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**MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 13, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: James LaRue, Ross Penhallegon, John Sundquist, and Kai Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Arno Nelson, Orin Schumacher, Steve Smith

B/CC PRESENT:

GUESTS PRESENT:

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Kai Williams called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APPROVAL OF March 11, 2009 MEETING MINUTES POSTPONED TO JULY 8, 2009 MEETING.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

Schumacher informed the committee as to the status of the applications for new VMAC members at the BCC. The applications have been postponed twice by the BCC, as the board has been reviewing committee staffing, size, and structure with legal counsel. Technically, VMAC is a nine-member committee, but by informal direction by the BCC this committee was shifted to a seven-member staffing level. The new direction from the BCC is that all committees will be made up of five members that will be commissioner appointed and the remaining members will be elected at large by the committee pending application approval by the BCC. Nelson asked if any committees, such as Parks, have been staffed according to this new BCC direction.

Schumacher responded that the Parks committee was staffed in that manner. Additionally, he said that he had asked if VMAC was to start over to receive the five BCC appointed members or what the process would be since VMAC already has members. There was no definite answer at this time, but from conversations with the BCC the existing four members may be "appointed" by the BCC with one additional appointment, and the remaining two positions would be chosen by VMAC pending BCC approval.

LaRue asked what effect his participation on the committee has on the County, given current policies and the limited accomplishments of this committee.

Schumacher asked why he thought that was happening.

LaRue responded that people and other agencies are concerned about the County and how the County does things. When he speaks to non-county residents about Lane County and its

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committees, such as VMAC, they consider Lane County to be too controversial, a source of amusement, and that attitude becomes a problem when working with limited funds to get from point A to point B. It takes ten years to accomplish something, but has no rhyme or reason to what actually transpires or what you actually get -- like the West Eugene Parkway project. By the time that project is figured out, we'll either be back to the horse and buggy stage or we'll have teleportation. It makes him think that we're not making a lot of difference. These things are so controversial, but they don't need to be controversial.

Sundquist asked if this has been explained to the potential new VMAC members.

Schumacher answered in the negative.

Sundquist said that an explanation would help the potential members understand that their appointments at the moment are in limbo.

Schumacher replied that this committee serves the BCC and that perhaps it would be for them to communicate with the potential members as to the status of their applications for the VMAC.

Sundquist asked if he meant that each member should talk to each commissioner.

Schumacher replied that Commissioner Fleenor is the BCC Liaison to VMAC.

Williams stated to clarify that contacting the potential VMAC members regarding their appointment status should be done by the BCC not by this committee.

Sundquist said that the committee is told what to do by County staff not the BCC. The committee meets and is provided information by staff, so we are staff dependent.

Williams responded that it is the BCC that makes the actual decisions of who is or is not appointed to a committee.

Schumacher said that if there is communication to be had with the applicants for this committee, and since those applications are downtown with the BCC, and these are people that are trying to serve for them on a committee that the ball falls in their court (BCC) for any communication concerning their pending applications.

LaRue asked what would happen if the committee disappeared. County staff would still function. He wondered if in reality the committee is making a difference. He expressed that he would like the committee to get something accomplished. He said that the committee hasn't done any outreach to the public or anything else of note. He was concerned that the committee was failing in its advisory role to the BCC.

Schumacher responded that the County would move forward and there would be no change in the program, but that he understood his frustration.

Sundquist asked if the three new members, when appointed by the BCC, would energize the committee and help get things done.

LaRue responded that he had no idea, as he doesn't know them or what their thought processes or in which direction they may wish to go. He said that it boils down to what's the most efficient way that the County can get the work done with the money they have. He said that at times the committee bickers and doesn't get much accomplished towards those goals. He would like to have more input to what's going to happen down the road.

