Set priorities for further outline development and assign members
- Read any Q&A/Wrap up (facilitator and chair)
- Vote to adjourn (chair)

Heidi Ricci conducted roll call at 12:02 p.m. and all subcommittee members were in attendance other than Derek Brindisi. Jenny Helmick discussed the need to identify an alternate chair and asked if anyone was willing to step into an alternate chair role. Jenny and Heidi discussed the role and responsibility as chair. Russell Hopping offered to co-chair. Jenny noted that meeting minutes were distributed for the first two meetings. The vote on meeting minutes would be tabled until the next meeting so subcommittee members have time to review.

#### **Identify any additional overlap from other subcommittee and Task Force meetings**

Heidi Ricci commented that she did not feel that her questions were answered by the DPH presentation that was given at the full task force meeting. Heidi noted that she felt as though the human health topic was important to the full task force. Heidi referenced a 2021 article and asked that it be shared with the subcommittee and the full task force as it is foundational to the human health discussion. Heidi provided a link to the article and Jenny pulled it up for the group to review. Heidi asked if the link could be sent as a follow up to full task force members. Jessica Burgess noted there is no OML reason why this link can't be shared with the task force. Jessica commented that the link itself was fine as long as there was not an opinion-based narrative along with it. The group discussed the need to solidify direction through a purpose statement and general framework. It was noted that the Policy Structure subcommittee agreed that this topic be discussed at their next full meeting after the holidays.

#### **Continue discussion of recommendation ideas and outline(s) developed**

Jenny bought up the calendar of meetings and presented it to the group and discussed the remaining meetings in January and February and the need to start outlining draft recommendations expeditiously. In addition, ERG could take what has been heard and draft straw recommendations for the subcommittee to work with. It would need to be things that have been deliberated on. Jenny opened it up to thoughts and comments from the subcommittee group. Subcommittee members agreed with the proposed approach and Jenny noted the need to identify the content that the group needs assistance with.

Jenny showed the group Russell Hopping's draft recommendation on landowner opts which was focused on easing the burden of landowner opt outs. Jessica noted that Russell's recommendation was regulatory and would need to go through a regulatory review process. Russell commented that was helpful to know. Jessica discussed two different types of opt outs and described the regulatory aspects within MGL 252 and Section 2A. The discussion focused on how the regulation would apply to MCD and SRB activity. Subcommittee members and meeting attendees discussed the aerial application regulation language related to markings and the need for some clarity. Heidi noted fleshing out the regulatory language through MDAR and ERG would be helpful. Jessica noted that regulatory information could be provided.

Heidi asked Priscilla if GIS data could be incorporated into MCD systems for exclusions? Priscilla responded that she believed for the most part yes but the more information the MCDs received the better it would be. Russell explained the rationale for his recommendation. Russell clarified his draft recommendation was for landowner opt out not municipal opt out. Russell took the underlying questions and highlighted anything that intersected with opt out exclusion requests. Russell's intent was to support the case that all three directives would at least be partly addressed and set the stage for a two-part recommendation: First, reduce the requirement for ground and aerial markings by adding in GIS boundary data. Second, recommend a data-based option for automatic annual renewal.

Heidi Ricci commented on the annual renewal process and acknowledged that this recommendation would require funding to make it happen. The group discussed this as a larger IT effort and thought that there may be a desire to do something like this in the Commonwealth. Alisha Bouchard highlighted the point about funding and the notion that in the draft recommendation there be language that we get the IT resources to facilitate this. It was noted by some members of the subcommittee that IT resources are currently stretched thin in the state due to ongoing Future of Work initiatives. Eve Schluter also mentioned the need to support an IT system and provide ongoing maintenance and dedicated resources would go a long way.

Jessica Burgess commented that thousands of exclusion requests are received every year and that MDAR also gets many requests not to be excluded from spraying. Jessica also discussed the regulatory amendment process. Heidi Ricci appreciated the time involved on both sides and mentioned the current system was a large cost and burden on large landowners and would hope that a new system would create efficiencies for landowners and state agencies. Priscilla and Russell discussed the landowner exclusion process of providing information outside of the online portal. Jessica responded regarding the current process and legal requirements of submitting through the online system or by mail to MDAR.

Priscilla commented that there still needed to be a submission method for individuals that are not tech-savvy. The concern was that there could be long-term difficulties getting the process through all the steps to be approved and a paper form could take off some of that burden. Russell commented that his recommendation did not eliminate the paper option, but paper would become more difficult to use. There was a preference to get away from paper. Heidi Ricci noted that since the parcel data is in GIS, parcel data should be easier to find. Heidi also agreed that there should still be a paper option for those that do not want to submit electronically. Priscilla thanked Russell for putting the recommendation together and the laws and regulations that would be impacted. Jenny noted that Russell's document would be distributed to the group.

Members of the subcommittee discussed coordination with Heritage for rare species habitat. Eve noted that this was limited by regulation as there was no jurisdiction over areas that one day may become habitat. Heidi commented that this was an area that may need to be flagged for regulatory change. The conversation continued between Heidi and Eve. Eve noted that this would require review of things that aren't under current purview. Heidi recommended flagging this and flushing out what the concern is and what we are looking for, as it would become increasingly important as more restoration projects come up. Russell added that there may be a tool already in place and just need to develop a process. Heidi clarified that this was only for emergency spraying events. Heidi volunteered to flush this out a bit more through background and rationale documentation.

#### **Set priorities for further outline development and assign members**

Jenny pushed the group to identify recommendations that may be critical and the highest priority for the subcommittee to develop for public input. Russell brought up the periodic survey of municipalities and annual reporting of treatment areas. These recommendations were areas that provide real data and feedback to address goals. Heidi recommended public input into the overall plan, annual reporting, and engaging the public as priority areas. Priscilla noted engaging with the public by letting them know the MCDs are there, having the public participate in commissions, and provide an opportunity for the public to provide input into the plan, although the average person may not know how to address mosquito control.

Eve noted that this may be a broader recommendation on the development of an outreach plan for the MCDs. Priscilla recommended caution in putting this on the MCDs as there needs to be more focus on those towns that

don't have MCD's to ensure information is consistent. It was stated that there was a recommendation being drafted in the Best Practices subcommittee for the state to be responsible for outreach and education and it would be optional for the MCDs. Heidi reiterated the framework for a broader statewide system of outreach on what people can do towards personal protection and source reduction. It is mentioned that municipal public engagement is needed for communities. There needs to be more structure on the municipal approach and there needs to be public input and public engagement for decision making.

Russell stated he could see the Best Practices subcommittee handling this as a best practice that all towns come up with a good housekeeping plan to address mosquito control. For example, what you are doing around your yard and roadside trash that could reduce the risks of WNV? Jessica clarified that not every city or town is in an MCD, but there is an MCD that every city or town could join if they are not a member. Russell noted that he would not want to see an obstacle with opting into an MCD and that there should be funding available to remove a burden of allowing an MCD to assist a town or city.

Jenny asked the subcommittee members what they thought about priority development and prioritizing recommendations. Heidi thought the overall plan with local options was falling under the two directives. Noted there may be one solution to two of the directives. Priscilla stated that she could not support a municipal tiered option, as a menu-based option does not follow an IPM approach. Priscilla noted that there may be assumptions that towns must have surveillance and education and other things are optional. A true menu-based system would mean towns can ask for just larviciding or just adulticiding. Priscilla was concerned that she couldn't support some of the other recommendations about public engagement if this was put into the same recommendation.

Heidi envisioned the recommendation would be IPM with public education and surveillance as a baseline statewide. Members of the subcommittee discussed the efficacy of aerial based larvaciding and adulticiding and steps in the process of determining necessary pesticide application. Russell noted the need to flesh this out more to get down to the definition of IPM. Jenny noted that perhaps this is one that ERG should take to develop some sort of straw recommendation. Heidi referenced Boulder. Priscilla responded that Boulder had very different mosquitos and disease issues. Heidi noted that we need to know about mosquito populations not just disease which can lead to activities like water management. Heidi acknowledged this may not get fleshed out in the recommendation and perhaps we lay out a few options here if full agreement cannot be reached.

#### **Read any Q&A/Wrap up (facilitator and chair)**

Jenny noted the need to return to directive 3. Jenny mentioned that ERG could take on the municipal option or survey to put together straw recommendations. There was discussion related to homework assignments. There was a question in the Q&A from Brian Farless that Jenny reviewed with the subcommittee group. Heidi Ricci and Priscilla Matton discussed larval dips prior to application. It was noted that Brian Farless is the Superintendent of Suffolk and East Middlesex MCD's

#### **Vote to adjourn (chair)**

Seeing no other questions or comments Heidi Ricci took a motion to adjourn from Priscilla Matton. Seconded by Russell Hopping. All those in attendance voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 pm.