

Lodi News-Sentinel

## San Joaquin County mosquito board postpones decision on trustee health benefits

**By Ross Farrow/News-Sentinel Staff Writer | Posted: Tuesday, November 20, 2012**

San Joaquin County's mosquito abatement board postponed a vote on whether trustees should continue to be eligible for health care benefits at its board meeting Tuesday.

The San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District board voted in 2009 to receive health plan benefits, a decision that's been questioned by the [San Joaquin County Taxpayers Association](#).

"I am not questioning the (district's) authority," association president Dave Renison told the board Tuesday.

However, Renison said the question trustees should weigh is whether they should allow themselves to receive health benefits given the poor state of the economy.

The association says the district has spent \$110,000 between Aug. 1 2009 and June 1 of this year on insurance for the trustees. District staff, however, is reviewing the insurance spending and has not confirmed the association's numbers.

The district offers the 11 trustees up to 100 percent of insurance premiums by Kaiser-Permanente, the same health care package that mosquito district employees receive. If a trustee wants to use another plan or include his or her spouse and children in the Kaiser plan, the trustee must pay the difference, according to district manager Eddie Lucchesi.

Not all trustees make use of the plan, but the exact number wasn't immediately available.

Trustees also receive a stipend of \$100 per board meeting, plus expenses incurred attending conferences. The board meets monthly.

The board had an animated discussion in 2009, when trustees voted to allow themselves to have health benefits at district expense, and they don't seem to be in agreement now.

At the recommendation of board member Mike Manna of Acampo, trustees voted to have board president Francis Groen — representing the city of Ripon — Lucchesi and the district's attorney, Chris Eley, crunch numbers about the mosquito abatement district's revenue and the actual cost of benefits before returning the health benefits issue for board consideration.

Lucchesi said he hopes to have more precise numbers for the Dec. 18 board meeting.

Trustee Chet Miller of Tracy, a 25-year veteran on the mosquito board, said that killing mosquitoes is more important than trustees getting health insurance from the district.

"I didn't know you got 10 cents to be on the board," Miller said when he was appointed for the first time by the Tracy City Council. "We're not here for the money."

Trustee Jack Snyder of Manteca praised the board's work and that of the district.

"This group is outstanding," Snyder said. "Personally, I'm proud to be here."

Three trustees live in the Lodi area — Manna, Marc Warmerdam and Jack Fiori Sr.

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