

**MINUTES**  
**VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**November 8, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Bodner, Paul Clements, Peter Graham, Mike Koivula, Jan Nelson, Douglass Moser, Ross Penhallegon, John Sundquist

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Melotti

STAFF PRESENT: Orin Schumacher, Ollie Snowden, Arno Nelson, Bill Manewal, Caroline Manewal

B/CC PRESENT: Faye Stewart

PUBLIC PRESENT: Jan Wroncy

Karen Bodner called the meeting to order.

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jan Wroncy, 94340 Horton Road, Horton – Wroncy stated she had previously served on VMAC for 2 full terms, she's an organic farmer, she has a strong research background, and she was re-applying to offer her experience and expertise in finding alternatives.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Correction to the October 11, 2006 Minutes: Page 3, VI – correct the spelling of Penhallegon.

Motion: Sundquist moved to approve the Minutes of October 11, 2006, as corrected. Penhallegon seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

Jan Nelson requested that references to "Nelson" in all future minutes be either J. Nelson or A. Nelson. Staff will make this clarification in the October minutes.

Clements commented on information in the October minutes regarding Black Locust – stating he would like to challenge people to think about what is really invasive and/or noxious and what is not. He explained that he would prefer Black Locust for posts over chemically-treated fir posts; He suggested, that if the County moves forward with the Johnson Road site, that maybe this patch could be used to do something productive.

**III. GENERAL COMMENT**

Best Management Practices (BMP's) – Sundquist noted he had not been able to find the BMP's on the Internet and also, some members do not have Internet access, so he requested that staff provide copies for members. Schumacher explained this is a very large document. He offered to pull the parts related to vegetation management and make copies for members, and also have one complete book available for review.

Subcommittee suggestion – Sundquist suggested that VMAC form subcommittees to work on grassy swales for rights-of-way and also ideas for how the inmate crews can help.

**IV. BCC DECISION ON VMAC BYLAW REVISION - SCHUMACHER**

Schumacher reported this item had gone before the Board with the result of a “no vote” meaning the Bylaws stand as currently written. Stewart explained there were only 4 commissioners present and the Chair had not entertained a motion after hearing individual input that indicted a 2-2 vote. Stewart explained, that for him to make a decision, he is interested in hearing the different opinions regarding an issue more than whether an issue received a majority vote or not.

J. Nelson noted she would like to see VMAC be able to interview applicants before making their recommendation to the Board; and the important issue to her is their ability to attend meetings.

Bodner commented, that to her, it is a privilege to be appointed to an advisory committee; that it's not something to be taken lightly.

**V. IVM COORDINATOR SALARY (ROAD FUND VS. GENERAL FUND) - SNOWDEN**

Snowden stated his understanding was this item was on the agenda due to the Committee's frustration with Schumacher's inability to work on noxious weed control off the right-of-way. Snowden explained the sources of the Road Fund and that it has to be used to facilitate travel of motor vehicles. He noted there is intense competition for General Fund monies and the Board would have to decide that management of noxious weeds off the right-of-way was a higher priority than some other service within the General Fund in order to make a change in Schumacher's salary source. He stated, that if VMAC believes this would be high priority, then they can make a recommendation to the Board and staff could carry that forward during the budget process; but his personal opinion is it would be a long, uphill battle. Stewart agreed, stating that about 70% of the General Fund money is mandated services, so there isn't very much that is discretionary to begin with. In response to a question, Snowden noted some other counties deal with this issue using Weed Boards, but funding for those is difficult to find also.

Snowden went on to explain the uncertainties involving the Secure Rural Schools Funding. He added that even if it would get renewed for five years, there would still be two problems: 1) revenues to roads would stay flat while expenses continue to increase, and 2) the distribution formula is being looked at and if that gets changed from its current formula to one based on population, that Lane County would take a big hit.

The Committee and staff also discussed the following ideas/options: System development charges (SDC's) for transportation and/or storm drainage, real estate transfer taxes, storm drainage fees, weed partnerships, grants, and cooperative projects with watershed councils.

