

Unapproved Approved

Candia Selectmen's Public Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Attendance: Chairman Fred Kelley, Vice-Chair Carleton Robie, Selectman Joe Duarte, Selectman Amanda Soares, Selectman Richard Snow, Selectmen's Assistant Cheryl Eastman, Building Inspector Hallock, and Erik Shifflett and Heidi Tillotson from Dragon Mosquito.

3:00 p.m. The Board will be holding a work session with Dragon Mosquito and Building Inspector Hallock. Chairman Kelley explained to Mr. Shifflett and Ms. Tillotson that the town has received a lot of complaints about the notice that went out in paper. He would like an update on this and felt he needed more information about it. Selectman Soares explained the citizens interpreted the notice as people (from Dragon Mosquito) would be entering their property without permission. She noted that some residents felt very strongly about this. They assumed if they didn't send the letter to Dragon Mosquito you would still come on their property. Selectman Soares noted she tried to explain the first step, which is the dip when the larvae counts are done. The defenses were up amongst some residents, because they thought Dragon Mosquito was going to enter their property without permission. At the deliberative session it was said that permission would be asked, this notice seemed contradictory to that. The other issue was people knew about the Vectobac being used, but all the additional stuff (methoprene, aliphatic petroleum hydrocarbons) were not mentioned at the deliberative session. The citizens want to know what effect these chemicals are going to have, because they were not informed about them. The people want to know what these chemicals could harm or not harm. Mr. Shifflett noted he had some of the same questions as the residents. He noted they needed clarification, so he would like to address these concerns. He explained that Dragon Mosquito has access to any pesticide that is legal in the State of New Hampshire. They use different pesticides depending on the application, weather, program, or resistance. They list every pesticide they could potentially consider using in the State of New Hampshire in every notice in all 27 towns that they put out. This doesn't mean they are abandoning the plan that Health Officer Hallock put together. This plan is 100% accurate and this is the plan that was discussed and described at the deliberative session. Vectobac is the primary method for mosquito larval control and that was discussed. Mr. Shifflett stated no one said they just use dunks. It was clear that Vectobac was the primary method to kill mosquitoes. There are other products that could come into play as part to the program. For example, if the find EEE and there is a need for street spraying or treat the school grounds. In cases such as this there are different pesticides, but they all get listed on the public notice. This is a legal requirement. So if they are not listed on the legal notice then they can't use them. They maintain this expertise and the state relies on Dragon to determine the proper item to use in any given situation. The plan they have in place for the town is in alignment with the plan they have on the website. He reiterated Vectobac is their primary larvicide; this all they use to kill larvae. If they get to a stage where they need to kill pupae, there are other products they can use to create a very fine surface film. This is the only thing that is effective, because

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they don't eat at this stage. If they put a film like this on the water it will kill the pupae and the larvae, this is the last thing you can do before they hatch. Those products are very non-toxic. They evaporate after a day or two, they're derived of plant organic matter, and they're non-toxic to fish. Mr. Shifflett noted there are more chemicals in the DEET we put on our skin than the chemicals they use. Mr. Shifflett presented the Board with a memo which clarified his role at Dragon Mosquito (see attached). He noted all of the activity that he has engaged in to produce this mosquito control program has nothing to do with employment at Dragon Mosquito. If the town decided to drop this program and never renew it won't have an effect on him financially. Everything has done up to this point he has paid out of his own pocket. The second point Mr. Shifflett made was that he is a resident and a tax payer as well as a Director at Dragon Mosquito. It's in his job requirement to make sure they do a good job. He went over some key points in his memo; he noted there were some helpful links in his memo. The memo explains what they're doing for the town, which is not just killing mosquito larvae; they're trapping, surveying, and testing. They have a new alert system in place to proactively alert residents if there is a positive EEE pool test. We are providing monthly reports, so they will be post in all of the towns they went to and what they did. If there are concerns they can address them. They will put together a report at the end of the year of everything that was done. It will consist of mortality test results, EEE Arboviral test results, a list of sites they have on record, and any plans they plan on instituting for next year assuming they have another program. Mr. Shifflett explained the chart on the second page of the memo (see attached). The LD50 rating is a measure of toxicity. He noted the Anvil 1010 probably won't be used this year, because they are testing out Zenivex (an adulticide) which is the least toxic product. If Zenivex works then they will retire Anvil 1010. Ms. Tillotson explained Anvil 1010 could potentially be used if they choose to conduct limited spraying if test results called for that.

Mr. Shifflett explained he had an email list of hundreds of residents and he could send out this memo which might take some of the heat off and help clarify. He noted there is information circulating that is out of context. People are assuming the worst and think the word "may" means "shall". We need to cover all of our bases on this. He agreed with the Board that the notice was misleading. Mr. Shifflett noted they can do a good job by spreading the correct information. The people who are against it now were against it before (the program). This was the program that was discussed and will be delivered. The voters approved both measures by a significant margin. Our plan is to meet expectations and deliver on what was promised, which is a good ecologically sound, comprehensive, integrated mosquito management program. They will not go on private property without first getting consent. They want people to call or email and put in survey requests, so if they have standing water they can go out and check it. If they see a spot they want to check they will knock on doors and get permission. They will proactively visit town property. He noted they have received 15 survey requests from the town of Amherst. This is what they would like to see with Candia. Once they start collecting these surveys the program keeps getting better and better. Health Officer Hallock noted their trucks are marked, so they're not sneaking around town. Ms. Tillotson added all of their sprayers wear

