



Board of Commissioners

Mike Martin
Ralph Lightfoot
Julius Kwiatkowski

Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer

July 25, 2022

Dear Taxpayer,

The East Flagler Mosquito Control District is an Independent Special Taxing District created in 1952 for the sole purpose of protecting Public Health by controlling mosquito-borne diseases such as: Malaria, Dengue Fever, Zika virus, West Nile virus, Chikungunya, Heartworm, and others. We operate under the jurisdiction of the Florida Department of Agriculture. There are three Independent Commissioners elected by the taxpayers of the District.

Because so much of the Mosquito District is prime mosquito habitat (there are 48 species of mosquitos in Flagler), our aerial spraying program is more than 30 years old. Our current helicopter is 18 years old and nearing the end of its useful life. As our helicopter is the primary treatment vehicle for both adulticiding and larviciding, as well as surveillance in the salt marshes, it is imperative that we replace it.

Planning for the replacement of the helicopter should have been done a decade ago, or longer, but the previous director did not do so. Now we only have but a few years in which to raise the money. Our current helicopter is aging badly, and in the past 12 months we have had to spend close to \$150,000 in repairs. As our model is no longer manufactured, parts are becoming very difficult to find, and the manufacturer took two months recently to manufacture a new hydraulic pump for us. We are also facing very expensive FAA-mandated maintenance in the next few years. Additionally, the District is about to embark on an expansion of its service area in Flagler County as requested by the Flagler County Commission and this will place further demands on our aerial resources. The Mosquito District has no choice but to replace our helicopter, and the current price is \$4 million.

Currently, under present interest rates, the finance charge, the interest, on a \$4,000,000 loan will cost the taxpayers of the District \$628,200! But by raising our tax rate, we can and will be able to collect enough revenue to pay cash for our new helicopter, thus saving our taxpayers \$628,000. The District is currently debt-free, and we intend to keep it that way. Avoidance of debt is the height of good governance. Additionally, replacing our helicopter will save us several hundred thousand dollars in expected maintenance, and will eliminate the extended service outages that will occur as the old helicopter undergoes such maintenance.

While the Commissioners dislike raising taxes, even if only in the short-term, to spend \$628,200 (or more, if interest rates continue to rise) unnecessarily would be abdicating our financial responsibilities to the taxpayers of our District. Raising taxes is never desirable, but when we can save well over \$600,000 it is the smart and responsible thing to do. This increase will be short-term only, to raise enough money to pay cash, and avoiding the very expensive interest on a loan. Your elected commissioners were unanimous in the vote to consider this tax increase.

East Flagler Mosquito Control District

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Palm Coast, Florida 32164

Phone: 386-437-0002
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flaglermosquito.com



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To summarize: by increasing taxes now, for a few years, we will save over \$628,000 in interest over the next ten years, avoid the ever-increasing maintenance costs of operating an 18-year-old helicopter, and ensure that we can continue to safeguard the health of the residents of both the East Flagler Mosquito Control District and surrounding Flagler County.

Sincerely,

Mike Martin

Mike Martin

District Board Chairman, Seat 2

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