January 3, 2024

The executive board of the Virginia Mosquito Control Association held a meeting on January 3, 2024 through GoToMeeting.

Those present were Past President Wes Robertson, President Elect (Acting President) Karen Akaratovic, Vice President Lauren Lochstampfor, First Vice President Addie Weddle, Secretary/Treasurer Jay Kiser, MAMCA Represetatvie Tim DuBois, Local Arrangements Committee Chair Charles Abadam, and Hospitality Committee Chair Carol LaLiberte.

The executive board meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

Wes Robertson made a motion, seconded by Lauren Lochstampfor, to approve the December 6, 2023 board meeting minutes as presented to the board by Jay Kiser. During discussion, Karen mentioned some errors she would like changed: in the section regarding speaker gifts, Karen was asking to give 2 macarons per speaker and not 6. In the motion made for door prizes, the word “committee” was left out before “signup sheets”. In the discussion regarding an email going out to membership to notify them of board member changes, Zack Cohen’s name was misspelled. Jay agreed to change all of these items. There was no more discussion, all in favor and none opposed; motion carried.

Lauren Lochstampfor made a motion, seconded by Wes Robertson, to approve the January 3, 2024 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

(Board members and committees not mentioned had nothing to report)

Agenda Committee Chair Karen Akaratovic, making minor changes as needed and ironing out some small issues. She added the QR code to the agenda for the conference virtual packet. Jay asked if she had a date in mind that the agenda would be finalized. Jay would like to have at least a week before the conference to print them out. Karen said she was planning on printing them and will give the hard copies to Jay before the conference.

Information Committee Chair Karen Akaratovic, currently working on the Winter Skeeter. She has all the articles she needs except for the 2024 ballot.

Website Committee Chair Karen Akaratovic, is updating the website as things come in.

Industry Representative, Karen said that Zack Cohen apologized for not making it to this meeting. He was planning on attending, but had an appointment he couldn’t miss. Karen asked the board if they wanted to take any actions due to Zach’s absences or just let things stay as is until after the elections were over. Even though Jay was a major proponent of taking Zach’s name off the position, he said he was okay with leaving Zach as interim. The rest of the board was in agreement to keep Zach as interim.

Merchandise Committee, Lauren (committee member) said that Penny Smelser (committee chair) sent out an email to the committee on December 15. The email was asking opinions of the committee for merchandise ideas.

Audit Committee, Karen said that the members of the audit committee have been decided. Carla setup Penny Smelser, Michael Bowry, and Amber Rymer to be on the committee. They should contact Jay soon to schedule the audit.

Membership Committee Chair Jay Kiser, we currently have about 65 members signed up for 2024 and 5 sustaining members. About half of those have paid. The total number of sponsorships for the 2024 conference is currently $1250.

Student Competition Committee Chair Jay Kiser, judges have completed their evaluations of the posters and the committee has tallied the totals. Jay plans to send emails to students soon and notify them of their winnings.

Hospitality Room Committee Chair Carol LaLiberte, talked with Charles and Jay and received costs from previous years’ hospitality rooms. She worked up a summary of items and costs and sent them to the board a little bit before the meeting started. She asked if the board had any recommendations. Jay said that the items on her list look good, but details are really up to her. The board is looking for an estimated total with a slight breakdown in category: grocery food, drinks, restaurant food, and others. Once she has a total, she should email it to the board for a motion. Jay said he can email the board a list of what was spent during past years. Charles said that this year will have a higher cost because it will cover the drinks. Once the motion is carried, Carol said she will collect all her receipts and give them to Jay to have a check cut.

Local Arrangements Committee Chair Charles Abadam, everything is being worked out. All he needs to do is give the hotel the final food menu for the event. He plans on having sodas on-consumption for a break or two. The AV will include the 10’ screen package. The Ice Breaker will take place in the vendor room on Tuesday evening, the hospitality room will take place in the corner room with windows, and the room used for the HR last year can be used as overflow.

Karen asked if parking will be the same as last year: free government license plate parking, free hotel guest parking, and a code to use for other day use parking. Charles thinks it will be the same as last year, but he will double check. Karen will send Charles the parking info she posted to the website last year so he can see the details.

Karen asked Charles if the vendors were communicated with regarding 2024 registration and conference sponsorships. Charles said no and wasn’t sure if he would be able to. Karen reminded him that this was needed and he volunteered to do it, two different times. Charles said he will contact them, and asked if anyone could help. Tim volunteered to help contact vendors. Charles said he will get in touch with Tim and they can divvy up the work. Jay said that 5 vendors have already registered on their own with 4 of them sponsoring. The only ones left on the list are Summit Chemical, Veseris, CoDiagnostics, and Central Life Sciences. Envu, Morrell, and other companies could also be contacted if desired.

MAMCA Representative Tim DuBois, the 2025 joint MAMCA/VMCA conference hotel is still being worked out. There are currently 3 hotels being decided on: Virginia Beach Sheraton (probably too small for the joint meeting), Newport News City Center Marriott, and the Virginia Beach Town Center Weston. The last two have free public parking options and an F&B of $17,000.

Tim asked the board how VMCA would like to handle the aspects of the 2025 meeting. In 2017, VMCA received $100 per sustaining member and $10 per member. Jay thought this would be a good way of doing it in 2025. Jay said that VMCA membership is now $20, but these details can be worked out. Tim asked if there were events that VMCA would like to do in the joint meeting. Jay would like to have the VMCA student poster competition and invite students from all MAMCA states. Jay would also like to have a 50:50 raffle and silent auction during the meeting. Tim suggested that Jay talk with Brian Byrd, who is incharge of the MAMCA student competition. It was suggested that VMCA host the hospitality room at the joint meeting. Depending on the hotel chosen, different costs may be included. The board suggested discussing VMCA’s involvement with the HR further when a hotel is chosen.

Nominations Committee Chair Wes Robertson, emailed the ballot to the board this morning. Josh Bernick does not have a bio and picture yet, but that should be sent/added by the end of the day. Jay said that he would feel more comfortable making a motion on a complete ballot, and would rather do this via email when Josh’s bio is added. Lauren and Karen agreed. Wes said that he will email the ballot to the board when it is complete.

Curations Committee Chair Wes Robertson, other than Henrico and Suffolk, no one else has committed samples yet. Lauren said that Fairfax will be sending some samples. They need to figure out what will be going to the Smithsonian first. Wes said that this first collection should be a good start. Most of the equipment the committee is currently using came from Henrico. Wes plans on finalizing a purchase list and sending it to the board soon.

Photo Contest Committee Chair Wes Robertson, lots of last minute submissions came in during the last week of 2023. Most of the categories have at least four photos. By Friday, Wes will send out a Google doc for voting. Wes will create a poster or sheet to hang up at the conference that will have instructions for voting. Wes also has a voting box he will bring to the conference for voting. Jay said that table space may be limited, but the elections committee has a voting booth they may be able to share. Wes will talk to Penny about that. Wes will send Jay the list of winners before the conference, Jay will write out the checks, and they can be handed out during the conference. Karen said that the submission deadline for photos was 12/31/2023, but people are still able to submit online; should it be taken down? Wes said not yet. Late submissions are not bad, and the submission form can be taken down when the voting process starts.

Education Committee, Karen said the January recert is taking place on 1/17/2024 in Chesapeake. There may be a reminder article in the Skeeter and/or a reminder email.

Elections Committee, Karen said that the equipment discussed at the last board meeting has been purchased. The committee is just waiting on the finalized ballot.

Special Awards Committee, Karen said that Jennifer Barritt (committee chair) will purchase the awards in January. Once the awards are purchased, Jay will deliver the presidential plaque to Carla. A photo of Carla and the award can be taken and projected during the business meeting if she is unable to virtually attend.

Old Business

* Hotel charge/receipt: Karen asked if Jay received the necessary paperwork/receipt from the Hilton from November’s overcharge/reimbursement. Jay did receive a document from Brenda (Hilton employee), and he thinks it should be sufficient to use during the audit.
* Amazon gift cards: Jay asked if any special instructions are needed to members when voting or submitting committee signup sheets. Since these submissions will put them in a drawing for gift cards, should they be notified to use particular email addresses that the cards can be mailed to. Karen said that something can be mentioned on the committee signup sheet, but voting is done by the emails listed in the membership files. Jay will notify the winners before sending the cards and make sure he has the email they want him to use.

New Business

* Suggested bylaws change: Karen emailed the Bylaws Committee and asked about the possibility of adding a due date for the ballot to be presented to the board. There is a current due date of 6 weeks before the business meeting (BM) for the ballot to be presented to membership. Karen is suggesting that the ballot be presented to the board 10 weeks before the BM. This will give the board 4 weeks to solve any problems and give the elections committee ample time to send the ballot to membership. Jay (Bylaws Committee Chair) said that he likes this idea and his committee is currently discussing the suggestion. Jay will get back to the board soon with the committee’s recommendations on how to move forward.
* The next board meeting will be January 31 (Wednesday) at 9am.
* Purchasing VMCA supplies: Jay said that there are two things he would like to purchase soon, but he has not worked out the details yet. He will send an email to the board soon and hopefully get a motion passed via email. 1. Jay only has 15 blank checks in the VMCA checkbook. Normally this would last over a year, but with the photo contest and student competition this might not be enough for the conference. These checks have carbon copies attached and come in a large quantity. Jay is thinking they will cost between $75 and $150. 2. With the extra conference posters being printed this year, Jay suggests we buy extra 2’x 3’ backboards. He will look around to see what is out there.
* President’s hotel room: Jay asked the board what they would like to do regarding the purchase of a hotel room for the president during the conference. Because Karen is just acting president and will be the actual president next year, Jay suggested only paying for her room in 2025 and not 2024. Karen said that she does not plan to stay at the hotel overnight during either year and not to worry about getting her a room.

Jay Kiser made a motion, seconded by Lauren Lochstampfor, to adjourn the meeting at 10:42am, all in favor, none opposed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Kiser

Secretary/Treasurer VMCA