**VI. DISCUSSION – VMAC SURVEYS/BALANCE - SNOWDEN**

Snowden explained when staff went before the Board on the last round of appointments, there was discussion at the Board about committee balance. The Board felt it was appropriate to add questions to the standard application form in order to gather more information, so that was why the survey was drafted. Snowden noted the issue of balance has been a recurring theme at the Board level, with balance variously defined as gender, geographic, skills/knowledge, etc., but in the end it basically comes down to the opinions on the use of herbicides to control vegetation.

In response to a question about how the Board gives “direction” to staff, Stewart explained the Board can give direction by having 3 or more members reach consensus; they don't have to do a formal vote. He added that due to a concern that most of the current VMAC members were totally against the use of herbicides, the Board approved doing a survey in order to be able to confirm whether or not there is a current problem related to balance.

Moser stated that a previous 4-1 vote to 'start using sprays again' would indicate the Committee was actually unbalanced in favor of spraying. Clements clarified that developing and voting on the Permitted Products List was not a vote for or against spraying; that it was staff, VMAC and the Board moving forward on the mandate in the Board-approved Last Resort Policy itself to develop/adopt a Permitted Products List. [See Lane Code 15.510(3)(a)]

J. Nelson referred to minutes from 1988 stating the original idea of establishing a broad-based advisory group did not include any mention of pro/con herbicide use; that the pro/con herbicide balance issue was introduced later as a diversionary issue and from then on it kept everyone busy fighting each other. She added the idea of IVM is to reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides and the purpose of the Committee is to advance the idea of IVM. Staff distributed copies of information previously submitted by J. Nelson. Schumacher clarified that for staff to make/distribute copies of information, it must be directly related to a scheduled agenda item.

Penhallegon stated the true definition of integrated vegetation management includes many pieces; that herbicides is one piece, doing nothing is another piece, that true IVM is having all the pieces available if needed. He added that to get a true picture, one needs to look at all of the minutes from way back, and that the purpose of this Committee is to develop policy recommendations like the Last Resort Policy so we can move forward.

Snowden noted if you review previous minutes, the discussions of balance range from geographic, gender balance, and herbicide use; but the flash point has always been one's position on herbicide use.

Stewart explained the Board was not saying VMAC is currently not balanced; that there had been some concern expressed about balance, so the survey had been done to see if there was a problem or not. He went on to say there are a lot of other issues dealing with vegetation management that this Committee could be working on and assisting the County with, and he encouraged members to get past the herbicide issue and move forward.

Sundquist noted the herbicide issue had been sorted out years ago and this current survey is an insult and a waste of time to the people who had worked on this so far; that it's time to move on.

Bodner noted she was surprised by the strong reactions to the survey, she felt they were fair questions and she had no problem answering them. She said she would like to see us let go of the balance issue. She added she doesn't feel someone should be excluded from the Committee because they are strictly "no-spray" or "spray" (extreme belief in one way or the other).

Koivula asked what the Board had decided about VMAC's balance. Snowden stated the Board had not seen the surveys yet; that the process is for the applications and surveys to be reviewed by VMAC first, then their recommendations go before the Board, and then the Board will make the final decision on what constitutes balance as they choose who to appoint to the vacancies.

Schumacher stated he believes the concept of balance is never a moot point no matter what the topic; that there will always be an ebb and flow between issues. He added the next big issue facing us may involve finances and how to best use our money. He feels it's important to keep all the viewpoints on the Committee, regardless of which ones are currently the major issue.

Graham stated he understands the confusion some might feel on this issue because it does sound, from where he sits [as a new member] that there is some ambivalence.

**VII. DISCUSSION – DIVERSITY OF ADVISORY BOARDS SURVEY - SCHUMACHER**

Snowden noted the diversity survey and results that had been distributed to VMAC and put on the agenda for discussion had stemmed from the Lane County Diversity Action Plan adopted by the Board in 2005. He explained the Board's idea was to give advisory committees the results of the diversity survey, and then ask the committees to discuss a specific list of questions and then forward a copy of their minutes back to the Board. [T2S1] It was clarified that some of the current VMAC members had not been on the Committee when the original survey had been taken.