Schumacher replied that everyone has probably asked themselves the same question. He said from what he's witnessed that the group has gone down the same path time and time again, has not diversified the topics of conversation, and has not moved forward with a lot of action. The main conversation has been regarding the herbicide issue, which has changed a lot and continues to make an impact on our program. He thinks for the committee to serve and function well, that it should act more as a technical advisory committee. It should be involved with a diverse set of subjects and be more involved with the IVM issue and less with the herbicide issue. He thinks that the committee has become more of an advocacy committee rather than an advisory committee. That needs to change in order to be successful.

LaRue stated that when someone says that something is lethal, proof such as scientific fact backing up such a statement should be obtained. This applies to this committee and the commissioners. The County doesn't have to have its own scientific fact checking facility, as there

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are five trillion studies on all subjects available. The controversy arises when trying to choose which scientific study or conflicting studies to believe. We need to focus on a general consensus on some topic in order to get more accomplished. Additionally, we are not a road dust control committee, as that has nothing to do with a vegetation management committee.

Williams suggested that the group determine, if not now perhaps when the new members are appointed, a plan or agreed upon items to refer to in order to get more accomplished.

Nelson said staff also shares the frustration in the lack of direction and that varied IVM agenda items were suggested in order to help.

Sundquist said that we all have are different perspectives of reality, but he thinks we should try to see what going on here. If he feels that they are not bringing enough to the committee, then they should try harder. We do have a valuable function. The State is going to adopt some of Lane County's policies in the management of their roadsides in Lane County. The County can share its knowledge and equipment. He would like to discuss more about the coordination with the State on this topic and see if we could help with that process.

Williams said that we can go into the agenda, but with what Orin was saying about the committee members and some of the concerns raised it seemed that this discussion was important.

Sundquist asked if Orin could recap what his concerns were, again.

Schumacher responded that he didn't raise any concerns. He was just describing where we were at with the appointments of the new members and why it's taking so long. The board packets were prepared and submitted with recommendations to the BCC seven or eight weeks ago. The board removed it from their agenda for further deliberation. The packets were placed on the next agenda and then pushed again. Then it went to County Counsel because the BCC wanted to change how all of the advisory committees function in the County. The new process will be that five of the members on any sized committee will be each appointed by each of the commissioners. That five-person base group will then elect the remaining members "at large" and submit their recommendation along with the applications to the BCC for approval. He also said that the all committees, with some variation, will consist of seven members.

Sundquist asked if the new policy would apply to all standing committees.

Schumacher answered in the affirmative.

Sundquist asked if any appointments have been made utilizing the new formula.

Schumacher answered that the Parks Advisory Committee was staffed under this policy.

Sundquist asked why the appointments have not been made to this committee.

Schumacher said that now we have to prepare and submit a new board packet for the new committee members along with options for the BCC to review and determine how they wish to handle both the new appointments to the committee and the current members; that is, each commissioner could each "appoint" one of the four current members and one new appointee with the remainder elected "at large." The new BCC packet would be submitted in early June. The resubmission must be done, as our original packet was not drafted with the new BCC policy in mind.

Sundquist asked if the board was behind on appointing other committees, too.

Schumacher answered in the affirmative, as this is a new policy just reviewed by legal staff in the past couple of weeks. One aspect of the new policy is that the commissioners would no longer attend any committee meetings, but they would each have an "appointee" that would report to them on the committees actions.

Nelson added that this is just a guess on our part, as we are not privy to the BCC discussions. Orin will have to prepare a board packet that will provide them all the options for their review.

Sundquist asked if we would each report to a commissioner.

Schumacher responded that he didn't know, as that is for the BCC to determine.

Sundquist asked if there were seven members on the Parks committee.

Nelson said that he wasn't positive but he thinks that committee stayed with seven members, but

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that there might be a waste management group with nine members.

Schumacher added that there was one committee with fifteen members.

Nelson said that we have enough to do in our division, so that they haven't been monitoring the committees in other divisions.

Williams said that more subcommittees may be needed.

Schumacher answered that more subcommittees were possible. And that our committee started out as one of the largest committees in the County back in the 1990's, as there were eighteen members at that time.

Williams asked if the group wished to continue this discussion or move on to a new topic.

