

MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 8, 2004

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** David Bingham, Karen Bodner, Paul Clements, Doug Graves, Molly Hoffer, Mike Koivula, Chris Melotti
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sandra Corbin, Mike Kesling
- STAFF PRESENT:** Sonny Chickering, Stephonee Colley, Arno Nelson, John Petsch
- BCC PRESENT:** Commissioner Anna Morrison
- GUESTS PRESENT:** None

Chair, Chris Melotti, called the meeting to order.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – (DATE OF LAST MEETING)

MOTION: Bodner moved to approve the Minutes of July 14, 2004, as corrected. Graves seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

III. “SWEEPIN’ THE BROOM” SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE – CHRIS MELLOTTI

Melotti said the subcommittee hasn’t had a formal meeting to date. Morrison asked Melotti to clarify the goal of the subcommittee, and he said the main goal is to complete “on the ground” project within a Lane County right of way. He asked that another member of the subcommittee take his place to coordinate meetings. Hoffer volunteered to take the lead. Melotti said he made contact with an ecologist from the West Eugene wetlands who is very interested in working with the subcommittee, and who also may have funds available for this project.

IV. JONES & STOKES UPDATE – JOHN PETSCH

The report has not been received to date (J & S had priority work for time sensitive County projects). Draft report is expected the first week in October and if so, copies will be forwarded to Committee along with regular meeting packets.

Chickering said a meeting was held with Latimer and it was decided to proceed with the annual report and to include recommendations for specific amendments to the Last Resort Policy. The Board of Commissioners would determine whether to pursue those recommendations, or not.

V. ROAD TOUR REVIEW / DISCUSSION – SONNY CHICKERING

Chickering told the Committee that some stops were related to Vegetation, including the Horton area, ½ mile off Hwy 36. Knapweed filled most of the pastureland along the road. Clements said the east side of this section of road is where Horton Road Organics is located, one of the premier farms in the County in terms of product, labor, and no chemical use. Clements said that knotweed is in seed right now. Chickering said the first stop was at the Veneta Shop, where Manewal had brought in a small knotweed plant. The knotweed had a taproot on it that was nearly a foot long, and Chickering described it as being “like a concrete rebar stirrup”.

Bodner asked about getting a demonstration of the Aqua Master injection system, and Melotti said that he’s been e-mailing the coordinator for the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council, who has a knotweed control project ongoing now and thinks they are using this method. Bodner said she would like to actually see the mechanism in action. Melotti said he’s trying to get the person actually in charge of the project to speak to the Committee on the subject, possibly for the October meeting.

Japanese knotweed was also seen right off Hwy 36. It was a 10’ by 12’ tall bush and flowering.

The tour included seeing brushing work done on Sea Pine, a drive up on Stagecoach, and a pull-in on the beginning of Bernhardt Heights.

VI. ROAD MAINTENANCE MANAGER / OPERATIONS UPDATE – ARNO NELSON

Nelson reported that all mowers and brush cutters are in full operation and a final pass on full-width mowing is complete. Brush cutting and top trimming is planned to start in preparation for 2005 pavement overlay work.

Nelson said he moved an RM3 position from one zone over to the Vegetation Crew to increase personnel, and he is looking into the purchase of an additional mower for 2005. Nelson said they are planning on approximately 80 miles of roadwork in 2005, 63 miles of the total is chip sealing.

Nelson said that the VM Coordinator position is on hold until after the Ordinance issue is dealt with. The position is budgeted through June 2005, and evaluation of the vacancy would be based on the outcome of the Jones & Stokes report and the Last Resort Policy.

VII. UPCOMING TERM EXPIRATIONS (DEC. 31, 2004) – SONNY CHICKERING

Chickering officially announced to the Committee that five (5) members’ terms will expire as of December 31st, and that they may re-apply (applications are available online at www.lanecounty.org under “General Information”, “Advisory Committees”). All current members are in their first term.

Chickering explained that Melinda Ketzok will place a vacancy ad in the Register Guard, Springfield News, and in-house publications. The ad will run late September through October 31st. Chickering asked the Committee for additional posting locations besides three bicycle shops, and Melotti suggested the West Eugene Wetlands Office, a BLM facility (11th & Danebo), and Hoffer suggested the Master Gardener program (Extension Office at the fairgrounds).

The process includes review of all applications by the Committee and recommendation to the Board.

VIII. POLITICAL ACTIVITY/ORS 260.432(2) – SONNY CHICKERING

Chickering passed handouts to Committee (Political Activity of Public Employees, memo from Teresa Wilson, County Council, dated 7/26/04), and explained to Committee a new policy relating to restrictions on political activity and campaigning by public employees. He explained that the Secretary of State has taken the position that the term “public employee” includes public officials who are not elected, paid or not, such as members of appointed boards, commissions, and advisory committees. Basically, he said that Committee Members as individuals or as a body can not lobby for a candidate or a measure while representing the Committee itself.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. PRESENTATION ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO'S) / CAROL MALLORY-SMITH, OSU:

Manewal will confirm with speaker for October presentation.

2. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: WED., OCT. 13, 2004

- Knotweed Presentation (Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council) – Chris Melotti to confirm speaker for meeting
- “Sweepin’ the Broom” Subcommittee Update – Molly Hoffer
- Jones & Stokes Report – John Petsch

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Recording Secretary