March 15, 2023

The executive board of the Virginia Mosquito Control Association held a meeting on March 15, 2023 through GoToMeeting.

Those present were past president Wes Roberston, president Carla Caulkins, president elect Karen Akaratovic, vice president Lauren Lochstampfor, first vice president Addie Weddle, secretary/treasurer Jay Kiser, local arrangements committee chair Charles Abadam, and education committee chair Katherine Reutt.

The executive board meeting was called to order at 9:01am.

Wes Robertson made a motion, seconded by Lauren Lochstampfor, to approve the January 31, 2023 board meeting minutes and February 8, 2023 email minutes as presented to the board by Jay Kiser. There was no discussion, all in favor and none opposed; motion carried.

Wes Robertson made a motion, seconded by Lauren Lochstampfor, to approve the March 15, 2023 financial report as presented to the board by Jay Kiser. There was no discussion, all in favor and none opposed; motion carried.

Board member and committee reports

 (Members and committees not mentioned had nothing to report)

Hospitality room committee, Carla is considering Carol Laliberte for the chair. Jay and Charles asked Tim and Addie if Carol will reliably be at the conference next year to do the hospitality room. Tim said the plan is for her to stay on as part-time for mosquito control. Both Tim and Addie said she is reliable.

Technical advisory committee and local arrangements committee chair Charles Abadam, is flushing out the committee and getting members set up to help. Next conference, he would like for the presiders to be incharge of the timer. This worked out well during the lightning round. The speaker system that Charles provided at the conference worked really well, and the screen seemed to be adequate. Lots of people sat in the very back, so a larger screen might be helpful. Some board members mentioned how densely packed people were in the presentation room. A few suggestions were mentioned to solve this next year: 1. Have people move forward to the empty seats in the front or have assigned seats (the former suggestion was attempted during this conference and the board didn’t like the latter), 2. Have two meeting halls/rooms opened up and used for the presentations and use one room for the vendors/banquet (a larger screen may be needed and not sure if banquet and vendor tables can fit in one room), 3. Do option 2 above with vendors set up in the hallway or utilize the smaller rooms (noise may be an issue in the hallway and the hallway is already utilized for other things). Charles will ask the hotel if the banquet and vendor tables can fit in one room. If so, option 2 may work.

The minimum F&B for 2023 was $8,000 and 2024 will be $9,000. Charles doesn’t think this will be an issue, since we hit over $9,000 in 2023. Charles has not calculated the exact costs for the 2023 conference yet, he is still waiting for the final bill with modifications. Jay asked Charles to send him the first draft of the final bill to look at these numbers. In order to stay on budget in future meetings, Charles suggested we keep in mind: how many drink tickets are handed out at the ice breaker, offering 0, 1, or 2 full breakfasts, if vendors will sponsor future ice breakers, and if parking will be free.

Jay calculated the total money spent and brought in from the 2023 conference (supplemental financial report emailed to the board). 2023 was one of the most expensive conferences VMCA has put on, due to rising costs. Thanks to increasing our registration fees, we actually made over $2,000 (total cost $20,272.99 and total made $22,461.97).

Addie went over the 2023 conference surveys. Overall the surveys look great. There were a few comments throughout: More snack options wanted during breaks, more drink options wanted during breaks and banquet (Jay and Charles said this could be looked into, but will increase an already high F&B), cell phones not silenced was an issue, needing an election ballot box could be helpful, lightning round voting was iffy, presentations went over time (board discussed this problem and suggested extra steps for the presider to step in), and suggestions were made “to see a board member” with questions or advice, but some people in the audience didn’t know who the board members were (board suggested an introduction, slides with board members between presentations, larger/colorful/marked lanyards for board members).

Wes suggested having a list of things to say at the podium for the presiders. This will make sure things are not missed or forgotten.

Charles said that the 2024 hotel proposal has been accepted. There are a few changes being made, and the contract should be ready at the end of April. Charles will send it to the board and it can be voted on in May.