Penhallegon said that we are here to determine what we are going to do, what Orin needs to do his job, and to help him and everyone else become more effective. If that's not happening, then we're out of here. As he discussed with Arno, let's look for different weed control practices and see what works and do them in different places. Then we can take another weed and everyone spends a month doing research, finds pictures, send emails, and other educational and media outreach to publicize it. We have the resources to do it and the response would be phenomenal. Let's each take one or two of these cool exciting things and move forward.

Sundquist said that we would then need to change process a little bit.

Williams said that she agreed with what he was saying. It's a combination of that, the technical advisory committees, and then add into that the BCC desires; such as, the temperature of the community. She thinks that the committee can do those things.

Penhallegon said that would make our group more useful.

Schumacher said that he was very interested in that suggestion and they've brought up a couple of key items; such as, the temperature of the community. Make those the agenda items, and we could ask what the concerns are. The second part of the meeting would be the technical part where you deal with the specifics on certain projects. Everyone brings some knowledge or experience that adds to that part of the meeting. You almost break the meeting into the temperature of the community part, the technical advisory part, the part where we provide input to the County on what's going on, and a conclusion part where we sum up and provide direction for the specific project in order not to lose focus.

Sundquist stated that he thought that was a great idea.

Williams wrote on the whiteboard the four topics under discussion as follows: A. Temperature of the Community B. Technical Advisory Committee C. County Input and D. Summary/Conclusion.

Schumacher said that this would break up the meeting into four broader topics. Then we can pursue the technical part and resolve that issue before we jump to the next issue.

LaRue said that he knows something about grass and seeds, but he's not into the technical end of, let's say, here's thirteen different grass seeds that we should try to focus on for Lane County. He asked how can we can we advise the County on these topics.

Schumacher responded said that everyone here lives and works in Lane County and you see things around the County. When you bring those things to the group, you are reporting on the temperature of the community. We could look at the issue, grass mowing in the county for example, and deal with that concern and chase it down until it's done. Then we could look at the technical part; that is, how can we improve grass mowing in Lane County, what are you seeing as a negative as both residents of Lane County and members of this committee, and then focus on how it could be improved. It doesn't matter if you're an expert or not. The research you all do on different topics could be brought to the next meeting for a more focused discussion instead of jumping around and not getting anywhere. We need to refocus and address the issue with the four main topics and hit those points. At every meeting we'll go through temperature and that might be the larger part of the meeting as there are some big things going on. Then technical part could be discussed, but some days that might not be a large part of the discussion.

LaRue said that would give us a pulse of what's happening. And we could bring our knowledge of different topics; such as, roadside drainage and other topics, to the meeting. He would like to

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see some changes made.

Penhallegon said that the temperature is really what we're supposed to do. Each of us has an expertise to help Orin. We could find out what's going on out there, and although we might not know everything, we could bring our observation to the committee. Then the technical aspect could be addressed. This would break it down into two or three manageable steps that we can work on. We could spend time on one issue and get the public educated on that issue. And then we could move on to the next thing. There are hundreds of different things out there that we can accomplish, like different kinds of grasses. We can look and see what's out there. We could drive by a site for a perspective and the public can provide input to us, too. Then we could determine how to best handle that information in order to accomplish these things and move forward. We could then provide input for the BCC and tell them this is where we're going and what we're doing as an advisory committee. He thinks that this is an exciting opportunity to redirect and move the committee forward in a positive manner.

Schumacher responded that this would cover all topics and that we wouldn't walk away from any topic. This would just provide a better focus for the committee's discussions.

Williams proposed let's try to implement it for the next meeting. At the end of this meeting let's say that these are our four major headlines and determine where the items to be discussed fit within those for four categories and place them in there. We could look at those items in that broader picture, so we just won't be talking about them and then forgetting about them.

Penhallegon agreed that then we could say okay at the end and this is the piece that we're working on. This would assist us in accomplishing something worthwhile.

Sundquist asked if the group would have to pass an advisory board action or was it something that we're just going to do.

Nelson said that it's something that the group could come up with for what they want to do.

