

Minutes for the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century Task Force Meeting
October 27, 1:00 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.

Members in Attendance: Dan Sieger, Kevin Cranston, Stephen Doody, Kathy Baskin, Julia Blatt, Eve Schluter, Heidi Porter, Derek Brindisi, Commissioner John Lebeaux, Tanya Colpitts, Anita Deeley, Russell Hopping, Kimberly LeBeau, Bob Mann, Priscilla Matton, Jennifer Pederson, Rich Pollack, Helen Poynton, Heidi Ricci, Steven Rich, Richard Robinson, and Sam Telford.

Dan Sieger called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. He announced the agenda for the meeting:

- 1) Routine Business/Approval of minutes,
- 2) Presentation on mosquito control districts,
- 3) Procurement processes
- 4) RFR/Feedback from the taskforce,
- 5) Creating a subcommittee to review the RFR.

Caroline Higley acknowledged that the meeting was being recorded.

Dan Sieger asked for comments on the minutes. The meeting minutes from the October 7, 2020 meeting were provided to the Task Force prior to the meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Lebeaux and seconded by Jennifer Pederson after one typo was flagged. A roll call vote was taken, and the October 7 minutes were approved unanimously with the change requested.

Commissioner Lebeaux then introduced Priscilla Matton to give a presentation on the State Reclamation Board and the Mosquito Control Districts throughout the state. Priscilla Matton gave a PowerPoint presentation via screen-sharing about the 11 mosquito control districts in the Commonwealth. She described the structure of the districts and the funding by individual members towns. She described how the staffs were all Commonwealth-certified for applying pesticides and many held advanced secondary degrees. She listed the services mosquito control offers to member communities in the mosquito control districts as part of an integrated pest management services system. She described the measures the districts take to monitor and hopefully eliminate Arbovirus/EEE and West Nile Virus threats especially. She said an existing Generic Environmental Impact Report may provide some answers to questions people may be looking for in the RFR. She then detailed the current standards and measures the districts use for pesticide application as well as how they honor the wishes of those who choose to opt-out of spraying. She mentioned education measures the districts employ to reduce standing water on homeowners' property.

Dan Sieger thanked her for the presentation and opened for questions and comments others had for Priscilla Matton.

Heidi Ricci asked if there are different thresholds in different districts for dipping for larval and adult mosquitoes.

Priscilla Matton answered that there are different thresholds in different districts. She said that truck spraying is very difficult for EEE control but better for West Nile Virus Control and mentioned that aerial spraying is recommended for EEE control measures if the EEE threat is deemed serious enough.

Stephen Doody asked if Priscilla could speak as to the options towns have besides choosing not to participate in the district?

Priscilla said no, she could not.

Dan Sieger then asked Robert Monahan to review the procurement process and how it applies to the RFR for the study. Mr. Monahan mentioned that all the executive branches are required to use a state-wide service that pre-approves environmental research consultant vendors. These vendors are pre-approved by OSD so there are qualified vendors ready to go in certain areas. He outlined what would happen if they received multiple offers or no offers at all from these pre-approved vendors. He reiterated that no one should reach out to potential vendors before the posting on Commbuys.

Caroline Higley shared the RFR on the screen and discussed the changes in the RFR since the last meeting based on the comments, questions, and other feedback that had been received.

Mr. Sieger asked for comments from members.

Russ Hopping asked if it would be possible for different sections to be submitted at different times.

Robert Monahan answered in the affirmative and mentioned that they could set quarterly progress reports or even break down the project into sections.

Anita Deeley suggested that honeybees should be moved to agriculture and away from nature in the RFR.

Caroline Higley then clarified some questions that were asked about the wording of the RFR.

A suggestion was made to focus on the impact on human health and the reduction of arbovirus diseases as defining effectiveness of control measures.

Jennifer Pederson raised a concern that not enough academic institutions were included on Commbuys for environmental services besides UMass-Donahue.

Helen Poynton pointed out academics would be potentially good at putting together interdisciplinary teams that would then not have to subcontract out aspects of the study.

Caroline Higley then talked about where the RFR will go from here - the next meeting in two weeks will include a vote on the final version of the RFR.

Dan Sieger said the intent is to distribute a copy before the next meeting and to hold a vote at that meeting.

Caroline Higley mentioned how they do not have a set number as a budget in the RFR as there is not yet a budget for fiscal year 2021 in the Commonwealth, but she imagines around couple hundred thousand dollars.

Jessica Burgess then spoke about the review options for the taskforce including the option of creating a subcommittee to be responsible for reviewing, evaluating and rewarding. The taskforce would need to vote on creating the subcommittee and vote on defining its responsibilities. The subcommittee would also be required to follow open meeting law requirements.

Dan Sieger suggested that members let staff know by the next meeting if they would like to be included on a possible procurement review subcommittee. He asked if anyone not on the committee had any comments or questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn which was provided by Jennifer Pederson and seconded by Commissioner Lebeaux. The meeting ended at 2:30 p.m.