Churchill County Mosquito, Vector and Noxious Weed Abatement District

Board of Trustees

Churchill County, Nevada

7400 Reno Highway

Fallon, NV 89406

Meeting February 11, 2021

OPEN MEETING SESSION

1. **Call to Order**

Chairwoman, Christy Lattin called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Chairwoman, Christy Lattin

Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer

Trustee, Marion Jonte

Trustee, Tom Hutchings

Trustee, Cynthia McGarrah

Legal Counsel, Ben Shawcroft

District Manager, Nancy Upham

Assistant Manager, JD MacKay

Board Secretary, Melania Sagi

**Public Present**

Fallon Merbs

Jim Cork

Zip Upham

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:**

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Public Comment:**

None

1. **Review and Adoption of the Agenda:**

District Manager stated that as is would be appropriate. Trustee, Marion Jonte made a motion to accept the agenda as is. Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **Discussion and Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Lattin requested a correction on page 3 from the January 14th, 2021, meeting minutes. Where is says that Ms. McGarrah is involved with the "Turtle Economic Development Authority" it should say "Churchill Economic Development Authority." Trustee, Cynthia McGarrah made a motion to accept the minutes from January 14th, 2021, with the completed correction. Mr. Jonte seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **Certificate of Posting:**

Ms. Upham stated that the agenda was posted in accordance with NRS statues.

1. **Correspondence:**

Ms. Upham gave a brief description of the correspondences included in the meeting packet:

* 1. 1-4-2021 MacLeod Watts GASB 75 Engagement Letter. This is a formality that needs to be done in conjunction with the audit every two or three years.
  2. 1-4-2021 Survey of Occupational Illnesses and Injuries. This is also a formality as there were no on-the-job injuries last year.
  3. 1-5-2021 Ralph Handel — Mediation and Arbitration for Jim Cork and Fallon Merbs. Mr. Handel requested that both cases be heard at mediation together.
  4. 1-5-2021 Ralph Handel — Request for recordings of Public Meetings. Mr. Handel requested the recorded minutes from December 10th and December 30th, 2020.
  5. 1-6-2021 Ralph Handel — Requested audio from December 10 and December 30, 2020, Board meetings. This is a clarification of which information Mr. Handel is requesting. Ms. Lattin suggested using Dropbox or another similar service to transfer the requested data. Ms. Upham responded that Mr. Handel had offered to provide a flash drive and Board Secretary, Melania Sagi offered that the data was too great to transfer through email, but she was looking into alternative programs.
  6. 1-7-2021 Ralph Handel — Request for meeting announcements and Agenda. Mr. Handel requested all the Board meeting packets and agendas which are now available on the District website for anyone to print off for themselves.
  7. 1-8-2021 Ralph Handel — 5-Day Notice. Mr. Handel requested the 5-day notices which we gave him.
  8. 1-8-2021 Ralph Handel — Closed session recording and parties who may receive recordings. Mr. Handel clarified that as he was acting as the technician's representatives, he was privy to the closed session recordings as well as the open sessions.
  9. 1-8-2021 Krista Jenkins — Drone insurance documents. This is a breakdown of the total cost for the drone set up. Included is the certificate of authorization, which is the District's binding agreement with the FAA. Ms. Upham added that she was currently working towards getting the tablets, manuals, and software that would allow us to operate the equipment ourselves. In the meantime, the Douglas County pilot is willing to assist us if needed. Trustee, Tom Hutchings requested comparison data for the drone versus the flights as far as total costs and efficiency. Ms. Upham stated that she would provide Mr. Hutchings the requested information at the following meeting. Mr. Jonte asked how many people Ms. Upham was intending to license from our District. Ms. Upham responded that at this point just Assistant Manager, JD MacKay, and herself. There was a possibility of subcontracting the flight with an outside source but that would introduce questions of insuring the outside operator, also.
  10. 1-11-2021 Nancy Upham — Confirmation of request and thumb drive request. Ms. Upham confirmed Mr. Handel's request of the audio recording for the meetings.
  11. 1-11-2021 Jordan Walsh — Confirmation of District Representation. This is a correspondence from Ms. Walsh confirming with Mr. Handel that she will be representing the District during mediation.
  12. 1-11-2021 Nancy Upham — Response to 5-day notice request. Ms. Upham responded to the 5-day notice, clarifying that the letters were returned to the post office as not picked up, but it still covers Mr. Handel's request.
  13. 1-21-2021 Gary Smith — Letter of Intent to be considered for filling the vacancy with the District Board of Trustees. Mr. Smith recalled his intent before the actual appointment meeting. He may run in the next election, but he would like to continue to assist the District with the hiring process.
  14. 1-22-2021 Benjamin Shawcroft — Summary of Tortious Conduct pursuant to NRS 41.0385. This is a formality from Mr. Shawcroft to the District that needs to be filed with the District Manager.
  15. 1-22-2021 Ed James — Proposed legislative bill AB 34 language. Ms. Upham explained that this bill does not seem to include a lot of new language. It may have been distributed because of a change of Director or from the Department of Agriculture wanting to clarify available information. This bill covers the right of the director to notify people of their responsibility for their own noxious weeds, Nursery stock, and licensing with a criminal background history.
  16. 1-25-2021 Lyle Petersen — Vector Control Survey for CDC-NACCHO. District Manager, Nancy Upham will be submitting this survey.
  17. 1-26-2021 Keri Gransbery — Tax Rate Change for FY 2021-22. This needs to be returned to the Department of Taxation by February 22nd. Ms. Upham will go into greater depth later in the meeting.
  18. 1-26-2021 Karen Larsen — Exchange program for Clarke liquid pesticides. Clarke has offered a voluntary exchange program and the District will be returning approximately 20 gallons of material. It was discovered that there are fluorinated hydrocarbons in the plastic containers, and it may be a health issue. Mr. Hutchings asked if it was a gallon per gallon exchange? Ms. Upham responded that, yes, it was.