Williams said that someone could call a motion, but we're not a quorum.

Penhallegon said that it would be a decision made by the group.

Sundquist asked why they weren't a quorum.

Williams said that five members were the minimum required for a quorum.

Sundquist said that he thought it was four members for a quorum.

Schumacher explained that the committee is still actually a nine-person group, but acting under informal direction to have seven members so four would not be an official quorum.

Sundquist observed that the last three meetings have been run as though we were.

Schumacher replied that was the direction from the board.

Williams said that if that was the direction from the board, then there is no problem

Schumacher said that as our committee exists in Lane Code, we have not had a quorum. By board direction we've been running with that while they determine the structure of the committees. So now that they (BCC) have determined the structure of the committees, we will now have to operate under the new guidelines.

Sundquist asked if the group could address the second item under New Business, "Discuss BCC Recommendation for Monthly VMAC Meetings." He also asked if this item was from or to the commissioners.

Schumacher replied that it was from him.

Sundquist then suggested that at the end of the agenda we could work on the Work Plan and maybe adopt that suggestion. We aren't a quorum, so were just getting information and acting as a consultant at this point.

Williams said that if that's the board direction, then four would be a quorum for the moment.

Schumacher said that eventually the vacancies will be filled and that will address the quorum issue.

Nelson said that this has been going for some time now and has been frustrating for the group.

Schumacher said that they (BCC) could soon address our committee's status or they could push it back again as it depends on their workload.

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Sundquist echoed that they (BCC) have a lot on their hands at the moment; such as, budget and jail issues.

Motion: Williams moved that Agenda Items IV and V be postponed until the committee receives its new members and to postpone Agenda Item II until the next meeting to allow the members additional time for review. Sundquist seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

IV. REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEES FOR RETENTION OR DELETION

POSTPONED TO JULY 8, 2009 MEETING

V. REVIEW SUGGESTION TO FORM AN INVASIVE SUBCOMMITTEE

POSTPONED TO JULY 8, 2009 MEETING

VI. DISCUSS INVASIVE PLANTS PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND FUNDING

Williams suggested taking one weed, even if we're informally talking about it, pointing it out to the public and that she could put it on her wall at work. Let's start there.

LaRue said that the Register-Guard newspaper is always looking for new public awareness type items, as are the local television stations. Let's give them something to talk about.

Schumacher pointed out that next week is the State of Oregon Weed Awareness Week.

LaRue asked if the County does anything to celebrate Arbor Day.

Schumacher responded that the County worked with the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) on a tree-planting process and tree selection for planting along Beltline Highway towards the roundabout on Royal Avenue for Arbor Day. Our contribution consisted mainly reviewing their plantings and selection of trees. They went through the permit process and we gave them a public benefit permit, but generally the County hasn't done much for the holiday.

LaRue said that for next year we could plan to do a "right tree for the right place" or a "don't plant a poplar under a power line" or some kind of public educational outreach that would coincide with Arbor Day with television and radio coverage.

Schumacher said that is exactly what he is talking about. This is valuable input for him and the group so that we all can determine if we are doing what we should be doing.

LaRue said that at his nursery business they would celebrate Arbor Day by giving out free tree seedlings or set up a contest for the most creative planting. You can do fun things to let the people know and at the same time how the County is trying to maintain the right of ways so they cost less. The public can help out with those cost reductions by planting the proper types of trees, as that would save the County having to remove trees that are either of an improper type or were planted in the wrong location. And we could do it in a feel-good manner, by not coming down hard on people and educating them. Of course, some people that don't care about it will plant a row of poplars, but we could make a difference that way.

Williams suggested that be added to the Work Plan so we don't lose sight of that idea.

Penhallegon suggested that we could do a weed-of-the-month club or something like that for public outreach. The television, radio stations, and newspapers are always looking for those types of stories, and that would be a good way to get the word out to the public that we could use help in controlling the weed. An example of public awareness and involvement would be if we got one thousand people out to Mt. Pisgah to pull all the Scotch Broom that's out there. There are lots of things could be done with a minimal amount of money for advertising. As an advisory committee we could be involved in planning these types of activities and work with other groups in the area; such as, Arbor Day committees both local and state.

