

## **Minutes for Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century Task Force**

October 7, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom

The meeting was held remotely under the Governor's Order issued on March 12, 2020, which authorizes a public body to meet remotely and suspends the requirement of a quorum on the body being physically present at the meeting location. All votes were taken a roll call votes.

Dan Sieger called the meeting to order at 3:51 p.m. He referred to the agenda requesting approval of the minutes from the previous meeting on September 2, 2020, scheduling meeting times for 2020 and 2021 and distribution of the RFR to all the members of the Task Force.

Caroline Higley acknowledged that the meeting was being recorded.

The meeting minutes from the September 2, 2020 were provided to the Task Force prior to the meeting. Jennifer Pederson requested that on page 2, "so" be changed to "do." Heidi Ricci requested that the minutes reflect that her main point was that she wanted more mechanisms for public participation and to submit information to the Task Force.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jennifer Pederson and seconded by Commissioner John Lebeaux. A roll call vote was taken, and the September minutes were approved unanimously with the changes requested.

Mr. Sieger then discussed scheduling the upcoming meetings of the Task Force. Staff drafted a schedule for all the upcoming meetings through 2021. An additional October meeting has been scheduled for October 27, 2020 to finish discussing the RFR. Mr. Sieger said he hoped a final vote on the RFR could take place at the November meeting. He said public listening sessions could take place in January through June 2021. The Task Force could potentially break into subcommittees after that to discuss the structure of recommendations and how to pursue them. He mentioned that work would continue in August and September 2021 with the aim of finishing by October 2021. Mr. Sieger then moved onto the third item of business-discussion of the RFR. The Task Force is required to commission a study by an independent research or academic organization to complete a comprehensive evaluation of the Commonwealth's mosquito control process. He then asked the Task Force to give feedback on the RFR, first by discussing the scope.

Brad Mitchell said he's looking for this to discern between nuisance control and public health control as there are different risk/benefit analyses that go with each, so he'd like to see the scope address both situations.

Richard Robinson said he thinks there should be much more detail on what we would like to see in the report including the history of control measures in the state, the history of arbovirus in the state, narratives of the scientific literature, experiences with alternative models of control, and what are other places are doing to try and control this with an added emphasis on human health.

Julia Blatt said it seemed to her the scope of work was narrow and that it should be expanded to look at best practices when it comes to mosquito control so we can see the intersection with public health.

Richard Pollack said he thinks any discussion of mosquito control should be prefaced with a discussion about public health - while we'll be looking at the costs of various intervention programs we should also consider the costs of doing nothing. People need to consider the health impact on individuals as well as the fiscal issues-tourism and agriculture.

Eve Schluter stated it would be important to identify potential data gaps so we can note what is missing to complete the picture and monitor over time. The impacts of the use of certain products on our state's species is an example of this.

Jennifer Pederson said she has an interest in water supply and would like to see water included in the scope. She recommended adding DEP as one of the entities that we consult with.

Bob Mann referenced the second sentence of the scope and recommended consolidating into a single sentence using the word control.

Heidi Porter said she would like to consider engaging with all the land of the commonwealth, not just municipalities.

Heidi Ricci said she agrees with the comments Julia made about looking into best practices. She believes the information needs to be quantifiable and measurable as much as possible, identifying gaps where we don't have as much information. She believes the name "Mosquito Control for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" was the name chosen for a reason - we can look for innovative solutions. For example, Boulder Colorado and Washington, D.C. We now have a state climate change action plan-mosquito borne disease may be increasing because of climate change. On the land management side, we must look at dams and other issues causing still water areas. Can there be more of a menu-based approach where a community's needs are assessed?

Kathleen Baskin said it seems like a lot of the bullets from 1.2 need to be brought up to the scope in 1.1 so we can make it clear to any consultant what the expectations are.

Caroline Higley said if any Task Force members wanted to put their comments in the chat it would be helpful.

Brad Mitchell said he agrees that we need to do an analysis of the projects as there is a lot of variance in how they operate and the different ecosystems.

Anita Deeley said she wants to make sure the impact of spraying on honeybees and other pollinators is looked at as well.

Richard Robinson asked if we are looking at "effectiveness of mosquito spraying" as the reduction of human disease or number of mosquitoes killed?

Commissioner Lebeaux answered that we will have to consider that question of mosquito population v. ramping down the virus.

Richard Robinson stated he wants to make sure the Task Force determines that and not a consultant.

Helen Poynton said that an analysis of already available information was missing from the RFR. She mentioned how it is important for the RFR to target interest from academia and consultants. She also requested information on the toxicity of the chemicals used in spraying.

Jennifer Pederson asked about how the consultant will be selected.

Dan Sieger asked MDAR to weigh in.

Jessica Burgess said under the legislation it is the Task Force that is responsible for selecting the consultant. The public body responsible for that assignment is the procurement team.

Jennifer Pederson asked if the Task Force can vote to designate the staff.

Jessica Burgess explained that the Task Force is the awarding entity and in procurement through other public bodies within MDAR, a decision is made by the public body. She acknowledged that we could look at our different options to discuss at the next meeting of the Task Force.

Eve Schluter said she doesn't know if she feels comfortable ranking areas in which she has no expertise.

Dan Sieger suggested perhaps some focus groups would be a good idea.

Commissioner Lebeaux stated that we may need to prioritize things to make sure we can get everything accomplished by the deadline and flagged the need to determine what's essential to be accomplished.

Russell Hopping said the wildlife we choose to study will probably be an area we can pick and choose our priorities.

Dan Sieger moved on to discuss the public listening sessions.

Jessica Burgess explained that under the Open Meeting Law, everything discussed today could be incorporated into a new draft of the RFR but that anything submitted by the Task Force after the meeting would need to wait to be incorporated into the draft RFR until discussed at the next open meeting.

J R Shaw asked if the Task Force will look at private contractors? He introduced himself as Commissioner of Plymouth County Mosquito Control.

Dan Sieger stated we are required to do at least one public listening session. He asked what Task Force members think about the appropriate level of public participation opportunities. He also asked for thoughts about the structure of the sessions.

Heidi Ricci recommended a dedicated email box where people can submit questions and comments. We could have an early input process to make sure we're asking the right questions and then another later input process as well with survey questions as well. She recommended at least two listening sessions - one earlier and one later.

Dan Sieger asked whether we should align one with the kickoff of the study and then a second one as we develop recommendations to take input from the public? He then turned to the question of a workplan for meetings for the next year - in the next meeting or two could have a conversation about preseason prevention efforts. He asked if folks have any ideas on topic areas that haven't yet come up that they would want to see in the work plan?

Richard Robinson said in his opinion public education should absolutely be a priority.

Dan Sieger asked if there were any other comments from members of the public. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Lebeaux made a motion to adjourn and seconded by Jennifer Pederson. The vote to adjourn was taken by roll call vote and was unanimous.