Commissioner Hart called to order the regularly scheduled meeting of the Lee County Mosquito/Hyacinth Control Districts (LCMHCD) on 07/23/2026 at 10:00 a.m. in the William Opp Training Center at the Districts' headquarters, 15191 Homestead Road, Lehigh Acres, Florida 33971.

PRESENT:

Seat 1- Commissioner Ed Brantley

Seat 2- Commissioner Brian Farrar, Vice Chairman, virtually present

Seat 3- Commissioner Mike Ellis

Seat 4- Commissioner Steve Bowen

Seat 5- Commissioner William Burke

Seat 6- Commissioner Thomas B. Hart, Chairman

Seat 7- Commissioner Bruce Scott

Legal Counsel – John Agnew

STAFF:

Executive Director – Aaron Lloyd

Deputy Director, LCHCD – Kevin Watts

Operations Manager, LCHCD – Jason Cull

Research Director – Dr. James Dunford

Chief Financial Officer – Sean O'Neill

Human Resources Director – Melissa Tenzel

Operations Director – Ed Foley

Communications Director – Jenifer McBride

Network Support Technician – Joel Canova

Executive Administrative Assistant – Sabina Vilarchao

VISITORS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The following citizens addressed the Board: None

MINUTES APPROVAL:

Commissioner Hart requested a motion for item 10472_Board meeting minutes 06/25/2026. Commissioner Bowen moved to approve the 06/25/2026 minutes. Commissioner Ellis seconded the motion to approve the minutes as presented. The Board approved unanimously; motion passed.

LEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Department of Health report. Cheryl Adams, Biological Administrator, Division of Communicable Diseases provided an update:

https://www.floridahealth.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/fl-arbovirus-report-w29-2026.pdf

CONSENT AGENDA:

10473_Surplus

Commissioner Hart requested a motion for the consent agenda item. Commissioner Ellis moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Brantley seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved; motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

LCHCD Strategic Plan – strategic plans were presented and can be viewed on our website.
https://leecountyhcdfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/LCHCD_Strategic_Plan_Performance_Tracker_July-2026-final-PDFA.pdf

LCMCD Strategic Plan – strategic plans were presented and can be viewed on our website.
https://leecountymcdfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Strategic-Plan-update-July-2026AA.pdf

NEW BUSINESS:

10474_ Millage rate 2026-2027 LCHCD – Approve the tentative millage rate of .020 for the Lee County Hyacinth Control District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2027. The tentative budget will be reviewed by the Board at the August workshop.

Commissioner Hart requested a motion to accept the 10474_Millage rate 2026-2027 LCHCD. Commissioner Brantley moved to accept 10474. Commissioner Bowen seconded the motion. The Board accepted unanimously; motion passed.

10475_ Millage rate 2026-2027 LCMCD – Approve the tentative millage rate of .2201 for the Lee County Mosquito Control District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2027. The tentative budget will be reviewed by the Board at the August workshop.

Commissioner Hart requested a motion to accept the 10475_Millage rate 2026-2027 LCMCD. Commissioner Brantley moved to accept 10475. Commissioner Scott seconded the motion. The Board accepted unanimously; motion passed.

10476_ Fort Myers Beach Mosquito Control Interlocal Agreement – Approve a formal interlocal agreement for mosquito control services provided by LCMCD for Fort Myers Beach Mosquito Control District (FMBMCD). Once approved, LCMCD will present the interlocal agreement to FDACS and FMBMCD for review and acceptance. Ultimately, the interlocal will formalize an agreement of service between the Districts.

Commissioner Hart requested a motion for 10476_ FMBMCD Interlocal Agreement. Commissioner Ellis moved to approve 10476. Commissioner Bowen seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved; motion passed.

LCHCD OPERATIONS REPORT: Deputy Director Kevin Watts updated the Board.

Kevin Watts provided an update on operations and introduced Operations Manager Jason Cull as part of the District's succession planning. Jason will attend future board meetings to become familiar with the District's operations as Watts prepares to transition into retirement in the new year.

LCHCD has expanded its biological control program beyond the traditional use of triploid grass carp to include two insect species, *Megamelus*, a plant hopper, and *Neochetina*, a weevil. District staff are currently rearing these insects in the wet laboratory. Approximately six releases have been conducted throughout Lee County, including at Pine Island. Two sites have reportedly been cleared of the targeted water hyacinth, indicating encouraging early results. Staff are also coordinating with Jennifer McBride regarding a potential social media post on the District's *Megamelus* and weevil production.

Kevin also provided an update on an algae issue affecting the North Cape area. The algae, identified as Chara, has become

increasingly problematic as the region continues to experience a rainfall deficit and low water levels. The situation is similar to conditions experienced last year and has resulted in a significant increase in service requests. Jason Cull has arranged a meeting with the Cape Coral Public Works Director and staff for the following week to discuss the issue and identify potential solutions.

The District also continues to support professional development by sending staff to industry conferences, including the Aquatic Plant Management Society conference held the previous week. Jason Cull and Dr. Hannah Oswalt attended the conference, where Dr. Oswalt presented research titled "Fast and Furious," which evaluated the efficiency of an upgraded harvester in managing spatterdock. The presentation will also be featured in an upcoming District newsletter.

LCMCD OPERATIONS REPORT: Operations Director Ed Foley updated the Board.

Ed Foley provided the mosquito operations report and followed up on activities surrounding the 4th of July holiday. In preparation for the holiday weekend, LCMCD conducted approximately (6) aerial adulticiding missions and (50) ground adulticiding missions throughout Lee County. Trap counts remained very low during the holiday period, and service requests were also limited, indicating that the treatments were effective in reducing mosquito activity and allowing residents and visitors to enjoy the holiday with minimal mosquito concerns.

In addition, Ed Foley reported that rainfall during the current period has been concentrated primarily along the coastline, resulting in increased larviciding activity in coastal areas, particularly around Pine Island and Sanibel. Our field inspectors have conducted significant larviciding operations in these areas over the past several weeks. With additional rainfall forecast over the next 10 days, rainfall is expected to shift more toward inland areas. As a result, LCMCD anticipates increased activity from floodwater and freshwater mosquito species, including ***Psorophora columbiae***, which can become problematic in inland habitats following rainfall. The District will continue monitoring rainfall patterns and mosquito activity and will adjust larviciding and adulticiding operations as conditions change.

LCMHCD FACILITIES REPORT: CFO Sean O'Neill updated the Board.

Sean O'Neill updated the Board on the district's generator replacement project. LCMHCD had anticipated bringing a Request for Proposals (RFP) forward for Board approval at this meeting; however, the bids closed the previous week and are still being evaluated. Although a preferred bidder has been identified, the generator proposed does not necessarily meet the district's preferred specifications. Staff are therefore consulting with additional vendors and continuing discussions with the selected bidder regarding available generator options.

Sean noted that the District has historically used Cummins generators, but only one of the responding companies offered a Cummins unit for this project, with an estimated delivery time of approximately one year if ordered immediately. Staff are currently evaluating Mitsubishi and Perkins generators as potential alternatives and are working with vendors to determine the most appropriate option for the district's needs. The submitted bids ranged from approximately $723,000 to $1.1 million, with the final cost dependent on the generator type selected. Staff expect to provide the Board with additional information and a recommendation for consideration and approval at a future meeting.

Sean also provided an update on the Golden Bear tank removal project. The project will involve the removal of five Golden Bear tanks, each with a capacity of approximately 8,200 gallons. The district's selected vendor, Flint and Doyle, will remove and transport the tanks to a scrap metal dealer for disposal. This concluded the facilities report.

AST DEPARTMENT REPORT: Research Director Dr. James Dunford updated the Board.

Dr. James Dunford, Research Director, provided an update on the LCMCD research and mosquito identification activities. He announced the establishment of a new department dedicated to mosquito identification, surveillance, and the taxonomy of mosquitoes and other insects of public health importance. The new department, named the Mosquito Identification, Surveillance, and Taxonomy Department (MIST), will serve as an important foundation for the district's surveillance and

control efforts by ensuring accurate identification of mosquito species. LCMCD plans to interview candidates the following week for a supervisor to lead the department and replace the current mosquito identifier, who is expected to retire in December. The district hopes to have the new supervisor in place by August.

Dr. Dunford also announced that the district's identification laboratory will be dedicated to Dr. Richard Darcie, a renowned mosquito taxonomist and entomologist who was stationed at Buckingham Airfield during the 1940s. District representatives will visit the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory (FMEL) to collect memorabilia related to Dr. Darcie and display it in the district's laboratories. The visit will also provide an opportunity to tour the FMEL facility and discuss ongoing and potential collaborations with University of Florida faculty.

Dr. Dunford also highlighted a recent presentation on the District's Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) program delivered by Rachel Morreale at the Florida Entomological Society meeting, which was hosted this year by the Anastasia Mosquito Control District. The presentation generated significant interest and questions regarding the program. LCMCD will host the Florida Entomological Society meeting for the first time next year

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Executive Director Aaron Lloyd updated the Board.

Legislative update:

Aaron Lloyd provided the Executive Director's Report, beginning with a legislative update from Jennifer McBride. The American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) requested assistance in coordinating a meeting with Congressman Greg Steube. Jenifer and Aaron met with Congressman Steube and two AMCA representatives to discuss the SMASH 2.0 Act and encourage his support as a co-sponsor. The legislation would provide additional federal funding for vector control, including support for research and education, as well as assistance to county-operated mosquito control districts with more limited resources.

LCMCD is also increasing its public outreach efforts through a social media initiative called "Bite-Sized Florida History." The series is designed to educate the public about what Florida was like before modern mosquito control and to highlight the importance of the services provided by mosquito control districts. The initiative has generated significant public engagement and positive feedback. The district's Facebook content reached nearly 500,000 views during the most recent 28-day period, compared with approximately 13,000 views during the same period the previous year. The substantial increase in engagement reflects growing public interest in the LCMCD's work and its efforts to educate the community about mosquito control.

Aircraft update:

LCMCD operations are currently in good condition, with three aircraft and six helicopters in service. The district recently received its first newly purchased aircraft, a King Air 250, registration N597VF. The aircraft is in good condition and is awaiting installation of the spray tank, completion of a droplet test, and a weight-and-balance evaluation before being placed into operational service.

PI Center update:

Sean O'Neill and Dr. Hoel previously met with representatives from the South Florida Water Management District at the Pine Island Center property to conduct an inspection. The inspection identified infrastructure concerns damage and areas of the berm that require repair. LCMCD is awaiting a formal report that will be provided to contractors so that repair costs can be determined. Once an estimated cost is obtained, the district plans to work with Henderson Franklin, a law firm, to pursue reestablishing a property owners' association meeting and communicate the anticipated costs to the affected property owners.

COLA

Melissa and Sean are monitoring the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which was reported to be approximately 3.5% at the time of the meeting. As part of the upcoming August budget workshop, staff plan to present potential COLA scenarios ranging

from 3% to 5% for the Board's consideration.

Employee of the Quarter: Human Resources Director Melissa Tenzel updated the board

LCMHCD introduced its new Employee of the Quarter recognition program as part of its efforts to improve employee communication, recognition, and morale. The program was announced during the first quarterly all-employee meeting, with the first award presented during the fourth-quarter meeting. Employees, supervisors, and managers may nominate employees who demonstrate exceptional service, while members of the Executive Committee are not eligible for the award. The Executive Committee will select the Employee of the Quarter. The recipient will receive a framed certificate of achievement, and the district is developing a permanent plaque to be displayed in the training center alongside a framed photograph of each recipient. As an additional form of recognition, the Employee of the Quarter will receive one day of paid leave in appreciation of their exceptional service.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

10477_LCHCD

Commissioner Burke presented the LCHCD Treasurer's report for June 2026. Commissioner Burke moved to approve the Hyacinth Control District Financials, 10477_LCHCD. Commissioner Ellis seconded the motion. The Board approved unanimously; motion passed.

10478_LCMCD

Commissioner Burke presented the LCMCD Treasurer's report for June 2026. Commissioner Burke moved to approve the Mosquito Control District financials, 10478_LCMCD. Commissioner Bowen seconded the motion. The Board approved unanimously; motion passed.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

None

There being no further business, Commissioner Hart made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Commissioner Thomas Hart, Chairman

Brian Farrar

Term: November 2022 – November 2026

Commissioner William Burke, Secretary/Treasurer

Term: November 2024 – November 2028