The Committee discussed question #1 – “After reviewing the attached survey results, what are your thoughts on the makeup of your advisory committee?” Consensus was general happiness with diversity and makeup on VMAC with two exceptions, gender and age.

Question #2 – “Is your board/committee adequately representative of the communities it is set up to serve?” Committee suggestions for better representation included: farm workers, landscapers/nurseries, farmer representation is all organic growers/no representation from farmers who could be economically impacted by crop contamination from plants on the public right-of-way, chemical sensitivity, have members from more outlying areas. Discussion on time.

MOTION: Clements moved to table this discussion until the December meeting [to allow time for Agenda Item VIII, making a recommendation to the Board on the VMAC vacancies.] Sundquist seconded. All present voted in favor, motion carried.

**VIII. REVIEW VMAC APPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD – COMMITTEE/STAFF**

Snowden explained that since Sundquist had recently been appointed to fill a partial term of less than 6 months, per Lane Manual 3.506(2)(g), he was automatically appointed to the next full term; so members would be voting on their recommendations for three vacancies, not four.

Members reviewed some applications, then decided to go ahead and vote due to time constraints. J. Nelson reiterated that she would like VMAC to be able to interview applicants in person. Staff noted that would add another month into the timeline for filling vacancies. Staff distributed voting ballots and members each voted for three applicants.

Vote #1 – Dan Fuehring was the only applicant to receive a majority vote with 6 votes. The Committee re-voted, each voting for two applicants.

Vote #2 – Jan Wroncy was the only applicant to receive a majority vote with 5 votes. The Committee re-voted for one more applicant.

Vote #3 – Debra Miglioretto was the only applicant to receive a majority vote with 5 votes.

Staff will prepare the Board agenda packet to pass on the Committee's recommendation for Dan Fuehring, Jan Wroncy, and Debra Miglioretto to fill the 3 vacancies. This item will go before the Board of Commissioners on November 29, 2006.

The Committee discussed which remaining agenda items to cover at this meeting.

MOTION: Clements moved to forward VMAC agenda items IX and X to December. Discussion. No second. Committee consensus was to forward these two items to December.

**IX. ROAD MAINTENANCE UPDATE – A. NELSON/MANEWAL**

A. Nelson reported maintenance is gearing up for winter and they have their sanders and de-icers ready to go. He explained this includes bringing crews in at 3:00-4:00am on days when roads need sanding, etc.

Manewal reported on, and passed around photos of, a hazard tree removal on Blue River Drive at the bridge. This project included use of vegetation's top trim truck and the bridge crew's crane. He also reported that full-width mowing is continuing although they're somewhat behind due to being shorthanded; brush mowing is being fitted in; just finishing up some urban trimming and removals; not much storm cleanup, just a couple of trees down.

**X. IVM STATUS UPDATE - SCHUMACHER**

Schumacher reported PW lease agreement is up on the Waipuna and it will be returned tomorrow; native seeding projects have been completed on some ditch projects, also a coop project with the city of Eugene; he's finalizing the vegetation training program materials and the classes/training will take place December 5, 12, and 19.

**XI. REVIEW OF 2006 VMAC WORK PLAN – COMMITTEE/STAFF**

Updated 2006 Work Plan.

**XII. NEW BUSINESS**

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – WED., DECEMBER 13, 2006

- Report back – Board decision on VMAC appointments – Comm. Stewart/Staff
- Discussion – Diversity surveys (distributed at 10/11/06 VMAC meeting) – Schumacher
- Waipuna PowerPoint presentation (con't.) - Schumacher
- Adopt-a-Road for vegetation management/enhancement – Schumacher
- For packet – include copy of BMP's related to vegetation management, plus have one full copy available for review

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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Caroline Manewal, Recording Secretary