1. **Appointment:**

None

1. **Old Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2021 Aerial Contract with Frey Spray. Ms. Upham explained that Jerry Frey has not been available to place his bid for this upcoming year. In the past his rates have not increased greatly so the Board was provided with last year's bid of $780 an hour. With a larvicide flight taking an hour to an hour and a half, and an adulticide flight taking two or more hours, this is a significant cost. This is why the drone had been initially proposed to cover the smaller areas. Ms. Upham does not believe the District will need a flight before the next meeting, but she will find a solution if the need arises.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the "District Bylaws." The edits and updates had been completed to the District Bylaws. Ms. Upham requested from the Board to make a final decision about the adoption of the policy. Ms. Lattin made the motion to approve the District Bylaws as written. Mr. Jonte seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **New Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the District Program Goals and Planning Processes. This is an old document that outlines the District's Goals and Planning. Ms. Upham requested that this become a working document so that we can update it as new technology and processes are implemented into our policies. Mr. Jonte asked if this document would be put onto the District website. Ms. Upham agreed that would be a good idea. Technician, Jim Cork, noted that this was an incredibly old document as there were phrases that had not applied to the District in a long time. Ms. Lattin requested the Board members to review the document and bring questions and comments to the next meeting.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding the "Role of the Board" document provided in the District binder. Ms. Upham introduced this document as needing to be reviewed every two years. It covers the framework and acceptable behavior expected of the Board members. Ms. Lattin made a motion to adopt the Role of the Board as the rules of the Board members. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2021-2022 Tax Rate. Ms. Upham explained that the District tax rate has been 8% for a number of years. The problem arises from our tax rate being dependent on the other entities in Churchill County. Due to the pandemic, there has been less revenue coming in. Ms. Upham suggested we try to stay in our 8% and should we have a large expense it may be prudent to discuss it with the other entities if they would be able to lower their rates. Ms. Upham believes we can work within the 8% as it would require another entity to decrease theirs for us to increase ours.