Agenda committee chair Karen Akaratovic, committee members have been acquired and they are each thinking of 5 presenters to invite to the conference. She would like to keep the lightning round; it was a fun way to end the conference.

Information committee chair Karen Akaratovic, Spring Skeeter deadline may be extended to the end of March. This way, the conference surveys and ID course article can go in. Last year, an annual subscription to the Adobe Indesign software was purchased to help create Skeeter editions. The subscription will be renewed next week, but needs a motion from the board to spend the money. The annual cost is $239.88 and Karen feels it is worth keeping. Lauren Lochstampfor made a motion, seconded by Wes Robertson, to auto-renew the Adobe Indesign Software each year until better or different software is proposed by the information committee. There was no discussion, all in favor and none opposed; motion carried.

Website committee chair Karen Akaratovic, list of committee members has been made. Several pages on the website have been updated: including the 2023 conference w/ presentations, sustaining members, and executive board. In the summer and fall of 2023, the domain name and website platform renewals will be up. Jay will look up past motions that were made, but he thinks they were made in a way to allow auto renews without motions needed each year.

Sustaining member representative, a few sustaining members showed interest in this position during the conference (Jeff O’Neill and Zach Cohen). Jay suggested sending an email to all the sustaining members and asking if anyone is interested in the 2023 interim position. Carla said she will work on this email and send it out.

Merchandise committee, Penny Smelser will be the chair this year. Jay discussed the money made and spent on merchandise during the 2023 conference (supplemental financial report was emailed to board). $1783.86 in merchandise was purchased before the conference and $1557.02 in merchandise sales took place during the conference. This created a -$226.84 balance. More sales may take place later throughout the year.

Student competition committee chair Jay Kiser, very successful conference for SCC. Several students showed up to present their posters at the Q&A session. The silent auction made $848.77 and the 50/50 raffle made $157. Because vendors only partially sponsored the silent auction food and drinks, SCC ended up paying $597.55 to cover the remaining costs. The SCC funds are currently at $2866.38, which is down from $4023.72 before the conference started. SCC should be back to normal after the Tour de Skeeter in October. Next year, SCC will avoid having F&B at the silent auction event and ask vendors to participate by donating items to be auctioned off. The committee is wanting to continue to invite students of neighboring states to the competition and give multiple awards. A more official request to the board will be made later.

Bylaws committee chair Jay Kiser, committee members have been selected and are currently discussing some proposed bylaws changes. Jay has brought up some of these ideas in the past, but now they are putting them in writing. 1. splitting the secretary/treasurer into two positions: each will be a voting board member with a two year term. 2. getting rid of the first vice president position (reducing the board member commitment to 4 years instead of 5, entices more members to run). It will take some time, but once the committee has its proposals complete, they will be sent to the board. Carla asked if Jay would be willing to stay on the board if the secretary/treasurer position was split up. Jay said he would be interested in staying on as the treasurer.

Curations Committee Chair Wes Robertson, committee members have been selected and started talking about collections for this year. They would like to start a collection that could travel around Virginia when jurisdictions wanted to use/borrow it for events. Different equipment will be needed, and Wes was wondering how to go about paying for it: alcohol, vials, pins, storage containers, freezer, shipping and other things. The board members feel that VMCA can cover many of the items, but larger expensive items like a freezer might not be possible. Shipping may get expensive, so handing off collections/specimens would be best. Wes said he will make a budget for the equipment and share it with the board. Wes suggested having a class on pinning, larval preservation, and slide mounting. This could be a stand alone class, virtual, or part of an ID course.

Nominations committee chair Wes Robertson, will start asking members if they would like to be on the ballot. After discussing the need for vendor rep, Wes said he can send out the email to sustaining members asking if anyone is interested in the 2023 interim position, as well as run in the 2024 election. Carla said that would be great and please include her in the emails.