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uniforms. They always make their presence known; they'll knock on doors to let people know they're in the area. All of the sprayers have their pesticide license with them at all times. The license is issued by the State of New Hampshire (the Department of Agriculture). Selectman Robie asked if there was any spraying in the first part of the program. Mr. Shifflett replied they don't spray until they survey and if they have the sprayers with them when the survey they can spray on the spot. For example, this week they've been surveying in towns and not spraying, because they want to see what's out there. By the time things are resolved and they get to come into Candia there may be a lot of larvae to treat. They will probably want to have the BTI and the backpacks with them when they come to Candia. Selectman Robie stated the main concern is the people want to know about the chemicals. The notices say the residents should contact Dragon Mosquito, but Dragon Mosquito should contact the residents. Selectman Robie asked how this got to the newspaper before it went through the Selectmen's Office. Mr. Shifflett replied there was a timing issue regarding the notice. They have a narrow window in which they have to publish the public notices and the state does require town postings, the Health Officer needs to be notified, and it should be in a minimum of two newspapers covering each town. Everything went out at the same time, but there was a delay of a week in Candia where things were not distributed. Selectman Robie thought in the future maybe this should work different. Selectman Robie asked if Mr. Shifflett was responsible for the signs. Mr. Shifflett replied that he was. Selectman Robie replied he didn't like driving around town and having his grandchild ask what "sucks" means. Mr. Shifflett apologized. He added you could say that literally this is something mosquitoes do. Selectman Robie replied if you want to use it in that term, but we know why the word was used. He added he doesn't use the word "suck" at his dinner table and didn't want to have to tell his grandchild why the signs were written like that. Mr. Shifflett reiterated that he apologized, but he's had a lot of positive feedback on the signs. Selectman Robie replied the signs offended a lot of people, but people don't speak up. Citizen Ingrid Byrd added that she was offended as well. Selectman Robie stated they are not going to kill all of the mosquitoes in Candia. Selectman Soares asked how many other towns besides Candia had the posting at the same time. Ms. Tillotson replied 21 towns which are towns they conduct a larvicide program or a comprehensive mosquito control program in. They are all a very similar public notice. Someone who doesn't want chemicals sprayed on their property can call us. For example, they have regular road spraying in some towns near the coast. They can shut off the spray when they drive by some residents who don't want it. This is why they request that people notify them, to protect the homeowners. Mr. Shifflett stated hopefully this memo will help clarify any misconceptions. People must opt out otherwise they are opted in. This program is really about larvicing with BTI as the primary larvicide. Ms. Tillotson noted the primary objective for most of the towns is larvicing. The adulticide usually comes later in the season. If adulticide is needed, the Health Officer and Selectmen would make the decision to spray. Selectman Duarte asked what if the BTI's are ineffective or they are past that particular stage, what would be the next step. Mr. Shifflett replied if they find larvae and they treat it with BTI it will be effective. They do go back and do mortality checks to verify their dead. They may treat the same water multiple times. If the larvae become pupae they will treat the water with

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surfactant which will prevent the mosquito from breathing. Selectman Duarte asked if the toxicity level is higher. Mr. Shifflett noted it is higher than BTI, but relatively low. Selectman Duarte asked how long before it dissipates. Mr. Shifflett replied there are variations due to weather, sunlight, etc. The average is a day or two and then it evaporates or it biodegrades due to sunlight. They apply it to moving water, near wells, or water sheds. They have it GIS mapped out and they notify the beekeepers. Ms. Tillotson noted beekeepers main concern would be with the adulticide, but the larvicide is safe. Mr. Shifflett explained they do not apply to any public water supplies and if there were fish in the waters they are natural predators so they wouldn't need to treat it. They treat swampy stagnant waters. Selectman Duarte mentioned the Planning Board instituted a Groundwater Protection Plan and maybe Dragon Mosquito should have this information. Ms. Tillotson explained they provide the State with every site that is going to be treated and an overlay of what is groundwater protected. They send back very detailed maps of what can and can't be treated. The one the town has is probably more detailed. Selectman Duarte noted this is relatively new and felt Dragon Mosquito should have a copy of it. Selectman Soares noted she could get copy to them. There was further discussion about the water supplies that would and wouldn't be treated. Selectman Soares noted the State just redid their water shed areas and GIS with the CTAP money, so these are significantly more updated. Chairman Kelley stated they have a policy in this town that anything that is noticed is brought to the Board first. They would like to review it and make sure all of the information is correct. He noted they were shocked when they saw this notice. He received lots of phone calls on this one notice. He strongly recommended that something like this comes through the Selectmen's Office next time before it goes into the newspaper. Mr. Shifflett replied they would do that next time, but feel free to forward any inquiries to them. Chairman Kelley noted they don't want to talk to Dragon Mosquito; they want to talk to the Selectmen because they run things in this town. Selectman Robie stated the residents shouldn't have to deal with this. He asked how deep into the woods were they going in. Mr. Shifflett replied all of the way or as far as the wetlands take them. They bushwhack through all kinds of swamps. They'll hire as many people to keep up with the demand. The more samples they collect the better the program is. Selectman Duarte suggested putting the memo up on the website. Selectman Snow stated he would try to get all of the information up on the website. Selectman Soares agreed and thought they should get the information on the website so residents feel more educated on this. She noted the proprietary information couldn't go on the website. There was some discussion about information on Dragon Mosquito's website. Mr. Shifflett noted he could help the Board with getting information out to the public. There some was discussion about animals getting EEE. Mr. Shifflett noted they would probably know if they had EEE positive mosquitoes before an animal contracted it. They will start the educational process if this happens, not to be alarmist but to make people aware.

Selectman Duarte thanked Mr. Shifflett and Ms. Tillotson for their time.