

**Metropolitan  
Mosquito Control District**

**Executive Committee**

January 24, 2024

9:15 AM

*Information Packet*

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**METROPOLITAN MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT  
MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

**COMMITTEE:**           **Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Metropolitan Mosquito Control District**  
2099 University Avenue West  
St. Paul, MN 55104

**DATE:**                   **Wednesday, January 24, 2024**  
**TIME:**                   **9:15 AM**

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**A G E N D A**

1. November 21, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting
2. Legislative Update – (Peg Larsen, Kim Scott)
3. Budget and Levy Development Schedule
4. Introduction - New Executive Director – Daniel Huff
5. Insurance Liability Waiver\*
6. Executive Director’s Report
7. Other Issues
8. Adjournment

\* Action Requested

Commissioner Jeff Reinert	Anoka County
Commissioner Gayle Degler	Carver County
Commissioner Liz Workman	Dakota County
Commissioner Keving Anderson	Hennepin County
Commissioner Nicole Frethem	Ramsey County
Commissioner David Beer	Scott County
Commissioner Fran Miron	Washington County

**Next Commission Meeting: Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 9:15 a.m.**  
**Next Executive Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 9:15 a.m.**

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**METROPOLITAN MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 16, 2023  
9:15 AM**

No meeting took place due to lack of quorum

## **Metropolitan Mosquito Control Commission Meeting**

### **January 24, 2024**

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Informational:**

Budget and levy development schedule

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**Background:**

In 2015 and 2016, there were questions about when, during the season, specific decisions about the District's budget and levy must be made. These questions arose during a time when the MMCC was deciding how to balance District resource and funding needs (levy) relative to service demand and reserves (fund balance). See page 3 for a schedule outlining steps to be taken by staff and the Commission to develop the 2025 levy and budget. Months or specific dates are taken from the 2024 Commission meeting schedule.

An initial review of legislative requirements and deadlines (see page 4) revealed that the MMCC must approve a preliminary tax levy for the following year by August 1 of the current year. The July Commission meeting is the closest meeting before this deadline. In 2023, the MMCC approved a preliminary 2024 levy at its July 26 meeting.

Both the 2024 levy and 2024 budget were approved by the MMCC at its meeting on December 20, 2023.

This information is being presented here both for review and to determine if modifications to the schedule can facilitate the levy and budget development process while satisfying statutory requirements.

## **MMCD Calendar for Budget Year 2024**

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Commission and Executive Committee provide direction to develop budget	May / June 2024
Commission approves preliminary 2024 levy and budget direction	July 24, 2024
Approved proposed levy deadline for the District (Proposed Levy due to MN Dept of Revenue)	August 1, 2024
Review 2024 budget and levy proposals	August 28, 2024
Proposed levy certification due (Proposed levy due to Counties with TNT notice)	September 10, 2024
Executive Committee reviews proposed budget (Subject to change)	September 25, 2024
Commission reviews proposed budget (Subject to change)	October 23, 2024
Executive Committee reviews budget	November 21, 2024
Parcel Specific Property Tax Notice	November 10 – 24, 2024
Commission adopts Final 2025 Levy & Budget (December Commission meeting)	December 18, 2024
Truth in Taxation Hearing (Commission & Staff)	December 18, 2024
Continuation Hearing, if necessary (Commission & Staff)	December 18, 2024
Certify Adopted Payable 2025 Levy (Due to MN Dept Revenue and Counties)	December 27, 2024

**M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: MMCD Board of Commissioners

FROM: Joseph Langel, MMCD Attorney

DATE: August 26, 2016

RE: Tax Levy Schedule

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At the Commission meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup> (2016), there was a discussion about the budget calendar. Specifically, questions were raised about when MMCD’s property tax levy must be certified to the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue. The calendar in the Information Packet showed that the initial levy certification deadline is August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Some Commissioners questioned the validity of that date given that it is earlier than other taxing districts. A quick review of Minnesota Statutes chapter 275 (the property tax levy statute) indicated that (1) MMCD is defined as a special taxing district; and (2) “each special taxing district shall adopt and certify to the county auditor a proposed property tax levy” “on or before September 15.” *Minn. Stat. §§ 275.065, subd. 1(b), 275.066 (16)*. It therefore appeared that September 15<sup>th</sup> is, in fact, the correct deadline.

The quick statutory review during the meeting, however, did not reveal the additional provisions in Minnesota Statutes chapter 473, which relate specifically to MMCD. Section 473.711, subdivision 5, provides that MMCD “must certify its property tax levy to the Commissioner of Revenue by August 1 of the levy year.” This specific provision overrides the more general provision in Chapter 275.