Sundquist said that he liked both Penhallegon and Williams suggestion to pick a weed. And he asked since this is State weed week if the committee could choose a weed tonight. We have lots of printed material on weeds, so we could pick the worst weed as a trial balloon to see how it goes. He then nominated Deadly Nightshade as test weed, but he is aware that it is not officially

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an invasive but that he doesn't like to see it.

Penhallegon said instead of picking the worst weed that we choose something that the public is more aware of and won't have anyone go out and pick a berry.

Williams said that Deadly Nightshade would be a good one for the Fall because of the red berries.

Sundquist said that he meant to say Poison Hemlock instead of Deadly Nightshade. There are different types of Nightshade, some people even make jam out of it.

Penhallegon said that green was poisonous and black is not. Poison Hemlock has some potential. We've eliminated Hogweed or least got it under control, as well as Star Thistle. He asked if there is one that we can grab for this process. Deadly Nightshade is a big one, but we can do it and it's easily identified but wondered if there's enough to show the control path. If we can work on one, then we can come back and say that we haven't seen Hogweed or Star Thistle and tell the community that they did a great job.

Williams asked about Herb Roberts

Schumacher answered that it was just transferred to the "A" list for ODA and there is another one which probably worse. He didn't know if they were charismatic in the weed world.

Williams said that she's seen people working in their gardens and this is something that commonly pops up. They're seeing them right now, so it might be a good time.

Penhallegon said the difficulty is in how to present it. It's kind of like Knotweed as it's huge with stalks like bamboo. It's a simple educational situation. He said that we have to find the special things that people can get without much difficulty. For example, we found that there were six different weeds that look almost exactly like the Star Thistle.

Sundquist said that if we do choose a weed then the public can report it to the County or the Extension Service. He then asked what weeds were potentially good candidates for this type of outreach.

Schumacher responded that Knotweed as discussed earlier in the meeting is a good candidate. There is a lot of information available on that weed, it's a very common weed, it can stand three feet over their heads, and people are using it now for landscaping as it's a fast-growing shade plant.

Sundquist said that he's seen it at the University of Oregon Landscape Department years ago.

Schumacher said that it's the new, modern, faster-growing bamboo.

Sundquist disagreed and said that it shouldn't be compared to Knotweed. Bamboo is a monsoon-climate plant, so it won't run unless you pour a lot of water around it. The Mediterranean weeds don't need the Summer rain as bamboo does.

Schumacher said that they are being used for the same purpose in landscaping, as they're both being used for quick shade.

Williams asked if Sundquist, as he had to leave early, thought that Knotweed was a good weed for the committee to pursue.

Sundquist answered yes, but since we've heard that it's herbal and medicinal that maybe we should come up with a couple of recipes for it. He'd also like to identify Poison Hemlock (*Conium Maculatum*) because it's so dangerous and in a lot of places. He removes it as soon as he sees any, but he wondered if it was safe to attack a large stand of it with a weed whacker and wondered if it would splatter and spread.

Penhallegon said that it would not be a big deal.

Williams asked if it was a native plant.

Sundquist said that he did not think it was a native plant.

Schumacher said that as he recalled it was a native plant.

Williams said that it's one of those world-wide plants.

Sundquist said that he could live with choosing that plant, but the bottom line is how to get rid of it. He said that the group could warn people to not adopt this weed because they might not be able to get rid of it later without using a weed-killing chemical. He said that he'd look for some

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recipes and would email them if he found any.

Williams wondered if some of the nurseries would be interested in helping with this outreach.

Penhallegon answered in the affirmative.

Williams said that the weed of the month outreach wouldn't impact their sales.

