Churchill County Mosquito, Vector and Noxious Weed Abatement District

Board of Trustees

Churchill County, Nevada

7400 Reno Highway

Fallon, NV 89406

Meeting May 13th, 2021

OPEN MEETING SESSION

1. **Call to Order**

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

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Chairwoman, Christy Lattin

Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer

Trustee, Marion Jonte, Jr

Trustee, Tom Hutchings

Legal Counsel, Ben Shawcroft

District Manager, Nancy Upham

Assistant Manager, JD MacKay

Board Secretary, Melania Sagi

**Public Present**

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, Nancy Upham requested that the agenda be accepted as is. Ms. Lattin made the motion to accept the agenda as written. Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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

Ms. Lattin requested a change on page 3 of the minutes from April 8th, 2021. It was written that Mr. Jonte spoke to someone from "The Bird Farm" area which should read "Hawk Estates" instead. Trustee, Marion Jonte made the motion to accept the minutes from the April 8th, 2021, meeting with the correction. Vice Chairman, Michael Spencer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

1. **Certificate of Posting:**

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

1. **Correspondence:**

1. 4-13-2021 Notice of New Sample COVID-19 Leave Form and Policies. This is an email from POOL/PACT regarding the sample family medical leave updated policy language.

2. 4-14-2021 Biocontrol Follow-up for Russian Knapweed. This is some information that has been handed out to some members of the public. The District is attempting to implement a Biocontrol program to combat Russian Knapweed, mostly in the Stillwater area. Ms. Lattin asked if this meant releasing new bugs to help kill the old bug. Ms. Upham clarified that what this biocontrol agent does is eat the seeds out of the pod from the plants that have gone to seed. The midge or wasp will become more established in the area. Some people are hesitant of the concept, but these biocontrol's have had 10 to 12 years of testing to make sure they would not forage for any other food sources such as alfalfa. Ms. Upham stated that this was safe and would help the Russian Knapweed infestation in that area.

Mr. Jonte asked if the bugs would multiply and go further into other areas. Ms. Upham responded that yes, that was the theory if they could become established as they could be destroyed if we had a terribly cold winter. This could be an effective way to deal with certain weeds that are difficult or expensive to kill. Mr. Spencer asked if there had been many positive responses from people or if they were reluctant. Some were reluctant, however, Ms. Upham said that the Tribe was supportive which would give the wasps a starting point if they could become established. Mr. Spencer asked if it was a wasp or midge. Ms. Upham responded that it was a wasp, but this species stays by the plant and would not be bothering the public.

Mr. Jonte asked where the specimens would be coming from. Ms. Upham stated that the Department of Agriculture was getting them. Mr. Jonte asked if other areas of the State would be trying it also. Ms. Upham said that yes, although she could not recall the exact locations, she knew there were a few.

1. **Appointment:**

None

1. **Old Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2021-2022 Tentative and Final Budget. Ms. Upham included in the meeting packet the budget approximation for 2019-2021 and 2021-2022. The State sent them back with 4 corrections to be made which are reflected in the included paperwork. Ms. Upham went over the process of creating the budget with Assistant Manager, JD MacKay and Administrative Assistant, Melania Sagi. The budget was currently pending final approval from the state. Mr. Jonte asked if there was less money available due to the pandemic. Ms. Upham responded that the District was doing well but she budgeted with a lower estimate to give a bit of cushion. The Local Government Investment Pool and the District's savings account were available, if need be, but she does not anticipate that happening. On the budget is B-14 which goes through the different contingency funds that include self-insurance, source reduction, capital projects and emergency funding. These are secure and can only be used for those reasons.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding the approval of a merit increase for District Manager, Nancy Upham moving Ms. Upham to Grade 69, Step 12 after this evaluation which amounts to a 2.5% increase. Legal Counsel, Ben Shawcroft explained that the Boards most recent evaluation of Ms. Upham would warrant an increase. Trustee, Tom Hutchings asked if we had the money for the pay increase. Ms. Upham said, yes. Ms. Lattin spoke with Trustee, Cynthia McGarrah anticipating this request and she stated that she had no problem with the increase. Ms. Lattin made the motion to move Ms. Upham to Step 12, Grade 69 for a 2.5% merit increase. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