The Commissioner of Revenue reviews the tax levy to ensure that the tax is within MMCD’s statutory levy limitation. That determination must be completed by September 10<sup>th</sup>. *Minn. Stat. § 473.711, subd. 5*. The Commissioner notifies the MMCD that the levy is appropriate and provides the amount of levy for each member county. The levy data is transmitted to the respective counties by September 15<sup>th</sup>. The Commission adopts the final levy and holds the Truth in Taxation hearing in December.

Let me know if anyone has additional questions about this process.

## Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Commission Meeting

### January 24, 2024

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Action requested:**

Determine whether to waive statutory tort limits

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**Background:**

The District has obtained insurance coverage (General Liability, Property Casualty, Worker's Compensation, etc.) through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for several years.

When renewing liability coverage, the District needs to decide whether or not to waive the statutory tort limits to the extent of the coverage purchased. The decision to waive or not to waive the statutory limits has the following effects:

If the District does not waive the statutory tort limits, an individual claimant would be able to recover no more than \$500,000 on any claim to which the statutory tort limits apply. The total which all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would be limited to \$1,500,000. These statutory tort limits apply regardless of whether the District purchases the optional exceptional liability coverage.

If the District waives the statutory tort limits and does not purchase excess liability coverage, a single claimant could potentially recover up to \$2,000,000 on a single occurrence. The total of all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would also be limited to \$2,000,000 regardless of the number of claimants.

If the District waives the statutory tort limits and purchases excess liability coverage, a single claimant could potentially recover an amount up to the limit of the coverage purchased. The total of all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would also be limited to the amount of coverage purchased, regardless of the number of claimants.

- The District has traditionally not waived the statutory limits.
- The limits currently are \$500,000 / \$1,500,000.

**Resolved,** the District not waive the statutory insurance liability limits.

**To: Commission Members**  
**From: Arleen Schacht**  
**Re: Interim Executive Director Report**  
**Date: January 2024**

## **1. DIRECTOR'S INITIATIVES**

Recruiting efforts are underway for the 2024 seasonal employees. We plan to post initial advertisements for seasonal technician positions in early-February with employment beginning in April.

Liam Odell, the Administrative Support resigned, his last day was January 8, he took a teaching position that would assist in him in pursuing his master's degree in education. Two long term employees have put in their retirement notices, Regional Manager of the Oakdale Facility Marty Kirkman, after 35+ years will retire on January 26 and the Maintenance Coordinator at the St. Paul office, John Walz, after 30+ years will retire on March 8.

January 9, we had our interim audit field day, officially starts audit season, with the audit fieldwork scheduled for the week of March 25.

This will be my final Directors report, I have enjoyed filling the role as the Interim Executive Director in 2023. While it came with some challenges, it also provided me with a terrific opportunity for growth and to develop additional leadership skills. I appreciate the time, patience and support I received from the staff and all the Commissioners.

## **2. MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES**

The weather so far this winter has been dry and mild, except for this week where we are seeing temperatures below zero. There has not been much precipitation besides the rain we saw around Christmas, most of the counties continue to be in an abnormally dry drought condition, ([droughtmonitor.unl.edu](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)) typically the snowiest months are still ahead of us, so there is plenty of time for snow to help alleviate the drought conditions in the wetlands.

Field staff are currently reviewing the data from the 2023 season and updating their field maps and attending District meetings to continue to work through plans for the 2024 season. In preparation for the upcoming season, staff will begin working on required annual training, reviewing District procedures, safety, and OSHA requirements.

Field staff have begun working to recruit seasonal staff. They are attending job fairs and working on new ways to try to get the word out about the great jobs we have at MMCD. Seasonal positions will be posted in early February.

Due to the retirement of two long-term employees, we will be hiring two Field Operations Supervisors in March.

## **3. TECHNICAL SERVICES**



Technical services staff began collecting information, analyzing data, and writing summaries for our operational review and annual reports, as well as preparing presentations for regional and national association meetings.

The Technical Services team members are preparing to host the Technical Advisory Board meeting on February 14, 2024.

Technical services staff will be participating in various internal workgroups to focus on expansion of District services.

### MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE

We are currently reviewing and analyzing data collected in 2023 and we are preparing to combat mosquito-borne illnesses in 2024. We are making plans to reduce the risks posed to human health by West Nile virus, La Crosse encephalitis, Western equine encephalitis, Eastern equine encephalitis, and Jamestown Canyon virus by controlling vector species populations.

West Nile virus (WNV) was active in Minnesota in 2023. There were 43 WNV illnesses documented in Minnesota residents. West Nile illnesses were diagnosed in 19 MMCD residents (10 Hennepin Co., 3 Anoka Co., 3 Scott Co., 2 Dakota Co., 1 Washington Co.). Surveillance by MMCD detected WNV in 129 of 818 mosquito samples tested.

There was one La Crosse encephalitis case (LAC) in the state in 2023 in a child from Scott County. Field staff from the Jordan facility responded immediately upon learning of the case with LAC risk reduction services in the area where the child was presumed to have been exposed to the LAC virus. Elsewhere, staff at MMCD collected and recycled 11,139 tires and eliminated 2,427 other small mosquito habitats in 2023. Eliminating these larval habitats is the primary method for reducing La Crosse encephalitis risk.

There were two Jamestown Canyon virus illnesses confirmed in Minnesota in 2023. Both cases were diagnosed in residents of the District; one from Anoka County and one from Ramsey County. Jamestown Canyon virus risk will remain low in the District in 2024 if this winter continues to be defined by low snowfall, as spring snowmelt *Aedes* species are responsible for transmission of the virus.

There were no detections of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) in Minnesota in 2023. Summer droughts over the past three years have contributed to a temporary natural reduction in EEE transmission. Four states reported a total of seven EEE illnesses in humans in 2023. Additional detections of EEE virus were documented from 86 counties in 18 states. The nearest detections were reported from Michigan where there were five counties with horse illnesses and/or EEE positive mosquito samples.

### TECHNICAL SERVICES LAB

In January, lab staff finished identifying and inputting data from the New Jersey Light trap samples. We also began writing the surveillance chapter of the report to the Technical Advisory Board for 2024. This chapter summarizes all the surveillance data for larval and adult samples collected in the summer. We summarize larval abundance and frequency of occurrence; using adult sampling data, we create seasonal and geographic displays of the abundance of our most common species and are responsible for editing and compiling the entire report.

Additionally, we will be identifying the nontarget impact study samples for the Black Fly Control program.

Carey LaMere is planning and organizing the North American Black Fly Association's annual meeting, which is the first week of February this year.

### TICK-BORNE DISEASE

Manuscript to the Journal of Medical Entomology.

A revised manuscript of results of thirty years of tick surveillance is currently under review.

Progress—tick-borne disease testing 2023:

Results pending in 2023's tick-borne disease testing projects (tularemia, Powassan virus, tick infection rates to various tick-borne diseases).

Tularemia - This rare tick-borne disease (Minnesota yearly rates are 0-3 people; 0-5 animals) caused by a bacterium. Most transmission occurs via handling or eating an infected animal (primarily hunters handling rabbits) but can also occur via the bite of an infected wood tick, dog tick, lone star tick or biting fly (primarily deer flies) or more rarely, via inhaling contaminated dust or aerosols or drinking contaminated water. All wood ticks collected from our tick surveillance and approximately four hundred more collected via a separate project are being provided to the Minnesota Department of Health for testing.

Powassan Virus - This rare virus (yearly Minnesota case totals have ranged from 0-11 (median 4)) is transmitted by three species of ticks, all in the genus *Ixodes*, but only *Ixodes scapularis*, the deer tick, commonly bites people. For the last several months of the tick surveillance season staff collected blood samples and also saved any ticks found while out in the field. Additional attempts to collect ticks were performed by dragging for questing ticks. All collections are being provided for testing to Dr. Matthew Aliota, U of M College of Veterinary Medicine.

Testing for various infections. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will test deer ticks for infection with Lyme disease (either *Borrelia burgdorferi* (common) or *Borrelia mayonii* (1-3 cases yearly)), human anaplasmosis, tick-borne relapsing fever, and babesiosis. A total of 480 questing deer tick nymphs and an additional 310 questing deer tick adults were collected via dragging in spring and early summer of 2023. Additional ticks collected were two lone star ticks and the approximately 400 wood ticks provided to the MDH for tularemia testing.

Progress—tick vector field projects:

The 2023 tick surveillance began on April 24. The first round of sampling was completed on June 23 and the second round on August 24. The third, and last, round of sampling was completed on October 26. Laboratory work, data entry, and tick identification is underway.

Preliminary results of 2023 tick surveillance is being compiled for the 2024 Technical Advisory Board (TAB) tick chapter.

**4. PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Mosquitoes in Winter

At MMCD we think about mosquitoes year-round, but a lot of people might not know what mosquitoes are up to in the winter months. We [wrote a blog post](#) that was published on our website and WCCO aired a story about this very topic as part of their “Good Question” series.

Commission Presentations

Starting in February, MMCD staff will be visiting each county during a commission meeting to provide our annual update that summarizes mosquito activity from 2023 and provides a look ahead to 2024. The presentation will be delivered by Alex Carlson, along with the Regional Operations Manager for the facility that serves each county. Our new executive director, Daniel Huff, will also be present when available. Here are the dates:

- February 6 - Carver and Scott Counties
- February 27 - Hennepin County
- March 12 - Dakota County
- March 19 - Washington County
- March 26 - Anoka County

We look forward to the visits with you all!