Penhallegon added that he thought that the nurseries would assist, as they already have some similar programs; such as, "Right Plant, Right Place". Ours would be a longer, bigger six-month and ongoing program, but he thought that they'd participate. He already appears on television twice a week so he would be able to spread the word. We ask the television stations or newspaper to come to a site for the outreach or provide them with the information. Then the story would appear four times per year in either the Home & Garden section or on the front page of the City section. If we only got one front page even that would be great. This type of outreach is not difficult; we just have to figure out what we want to do. Once a month, once a quarter in newspapers or on television. They are always looking for this type of opportunity.

LaRue said that we can also work with the nurseries by placing posters at their sites. The posters could be the "Wanted Dead or Alive" or "If You've Seen This Plant" types. Most of the nurseries would be willing to help. Maybe we could work with the OAN (Oregon Associations of Nurseries) on a weed of the month or a noxious weed program. They don't want invasive weeds in their nurseries, so they would be good allies as would grass-seed farmers.

Williams said that our meeting every two months would facilitate outreach for six weeds per year. She then said that Knotweed will be our first weed, as that is the general consensus of the group. Word of mouth is one method.

Nelson suggested posting on the website and suggested that an "Amber Alert" for a weed would be good if that was possible.

Penhallegon said that a "weed alert" for Lane County would be a good outreach method. If we think through this right, we could come up with many different and exciting methods to accomplish our goals.

Williams said that we have word of mouth as one outreach method and asked for other ideas.

Schumacher said that we could coordinate with the State of Oregon during Weed Awareness Week or one of their other outreaches.

Williams said that a picture or video with somebody standing under one of the weeds would be effective.

LaRue said if we did have such a picture made into a poster that we could take them to the Farmer's Market, Mt. Pisgah Wildflower Show and other venues, too.

Nelson mentioned that the cost of the prints would be a question, but that a small cost would be workable in the budget.

LaRue asked if any Federal funds were available.

Schumacher said that most grants were aimed at control rather than educational outreach.

Williams said that posters might be cheaper than printing handout flyers.

Schumacher said that there are many posters and other materials already available on the internet. We would have to download and take it to get printed. That would be cheaper than trying to develop and create our own posters.

Williams said that if the group did twenty or thirty for posting at different sites that would be cheaper than handout flyers.

Nelson agreed that could be worked into the budget.

Penhallegon repeated that this is a workable approach. Taking posters to the nurseries is an example of an easy method to get the word out. We each take a poster to some nurseries, LaRue takes it to the OAN, and then we'll push the next one for the next six month period.

LaRue said that Knotweed is something that is readily recognizable by the public and it is a serious problem.

Williams reiterated that the group would adopt Knotweed for the next four to six months.

Penhallegon said that would give us time to investigate different options. Let's see where the

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television goes and then we could explore different options if necessary.

Nelson said we could see pick different weeds during the Summer or Fall seasons.

Schumacher said that the one-species approach would be better than multiple species.

Nelson agreed and said that's how the road crews are trained. If you try to cover too many weeds at once, everyone gets overloaded.

LaRue said that he wasn't sure where it came from, but that he's seen a single-ring picture post card reference guide that someone puts out.

Schumacher said that the ODA issues them in cooperation with other agencies. The crews like them as they can see the weed on the card and it helps make the weeds stand out: Knotweed, you can't miss it.

Penhallegon said that once you zero in on that one thing and identify it, you instantly begin to catch it and see it. That's part of the opportunity. Once we show people then all of sudden instead of a yellow flower with a nice big leaf, they see a weed. It's an easy method to show them that it's out there. They know it's out there, but they didn't know what it was. Now they know.

Williams said for next meeting if we start doing these things, maybe we what we can do is to have it ready at the next meeting. Maybe we could decide on a poster by emailing suggestions back and forth that we've found this or that poster. And then after agreeing on one, we could get it produced for the next meeting, maybe twenty or thirty copies if it's in the budget, then we could split them up between us and then we could distribute them.

Schumacher agreed and expressed satisfaction on the tangible outcome of the discussion.

Williams said it was time to move to the next agenda item.