1. **New Business:**

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the investment of purchasing a "Vector Smart" NAM-W testing kit which is a PCR real time test to determine or detect Arboviral viruses in mosquito samples. If this is recommended by the State lab, this could be used to detect positive viral samples in chicken blood testing. Ms. Upham proposed that with an in-house lab she could open the testing to other counties. The District used to do them bi-weekly for a flock of 40 chickens in 5-8 different locations. The test involves poking the chicken comb and getting a filter paper sample. This was useful because Stillwater Refuge won't allow mosquito control without proof of the virus being present in that area. Knowing what is happening with the bird population is a great indication of what areas need to be targeted and allows the District to keep the public aware of any outbreaks. Buying a lab from scratch would be significantly more expensive than contracting out with a District in California to run our tests which would cost $3,500. Ms. Upham is looking into buying Washoe County's testing equipment that they no longer use which could help us build our lab without spending $20,000 for the kit. Mr. Spencer asked how the California lab would get our samples. Ms. Upham responded that the filter paper sample would be placed on card stock and sent in the mail. She is hoping to establish with some local property owners, and they would be compensated with feed for the summer. Mr. Jonte asked if she had considered children in 4H that had poultry. Ms. Upham agreed that it was a good idea. Mr. Jonte said that he thought it was a great idea to go through California until our own lab was established and the kinks ironed out. He expressed his appreciation for the program as it gave the District a two-week head start to get in front of any virus outbreaks. He asked if the kits screened for all three diseases at the same time. Ms. Upham said that she believed that they did.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding investing in hardware and software and possible changes to the server systems. The facility is running out of date hardware and software, the security system is inefficient, and the technicians need a better way to do things. Ms. Sagi spoke with a gentleman who was able to walk through the facility and run some numbers on the cost of updating, installation, programming, and maintenance on the technological needs of the District. Ms. Lattin asked who this gentleman was, and Ms. Sagi responded that it was an acquaintance of hers who studied information technology and pursues it as a hobby currently but would like to make it his focus. Ms. Sagi provided the Board Members with a list of expected costs. She explained that the charges may seem high but those are the initial cost which would save the District money in the long run with quality equipment. Mr. Jonte mentioned that he had spoken with Barry Stewart concerning upgrading the technological equipment and it had been suggested that laptops were the path to the future. Ms. Sagi explained that desktops were easier to maintain and if something went wrong individual parts could be replaced whereas if a laptop malfunctions the whole unit needed to be replaced. Ms. Upham added that a lot of the costs on the list were one-time charges that would eliminate a majority of the District's monthly costs. Giving the technicians tablets would eliminate any paperwork they are having to do, replicate and then input into the computer which would significantly increase their productivity. The security system, phone/internet, and IT support that the District receives from CC Communications is inadequate.

Included in the estimate are 3 desktop computers for Ms. Upham, Mr. MacKay, Ms. Sagi and one for the accountant. Ms. Lattin asked if Ms. Dowd could use her own equipment. Ms. Upham responded that the current version of QuickBooks that the District used was a hard copy only available onsite. In the future we would invest in the online version of QuickBooks which would allow the accountant, Phyllys Dowd, to work from home on her own equipment. Mr. Jonte inquired about the tablet for the technicians. Ms. Upham said that those would ideally stay in the vehicles and be updated before and after treatments. Ms. Sagi added that the type of tablets included in the estimate were the rugged kind that could stand up to abuse. Mr. Hutchings asked if it should be 6 tablets instead of 4. Ms. Upham responded that the seasonal workers would not need to be updating as much information as the full-time technicians so only the current employees would need those. She added that this equipment could also be used for the District's meteorological weather system.

Ms. Upham explained that this topic could be explored more in the future, she had just recognized the need to move away from the current information technology supplier. Ms. Lattin agreed that would be best. Mr. Jonte asked if this process included expanding and improving the security system. Ms. Upham said yes, newer and better cameras with a larger hard drive capable of saving recordings for more that the current 2-week limit. Ms. Sagi added that the estimate included an 8-terabyte storage for the cameras. Ms. Lattin asked if that would be on a hard drive in the office. Ms. Sagi responded that yes, it would be onsite as well as a 4-terabyte network storage server. Mr. Jonte thanked Ms. Sagi for her efforts but requested that a few more quotes from other IT service companies be gathered.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding ideas to fix the roof at the District facility. Mr. Jonte had spoken with Matt Louie concerning the roof. He was advised that to target the problem someone would have to go on the roof with a garden hose and systematically water the roof from the edge up towards the peak. Mr. Louie said that the problem was probably with the grommets. Mr. Jonte felt that replacing the whole roof was not a sound purchase when just the leak could be repaired.

Mr. Hutchings suggested taking the panels off to the crown and redoing the whole paneling. Ms. Upham mentioned that former Assistant Manager, Quinn Nuffer had said something about the flashing being a part of the problem. Mr. Hutchings agreed that may have been the start of the problem. It was established that the issue was on the East side of the building. Ms. Lattin asked if a roofing company had been consulted. Ms. Upham said not yet, but as with the IT bid it would be beneficial to pursue a few quotes for the repair of the leak instead of replacing the whole roof. Ms. Lattin added that although the employees were talented, they were better suited to abatement than roof repair and their time would be better served on the ground. Mr. Jonte stated that summer would be the ideal time to resolve this issue before the weather turned. Ms. Upham suggested that the next meeting in June could be hosted at the facility so that the Board Members could see exactly what the situation is. She agreed to speak to a few roofing companies for quotes.

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

Ms. Upham apologized for not having the numbers for April's applications and would bring the information to the next Board Meeting. The public is calling in about the weed and are being referred to the Lahontan Conservation District. Christy Sullivan handles the paperwork and Ms. Upham teaches the class. Attendees are given a sample of 2-4D and are required to use PPE when applying the product to limit the Districts liability. Mr. Jonte asked if the lack of moisture over the winter affected the pre-emergent from doing its job. Ms. Upham responded that there was enough distributed to help set the chemical.

1. **Board Member’s Reports:**

Ms. Lattin noted that she had received a service request for the Trap Club before their event. Ms. Sagi said that she had been notified and had passed the information on to the technician.

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

1. **Expenditures:**

April 2021 Expenditures:

Total Gross Pay: $29,648.22

Total Expenses: $60,916.35

Total Overall: $91,849.49

Mr. Spencer made a motion to accept the expenditure report. Mr. Jonte seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

1. **Public Comment:**

None

1. **Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 P.M.

SIGNATURE: Chairwoman or Vice Chairman

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DATE: