

FINAL
Village of Oak Park
Board of Health
April 27, 2015
Village Hall – Room 101
Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was called to Order at 7:04 p.m.

Present: Chair Miller; Commissioners: Barber, Danstrom, Strokosch and Lowrie.

Also Present: Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager /Interim Health Director, Mike Charley, Environmental Health Supervisor, Paul Geery, Assistant Manager/Biologist (Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District), Justin Harbison, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health (Loyola University)

2. Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved, first by Barber, second by Lowrie
3. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of March 24, 2015 were approved, first Lowrie, second Strokosch.
4. Public Comment:

Peggy McGrath (GoGreen OPRF) - Ms. McGrath passed out literature from the Midwest Pesticide Action Center and asked the Board of Health to think about the bigger picture and the use of pesticides and toxins. She was concerned about the dangers to our children as well as the effectiveness of spraying in that she believes spraying only is 5-10% effective due to the inability of the spray to actually hit a mosquito.

Julie Samuels (613 S. Lombard) – Ms. Samuels also mentioned the materials from the Midwest Pesticide Action Center and the alternatives to spraying. Ms. Samuels doesn't believe in the need to spray for many of the reasons stated in the Midwest Pesticide Action Center literature as well as she believes the cases of West Nile Virus are low and that if one does contract it, the person mainly gets sick but does not die. In addition, why risk spraying the chemical if the chance of hitting a West Nile mosquito in a particular spray is unknown if not rare.

5. New Business – Public Forum on the Village's West Nile Prevention Program

Chairperson Miller opened the forum by stating this was a meeting for the Board of Health to listen to a description of the Village's West Nile Prevention Program. The Board of Health will then discuss the issue of mosquito spraying at their next regular meeting on May 26, 2015. The speakers included health department staff responsible for implementing the program, a representative from the Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District which is the tax-supported entity responsible for mosquito control in the near western suburbs and the Department of Public Health

Sciences from Loyola University who does extensive research related to West Nile Virus and the use of spraying.

Mike Charley, Environmental Health Services Supervisor, is responsible for administering the Village's program. The Village receives a grant from the State of IL Department of Public Health to hire an intern to monitor and provide education to homeowners who have standing water. The Village also collects dead birds and sends them to the State as a means to monitor the presence of West Nile Virus. The Village also has a notification system via email or text for those who want to be notified in the event the Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District has determined that the criterion is met to spray in Oak Park.

Paul Geery, Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District, reviewed all of the methods used by the District to control for mosquitos. Actually spraying for mosquitos is rare compared to the other work the District implements. In the 1980's the District stopped spraying for nuisance mosquitos and only sprays when conditions are met for the presence of West Nile Virus as prescribed by the IL Department of Public Health. If they do decide to spray, they do not do District-wide spraying, they only spray in the location in which the conditions were met for the presence of West Nile. Mr. Gerry stated the concentration of the chemical they spray is considered to be very low and is the product approved by the USEPA and registered with the IL Department of Agriculture. Last year, the conditions were such that the District only sprayed in Oak Park once and the year prior they did not spray at all. Mr. Geery also talked about the option for a resident to have the sprayer turned off as they pass their home if they have written medical documentation.

The BOH took additional comments from the public. Ms. Samuels asked some follow-up questions such as if there was any proof that the spraying works; In areas where they didn't spray, were there incidents of West Nile, and if anyone died? Where is the District's proof that the product is "safe"? What effect is the spray on wildlife such as dragon flies? Ms. Samuels was concerned that consumers are not told everything that is contained in the product because the USEPA is not required to; no one is testing the chemicals. Another person from the audience (who did not fill out a form), asked if there were any studies done after the spraying to see if it was effective? Mr. Geery responded by talking about studies that the University of IL conducted in which they concluded that larvae control did contribute greatly to the control of mosquitos. Related to the concerns of the product being safe, he referred back to the USEPA who sets the standards for human health and the District follows those guidelines. Related to the impact on wildlife, Mr. Geery said he was aware of a study by beekeepers in which they determined that the bees were not harmed. In general, regarding post-testing, he is aware of studies (cage studies) in which spraying is 20-50% effective, however it is not possible for those studies to be conducted for specific areas since mosquitos fly around.

Building on the questions raised about studies that may have been done to see if spraying is effective, Justin Harbison, Ph.D, Assistant Professor with the Department of Public Health Services of Loyola University, noted three studies he was aware of in which it was determined that the spraying was effective in controlling West Nile. Related to the questions about the standards set by the USEPA, he noted another study in which lab coats on mannequins were mounted

behind the spray trucks and it was determined that the truck would need to pass them 2500 times to get the exposure set by the USEPA.

The BOH closed the meeting and would continue their own discussion at the next regular BOH meeting in May.

6. Old Business:

7. Motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Shelley
Deputy Village Manager/Interim Health Director