Education committee chair Katherine Reutt, sent out a survey to her committee and other local biologists that help teach the adult ID course. The majority of the group chose May 8 for the date. Katherine will not be able to make this date, but Karen said she will be there to make sure it goes smoothly. Other presenters will be asked if they can stay to help. A budget for the course was emailed to the board asking for $325 to cover the cost of breakfast and lunch items. Karen Akaratovic made a motion, seconded by Lauren Lochstampfor, to allow the education committee to spend up to $325 for food and drink for the 2023 adult ID course. There was no discussion, all in favor and none opposed; motion carried. Board members suggested a how-to-pin tutorial and a virtual option for students far away. Because it is now a one day course, Katherine said there is not enough time to add the pinning tutorial. Both Karen and Katherine advised against a virtual; there is too much equipment and software issues to deal with. If presenters needed to teach virtually, the suggestion was to send a pre-recorded presentation.

Elections committee chair Carla Caulkins, said she has Penny Smelser and Andy Lima as committee members. She is interested in the “I voted” stickers and voting booth examples Jay emailed the board. Wes found a customized sticker company that he can share details with board if interested. Carla asked if the plan was to have a suggestion box instead of or in addition to the conference surveys. With some discussion, the board felt like offering both in 2024 was a good idea.

Historian committee chair Tim DuBois, has a new committee member, Amanda from Fairfax. Tim is looking forward to having some new people to help. The committee would like to continue to have the history table at the 2024 conference. Charles asked how many tables the committee would like to have. Tim suggested 2 tables and Jay suggested 4 or 5 for the SCC silent auction.

 Karen brought up the issue of available space on the VMCA Google Drive. Currently, the information committee and website committee documents are on her personal drive, but she will be putting them on the VMCA drive. VMCA will need to increase the space. She and Jay suggested that the historian committee upload all of their info on the drive instead of having it on personal computers. Carla liked the idea which will make sharing documents that much easier. Jay said he will look up the costs of increasing the storage space.

MAMCA representative Tim DuBois, 2024 conference will be in Annapolis MD, January 23-25 at the DoubleTree. 2025 Conference will be MAMCA’s 75th anniversary. Jeff Hottenstein will be president and the conference will be in Virginia. Jeff is currently looking at the Delta Hotel on Shore Drive in Virginia Beach. Charles said he would like to visit this hotel if Jeff and Tim are going to see it. Tim asked what sort of information the board is interested in inorder to decide if they would like to have a joint meeting. Jay said he would like to know what MAMCA’s plan is for a joint meeting, what is expected of VMCA and what VMCA can do in addition. Tim said that MAMCA would pay for the meeting and would keep the money from registrations. VMCA would get $100 per vendor and $10-$15 per registration (membership to both associations). VMCA could host the hospitality room or MAMCA could. A time would be set aside for VMCA’s business meeting as well as SCC’s poster competition. Jay suggested inviting students from all the MAMCA states to the poster competition. The board seemed to be very interested. Tim said there was no rush, but VMCA should let them know by August 2023 if they want to join.

Special awards committee, Jennifer Barritt will be the chair.

Legislative committee, Randy Buchannan will be chair with 1 committee member.

Photography committee, TJ Carner will be the chair.

Old Business

* Photography contest: Wes asked if anyone heard from the photography committee about helping out with this. Jay and Carla said that they received an email from Jean Beard in PWC and she was interested in helping. She has some experience with another similar event. Jay will forward this email to Wes. There was talk of creating an ad hoc committee for the contest. Wes said he still wants to be a part of this. He has the template for the contest and he can share it with Carla.

New Business

* April’s board meeting will be April 12 (Wednesday) at 930am. Charles will send out the link. Tim asked if it could be sent out as an outlook calendar invite.

Jay Kiser made a motion, seconded by Wes Robertson, to adjourn the meeting at 10:05am, all in favor, none opposed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Kiser

Secretary/Treasurer VMCA