VII. EQUIPMENT DISPLAY

POSTPONED UNTIL NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED BY BCC

VIII. IVM COORDINATOR UPDATE

Schumacher reported that we're getting close to finishing up the road preps for the Summer season. At the coast the crews out there have been doing a lot of tree work, and now we're heading down to the Cottage Grove area to finish up there. Again, that's just the on the roads that haven't been maintained well enough. When our road equipment goes through, the roads will be ready and there won't be any damage to the equipment as they've been brush mowed.

LaRue asked if the County has anything to do with the reconstruction work on Hwy 126 between Mapleton and Florence.

Schumacher answered that it the State of Oregon was doing that job. Then continued and said that they were now full tilt into grass season. They've been kind of far flung but now they're getting back on track. He's running every machine they've got every day now trying to catch up on lost ground.

LaRue said that the grass is growing faster than you can get to it because it's wet.

Schumacher agreed that the mowing slows down when it gets wet. We've had sun then wet, now we're going to get another sun then wet period. Additionally, we've hired four new people, getting back to the guardrail work and we've been working in the urban areas trying to get the planter strips back under control.

LaRue asked where the money came from to hire people.

Schumacher said that when we lost the herbicides that was one of the things that he put into that package. If they take away that option from what we had proposed; which was, guardrails, noxious weeds, and partnerships with other agencies, then we asked for \$118,000, which is enough for two FTE's and that is equivalent to seven seasonal, six-month hires. We were going to ask for two full-time employees, but with our growing season in Spring and Summer for a lot of the planters we shifted it to seasonal employees. Now we get seven seasonal employees each

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year to offset that cost.

LaRue asked if the County was holding up their part of the deal.

Nelson said that so far it's been included in the budget each year, but that doesn't automatically ensure that it will be approved for any subsequent years.

LaRue asked if the Federal monies have come to the County this year.

Nelson said that the monies have arrived; however, it's a four-year step down with ninety percent this year, and reduced each year of the remaining years.

LaRue asked what happens after the four-year period.

Nelson responded that there will be major cuts unless something is passed to replace it.

LaRue asked if that meant closing roads.

Nelson said it would mean cuts in public service and it would depend on how they want to drop the levels of service – by backing off the local roads, etc. It is a huge issue.

Schumacher said that we've already had seven seasonal employees come on duty. We've got to every guardrail in Lane County, except for a few obscure ones, and we've seen the need. We did go through with brush machines last year and that's a cost to run them. We chased them with weed eating crews, but hopefully we can keep those people coming every year through the growing season. If you look at Delta there used to be mounds of blackberries that were creeping in and we cut them back. We had to hit it three times with the weed eating crews, and it's already back up to a guardrail height.

LaRue said that blackberries can grow almost three feet per day.

Schumacher said that they grow, for some reason, under guardrails.

LaRue suggested that they grow under guardrails due to seeds dropping from birds that sit on the guardrails.

Nelson said that they grow well in those locations due to their location around water and in a damp climate.

Schumacher said that the crews are doing great and if we keep those seven people we can keep that part of the job at a manageable level, but that there are other parts where we're not keeping up and cost is another issue. Again, we'll see how this year goes.

LaRue said that then you can get it down to where you have that annual growth that's easier to cut, it goes a lot faster.

Schumacher agreed and said that the original crew is done in two weeks. Then we'll get a new crew coming on, with four of the seven coming on and then the others on July 1. Another thing I want to get on here is the technical part is this transition of people managing the urban zones. The city has a luxury as they have a median crew hired to deal with just medians.

LaRue asked if he meant the traffic circle at Green Hill Road.

Schumacher answered in the negative.

LaRue said that they've planted a big, giant Sequoia tree there. It's a twenty-five to thirty foot tree.

Nelson said that if you go to other places like Bandon, they have objects of art there. Here our engineers tell us that if we plant anything on purpose within the clear zone and if someone gets hurt, we could be liable.

LaRue said that he guessed that you'd have to weigh the benefits against any negatives for it.

Schumacher said that he didn't see us doing any urban vegetation improvements because of the problem of trying to keep up with the maintenance requirements.

