

North Fork Mosquito Abatement District

Regular Board Meeting – Hotchkiss Town Hall

March 17, 2014

Present: President/Chair – Rain Klepper, Vice-Chair – Dee Dee Durrance, Secretary Treasurer - Tom Wills, Zach Hotchkiss and Glenn Austin.

Chair Rain Klepper called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. The minutes of the February 17 meeting in Paonia were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report:

The District accountant, Robyn Reinhardt, reported total cash on hand as of February 28, 2014 of \$9,106.19 including \$3,810.84 in the TABOR account. The District received its first payment of property taxes/SPO tax of \$3,467.90. Total income for the year to date is \$3,468.46. Expenses for the month of February were \$1,511.56, with \$6,931.71 for the year to date. Tax receipts will rapidly escalate over the next few months.

Operations:

Rain reported that an office space had been found at The Hive, the new office building created by Chris Yates out of the old TDS building in Paonia. The rent for the 400 square foot room space is \$295 a month and includes utilities, internet service and access to the many amenities of the building including meeting rooms and a commercial kitchen. There was a discussion of the advantages and how the new expense will be funded. The space offers everything District operations needs as far as a laboratory, office space and access for unloading traps. It was agreed by all that having a year round, secure space for computers and the laboratory equipment was a good step forward in placing the district's programs on a more professional basis. Previously the office had to be packed up at the end of the season and various equipment and records were scattered in various board members' and employee's homes.

Glenn Austin moved that NFMAD sign a 12 month lease on the space. Dee Dee seconded and it was approved with all in favor.

Four crew members, in addition to second season manager Chris Tschinkel, have been hired for the 2014 season with three returning from the 2013 crew. Ads will be run in the Merchant Herald and High Country Shopper asking for applications from additional part-time field tech workers so that the District has a pool to draw from as the season progresses.

Tschinkel is very busy planning spring mitigation of mosquito habitat, particularly in the Hotchkiss area to reduce labor and product costs in the future. The Hotchkiss Fire Department is willing to advise and play a standby role in burning (cattails etc.) as long as the liability remains with the private landowners. The Paonia Fire Department declined an active role in burning due to liability concerns leaving it up to private landowners, with the district encouragement, to make their properties more treatable.

Glenn and Rain will go to the April 17 sprayer maintenance/product promo day event held in Grand Junction. The two truck mounted foggers can be calibrated there as well as it being a good informational and networking opportunity. Gale Jirik of ADAPTCO will do additional calibrating later.

Rain presented information on a new sugar bait product, Terminix ATSB Mosquito Bait Concentrate that purports to be environmentally friendly using micro-encapsulated garlic as the active ingredient along with orange juice, date juice and sugar as attractants. The product is designed to be applied to non-flowering foliage away from people where it attracts adult mosquitoes, which then feed and up to 97% die within four days. If as effective as presented, the product could provide an important mosquito control alternative to use around organic farming operations and the chemically sensitive. Rain has been following the development of the product in Israel over the past two years.

Strategic Planning: Rain and Tom reviewed the draft, five-year strategic master plan for the District and asked for input on improving and making additions to the document. The Plan stores institutional memory/history of the District, sets goal and recommends actions to achieve those goals. One central goal is to successfully obtain a voter-approved property tax mil levy increase within a couple years.

There was a discussion of the issue of the Union Pacific corridor through Hotchkiss and the ongoing problem of the retention of water above the tracks. Drainage of runoff and seepage is not efficient due to a lack of an evenly graded ditch and some poorly functioning culverts. This results in a major mosquito breeding area, especially in the height of summer.

It was suggested that NFMAD ask the Town of Hotchkiss to contact the U.P. and negotiate a resolution of the issue in collaboration with the District, the County, water commissioner Steve Tuck, and other authorities and representatives as needed. Ideally, the U.P. would add ditch grading and culvert maintenance to their regular schedule over the next few years. Tom Wills, newly elected to the Hotchkiss Town Council, will approach the mayor and Town about the issue.

New Business: Rain will be submitting a grant application to the Planet Heritage Foundation asking for \$5,000 per year for three years with the money to be earmarked for maintaining professional office/laboratory space, equipment purchases and other operations enhancements.

Rain will be taking pictures for the website as well as to produce laminated ID badges for board members and staff.

Next meeting: April 21, 5:30 p.m. at the Paonia Public Library community room.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Wills – secretary/treasurer