Ms. Lattin agreed that we should try to work within the established rate. She asked if there has been an increase in workload as there has been a steady increase of residents in Churchill County. Ms. Upham responded that on some points it seems to have evened out as with more construction some sources have disappeared. However, with more residents there have been increased service requests since residents tend to think each year is the worst it has ever been. Ms. Upham stated that the technicians keep an eye out for new source areas and are proactive with their treatment. Chemical prices continue to rise but the quality of the material is also improving leading to more time in between servicing certain areas. Ms. Upham is searching for the most cost effective and best deals when purchasing chemical to keep overhead low. Ms. Lattin made a motion to keep the District's tax rates at 8%. Mr. Jonte seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **District Manager’s Report and Operations Review:**

Ms. Upham explained that for most of January the technicians were updating their source books. This is beneficial for the longevity of the District. The source books will tell the reader exactly where the sources are, the best way to approach them, and any other useful information to make treatment as efficient as possible. The books establish common names for sources so that each technician is using the same term which clarifies communication between technicians and management. All the equipment has been serviced, included the trucks, chainsaws, weedwhackers, and woodchipper. The technicians have been clearing access routes to source areas where the growth was too thick for efficient treatment. The technicians took two days off during the month for inclement weather. Management has been trying to establish a schedule a couple of weeks in advance so the employees can be prepared.

Ms. Lattin asked Ms. Upham to explain the zones for Ms. McGarrah's understanding. Ms. Upham explained that Highway 95 divides Churchill County to the North and South, and Highway 50 divides it East-West. The lines may be meshed depending on need and resources so there was some give. Management has discussed potentially switching the technicians to different zones, but nothing has been decided yet. This system has been working well for years so, the District will probably continue in this fashion.

Mr. Hutching asked if the District would continue with the chickens. Ms. Upham thanked him for the question and that yes, the District would be starting the program, but she was hoping to do the blood test in house. The technicians listened to a conference in California from the first through the third and they are still doing the chicken program. Ms. Upham explained that the benefit of the program is that the chickens pick up the viruses in the bird population. The bird population, as the amplifying host, will generally have the virus weeks before it affects the human or horse population. If the chickens in a certain area are positive, so would the mosquitoes in that area allowing the technicians to focus their treatment. Wild caught birds spread the virus, using chickens (non-migratory birds) allows the spread to be limited.

Ms. McGarrah asked if historical data was referenced with planning? Ms. Upham responded that yes, it is how we know where to focus the District's attention when moving forward. Mr. Jonte commented that using the Sentinel chicken was a great advantage to catching wild birds as they give a more accurate indication on what is going on in that specific area.

1. **Board Member’s Reports:**

Mr. Jonte asked Ms. Upham if she was aware of any national or state funds that were available to tap into should the need arise. Ms. Upham explained that she had an emergency fund built into the budget at $50,000. By servicing some of the state roads the District could expect to be reimbursed up to $80,000. She is looking into practical cost cutting options, such as the drone, to help weather this pandemic. Mr. Jonte asked if Nevada was more progressive in handling mosquito issues than California. Ms. Upham responded that it seemed, from listening to the conference, that they were doing the same things that we are. Where California primarily has an urban populace, Nevada primarily has a flood irrigation problem. The treatment will be different in these situations.

Ms. Lattin thanked Ms. Sagi for her work on the Board packets and asked that a copy be available to the employees as well as the union representative, Ralph Handel.

1. **Any Request for Future Agenda Items:**

Phrasing for Aerial contract

Annual Report

Chairs for the conference table at the facility

Ceremony/Building dedication

1. **Expenditures:**

January 2021

Total Expenditures: $13,573.93

Total Payroll: $28.407.35

Total Overall: $41,981.31

1. **Public Comment:**

None

1. **Adjournment:**

Meeting Adjourned at 6:19 PM.

SIGNATURE: Chairwoman or Vice Chairman

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DATE: