

## MINUTES

### SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE ALAMEDA COUNTY MOSQUITO ABATEMENT DISTRICT

### STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

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TIME: 5:00 P.M.  
PLACE: Physically held at the Office of the District  
23187 Connecticut Street, Hayward, CA 94545  
TRUSTEES: Victor Aguilar, President, City of San Leandro  
Cathy Roache, Vice-President, County-at-Large  
Tyler Savage, Secretary, City of Alameda  
Robin López, City of Albany  
P. Robert Beatty, City of Berkeley  
Kashef Qaadri, City of Dublin  
Courtney Welch, City of Emeryville  
John Zlatnik, City of Fremont  
George Syrop, City of Hayward  
City of Livermore, vacant  
Eric Hentschke, City of Newark  
Jan O. Washburn, City of Oakland  
Hope Salzer, City of Piedmont  
Valerie Arkin, City of Pleasanton  
Subru Bhat, City of Union City

1. Board President Aguilar called the Special Meeting to order at 4:10 P.M.
2. Trustees Aguilar, Roache, Savage, López, Beatty, Qaadri, Zlatnik, Syrop, Hentschke, Salzer, Arkin and Bhat were present in-person at the district. Trustee Savage arrived at 4:05 P. M. Trustees Welch and Washburn were absent.
3. Board President Aguilar invited members of the public to speak on any issue relevant to the district. Former ACMAD District manager John Rusmiser participated in the strategic planning workshop as a member of the public.
4. Each of the five Trustee Groups were placed in a Staff Group (by department) for five, ten-minute presentations.

The recorded minutes of each Staff Group are as follows:

**Operations Room:**

Field Operations Supervisor Joseph Huston presented Operations Strategic Plan 2024-2027 Goals and fielded the following discussion. Vector Biologists Neil Campbell, Sarah Lawton, Nick Appice, Erick Gaona, Ben Rusmiser, and Mosquito Control Technicians Alex Roache and Danny Sharkey were also in attendance.

**Discussion:**

Trustee Beatty requested comparisons of hours spent on sites treating with and without drone applications (agreed). Trustee López asked about historical problems with contacting Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories (high turnover causes inconsistent contacts). President Aguilar asked how many batteries we have for the drone (six). Trustee Salzer asked how technicians can identify problems with equipment during treatments (constant inspections during applications). Vice-President Roache asked if our drones will be used for aerial imagery (the recently acquired drone is built strictly for application purposes).

**HR/ Administration Room:**

General Manager Ryan Clausnitzer and Financial & HR Specialist Michelle Robles presented their 2024-2026 Strategic Plan for Finance/Administration Goals and fielded the following discussion.

**Discussion:**

After Trustee Bhat gave a background on the process of the strategic plan, Trustee Zlatnik asked about the history of seasonal employees (we generally hire two for the lab and two for operations). Trustee Bhat asked if the DEI would be a part of policy (yes, it will go to the board after a review by the Ad Hoc Policy Committee) and asked if the succession plan would be for all positions (in general, yes, but with a more immediate focus on support staff with upcoming retirements). Trustee Zlatnik expressed that he feels we respond to and represent the community well. Trustee Arkin provided feedback on the strategic plan process and expressed that she enjoyed being part of the committee. Trustee Qaadri asked for clarification on salaried employees receiving overtime (non-exempt employees are eligible to receive ETO for hours worked over 40 or they have the option to flex the time out) and asked if the clock in/out is being utilized to breakdown employees' different tasks (no) and expressed that he is happy to see the DEI on the plan for 2025. President Aguilar mentioned that there will likely be a bill introduced at the State recognizing Lunar New Year as a holiday. Trustee Syrop asked if employees could keep their current holidays as well as the two additions (adding an additional holiday was not approved by the Board in 2021 as the number of holidays is higher than most comparable agencies, so the alternative approach of swapping holidays is now being explored) and expressed that he would prefer to switch out the floating holiday. Trustee Syrop asked how long seasonals stay on (6 months, generally May – October) and asked what education background are required for seasonal employment (High School degree at a minimum, college students or graduates are preferred). President Aguilar mentioned that in San Leandro, an HR consultant has hired to review the job descriptions (yes, a likely outcome). Trustee Syrop mentioned that he agrees that it is more respectable to remove the clock in/out. President Aguilar asked if that is for non-exempt employees (yes) and how we plan on keeping track of employee's time (employees and supervisors are to keep track of their time). Trustee Beatty expressed that he didn't find the holiday switch to be a strategic priority (the change requires board action, will require sacrifices for staff, and fits into our goal of inclusivity) and asked if the field operations position will change as part of the succession planning (yes, which will be looked at based on the needs at that time). Trustee Salzer mentioned that the other departments have similar goals (some goals overlap within different departments and are worked on by several individuals). Trustee Salzer suggested formatting the years on an x-axis as that would be helpful for clarity (we will work with the designer on incorporating that suggestion).

### **Laboratory Room:**

Lab Director Eric Haas-Stapleton, Vector Scientist Dereje Alemayehu, and Associate Vector Scientist Miguel Barretto presented the Laboratory 2024-2026 Strategic Plan Goals and fielded the following discussion.

### **Discussion:**

Trustee Beatty commented that Trustee Washburn previously mentioned malaria habitats in our county are not a high priority (while malaria may habitats not be a priority now, Dereje's work in Africa is tying in with what we want to try here), he also mentioned his previous work with people who have done mosquito education work in South America (yes, the MATE project is partnering with a local university, training people on larval sampling and education to collect pre-intervention data to evaluate success), he asked what "assess the alignment" meant as it's not currently clear (yes, we will can propose that change). Trustee López asked if there were plans to make the digital resource available in county libraries as not everyone has access to computers in their homes (good idea). Trustee Beatty asked if the idea is to provide website access (yes, possibly as an app as well). Trustee López asked if staff I had worked with AI previously (yes) and then mentioned that a colleague in his freshwater ecology group is using R and AI processes to identify fish species (there was a soft launch of a similar project with Biohub). Trustee Hentschke appreciates the explanation of the goals by lab staff (thank you, the goals follow a path of starting locally, going regionally, then finally thinking internationally). Trustee Syrop asked about plan development (goals were presented to management who then developed, with staff, three umbrellas to work under). President Aguilar asked how we include non-English speaking residents in our efforts (while translating our lab report may not be very useful, staff is always looking for ways to spread public awareness). Trustee Syrop asked what website documents can be translated (we are looking at translating most materials). President Aguilar added city council documents are translated from English into Spanish, Tagalog, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Ilocano and they also hire translators for public comment. Trustee Syrop added that Mandarin, Tagalog, and Spanish are what the county translates for ballots and perhaps their translated criteria can be duplicated. President Aguilar mentioned that the lab may want to investigate a heat map to find areas that need extra attention (yes, this is already a resource that the laboratory has). Trustee Syrop asked if community relations be made explicit in the strategic plan (yes, the lab can suggest that). Trustee Hentschke asked if lab reports are produced in other languages (currently, no). President Aguilar added that AI could help in these endeavors. Trustee Syrop added some startups provide that service as well. Trustee Salzer stated that the strategic goals would be easier to understand if goals were put in an x-axis timeline (will pass on those comments) and asked if the lab has evaluated malaria mosquitoes based on habitat in the county (the lab has looked at trap results but not yet habitat), and said that if the MATE partners use the same malaria control protocols, one could collect results and compare. Trustee Bhat asked if untranslated documents are currently an issue (past studies have indicated that service gaps may stem from language issues and public engagement, a goal of this plan). Trustee Zlatnik asked that with climate change and with diseases are showing up in new areas, what do we have in our area vs. Southern California (dengue is transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* which has been found around us, but while we don't currently have these species, we are performing extensive monitoring and response plans for their arrival), he also asked if we have the vector but not the disease ( the other way around: we have the disease (travel-related), but not the vector). Trustee Bhat asked if there were recent invasive mosquito detections (no). Trustee Zlatnik asked what you look for in birds (West Nile, St. Louis, and western equine encephalites viruses and communicated the means through

which we hear about birds) and said that he was surprised anybody knows about this fact (yes, public awareness is an important challenge). Trustee Bhat asked what the goal was with rural Africa communities (described the work of MATE and how other countries in attendance at PAMCA are following closely). Trustee Zlatnik asked if there are any other countries involved (Kenya, due to a connection with Kenyan-born and current District Manager of East Side Mosquito Abatement District, Wakoli Wekesa). Trustee Bhat remarked that this is important work as malaria is very common there. Trustee Zlatnik added a child dies of malaria with great frequency. Trustee Qaadri asked about the goal of helping the African community, what about the reverse in terms of their response of tropical vectors coming our way (we'd like to learn inexpensive approaches to deal with tropical disease control that we don't currently use and the work with the MATE project aims to work closely with rural African communities). Trustee Arkin asked what a digital resource would look like (a web interface that would assist clients with information about possible mosquitoes in their area and potentially grow out into an AI model that would automatically identify them by a given photo and provide relevant information). Trustee Qaadri offered the lab to be a resource with AWS because he has inroads to assist and added the possibility to use captcha adjacent work to have the public ID mosquitoes as this could educate the public while also providing information.

#### **Outreach and Regulatory Room:**

Regulatory & Public Affairs Director Erika Castillo & Public Outreach Coordinator Judith Pierce presented the Outreach and Regulatory 2024-2026 Strategic Plan Goals and fielded the following discussion.

#### **Discussion:**

Trustee Qaadri asked if there is a goal to evaluate environmental impact and has that never been done before (many goals are continuations of long-standing projects including reviewing and determining best practices in pesticide management and alignment with CEQA standards and US FW requirements), and asked what does the partnership between CDPH and ACPHD look like (clarified the relationship between the agencies and ACMAD). Trustee Arkin asked what communication looks like between ACMAD and the public if there are diseases and invasive mosquitoes (detailed the relationship and response plan and that while we do not have invasives now, we are strengthening those relationships). President Aguilar asked to clarify the community outreach goals in the context of climate change (most goals are built upon prior work and expansion of our mission and vision for the district), how is the district targeting people of color and English language learners (highlighted existing outreach goals and the incoming addition of a bilingual outreach worker and that staff acknowledges the major need for language services and translation for district materials and what entities would be strategic to partner with, including the Promotoras of Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center and Community Health Liaison's for Asian Health Services. Trustee Syrop recommended the top 10 pages on the website to be translated into the main four languages spoken in the county (yes). Trustee Beatty reflected on the remarkable ambition and laudable goals for this small but mighty team and then asked when the district engages with US Fish and Wildlife, who from the district is actually talking (the point people for various situations was explained). Trustee López commented that it was important to empower youth with a sense of agency and urgency when it comes to the climate crisis and how the district is doing this and how the district is engaging with recent immigrants (strategic community outreach and deepening relationships with community organizations in low-income areas) he then recommended reaching out and potentially presenting to the American Geographical Union about our work. Trustee

Salzer asked about proactive invasive *Aedes* communication (as many entities will often incorrectly combine invasive *Aedes* with native *Aedes*, our messaging about invasive *Aedes* is limited to MVCAC messaging along with incorporating messaging on invasives in school-based education and events. John Rusmiser remarked that climate change has affected the coastline and many levees have been breached since his retirement. Trustee Zlatnik asked where the district receives information about climate change (our various professional associations and collaborations). Trustee Bhat questioned why certain goals are in 2025 and not 2024 (certain goals need more groundwork before we can concentrate on them, and the new hire will take a fair bit of bandwidth to support and train), asked if the new hire will be in the lab as well as Ops (the new hire will be focused on invasive *Aedes* and will therefore need to know about all aspects of the program to develop skills that help contain invasive spread, which would include a few aspects of lab work as well). Trustee Zlatnik offered his educator background to help support curriculum development for the education program (yes, and the program has changed over the past two years to better meet needs of teachers and to accommodate for the large amount learning loss in school aged children due to COVID 19 school disruptions).

**Equipment/IT Room:**

Mechanical Specialist Mark Wieland and Information Technology Director Robert Ferdan presented the respective Equipment and IT Strategic Plan 2024-2027 goals and fielded the following discussion.

**Discussion:**

Trustee John Zlatnik asked how many fish we use per year (an average of 45 lbs. purchased, 400 SR's/Fish Requests, averaging 6-25 fish per request) and inquired on how photos of pools are obtained for the Pool Surveillance Program (fly-overs and satellite imagery). Trustee Bhat asked about the co-op between NearMap and MapVision (unfortunately, NearMap services are no longer available). Trustee Zlatnik asked how the pool evaluation process worked (explained the BI/AI process followed up with hands on inspections of photos and physical site). Trustee Qaadri asked to elaborate on equipment replacements with electric alternatives (gas-powered equipment will be replaced when a ZEV alternative is available). Trustee Arkin asked if there are laws in place to mandate swimming pool up-keep (there are a few regulatory maintenance guidelines in place that may do more harm than good). Trustee Kashef asked about the pool imagery process (explained). Board President Aguilar asked about our involvement with pool maintenance and our pool program (explained). Trustee Syrop asked about translation issues with our pool program notifications (with 100% voluntary compliance, there has been no apparent issues, but that suggestion is aligned with this proposed plan), asked about drone use for imagery (no drones are used in the imagery process), and added that he has connections with the Hayward Executive Airport that may be helpful with potential aerial imagery. Trustee Beatty asked about battery storage with our solar (that will be considered) and asked about the sustainability of the flyovers for the pool program (options need to be constantly explored as the program is required, aerial imagery has been unreliable).

5. The Special Meeting adjourned at 5:10 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Approved as written and/or corrected  
at the 1120<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of  
Trustees held January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

DocuSigned by:  
*Tyler Savage*  
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**President**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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*Valerie Arkin*  
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**Secretary**  
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