Williams asked about the status of Game Farm Road.

Schumacher replied that we are back in discussions there, and that we have a few others to discuss in the future -- River Road, Irvington Road and Beacon. You have all these arterials into city limits that don't accommodate the equipment we have, so we're trying to struggle through how we'll do it.

LaRue asked how much it cost the County for the dog park out there.

Nelson said five and one-half million dollars.

APPROVED: _____

LaRue asked how did it come about that County had to spend that much money for roadside drainage.

Nelson answered permits and environmental permits as required and unfunded mandates.

LaRue said that it seems that you have all that money that could have been used there and it's used for something else. It's one of those things that get so elaborate in some of the requirements that you just choke to death on the costs.

Nelson said that when you see a big project we'll do, to different scales, fifteen or twenty of those that have lots of money tied behind them. Fish culvert projects for example.

LaRue asked if we could restore runs of fish without enormous investment.

Nelson said that we want to replace the culverts but when we get permitting process it costs us thousands and thousands of dollars. We have to do it, but just don't want to pay the five or six thousand dollars in culvert permits.

LaRue said that he was thinking about when removing two dams to restore it for a salmon running up the river. He wondered what permits were required for doing that.

Nelson said that they've probably been working on that for ten years.

Schumacher said that when he had a business before working for the County. They were awarded a contract with Bonneville Power to do dam service for endangered species and that was eight years ago. And the process was already going, as we were one of the latter phases of that process. And as part of their permitting, they can't do any impact where there are endangered species or if they find any they have to mitigate or change plans. We were one of the contractors that ran around all the way from the Columbia River to Southern Oregon for all those small dams that they were contemplating taking out.

LaRue asked if the dams along the Klamath River were taken out.

Nelson said that they had many permit issues with those dams. And the cost.

LaRue said that there were two dams within fifteen miles that they were going to take out and they'd been in since the 1920's. The sediment behind the upper one was substantial. They weren't going to blow the dams. They just cut a hole in the base and gradually dropped it down. They said that they knew that they were going to have downriver flooding and that they'd have to get the silt restored slowly and start rebuilding from those materials. It was a win, win, win, lose scenario for the micro systems already in place.

Nelson said it takes typically, once a project is identified, two years or a minimum of eighteen months to get the permits for a project that would last a day or two, and something like wetlands can add even more time and cost to the project.

Williams said it was time to move on to the Agenda Item IX.

IX. ROAD MAINTENANCE MANAGER UPDATE

Nelson said that we are prepping approximately eighty-five miles of road for chip seal and we should be close to being complete by the first of June. That's typically culvert work, replacing rotten culverts, ditching for drainage, and then Orin's crews come through and brush mow. We're on time for that due to not having a bad winter. We have approximately twenty-five miles of overlay roads with kind of the same kind of work, drainage ditches and culverts, and we're on schedule. Now we're starting to gear up to hire Summer help for those projects. Our paving crew is gearing up for June 1 and our chip seal crew for the eighty-five miles of road has a date of July 1.

LaRue asked if the price of asphalt gone down.

Nelson said that the cost has come down approximately twenty percent, but we have escalation clause. Right now it's down but by the time we using it you don't know. What they do is take the raw price of asphalt, put out some bids, and they give you a price per ton with a market value.

LaRue asked if we were working on Alvadore Road.

Nelson said that they were chip sealing that area.

LaRue asked if that wasn't just done a couple of years ago.

APPROVED: _____

Nelson replied that it was more like eight years. We get seven to ten years out of those and the County has a big chip seal program and it probably appears early to most people, but a chip seal will cost approximately twenty percent of an overlay. It's really not early, but rather twenty cents on the dollar compared other to people that wait five years too long and that increases the cost.

LaRue asked if it would be like Crest Drive.

Nelson responded that job is a total reconstruction and the cost might be around thirty dollars per square yard.

LaRue asked when doing Alvadore Road if we are going through looking for spots with cracks that need repair.

Nelson said that we have a pavement management program where we watch the deterioration that to your eye won't see, but when you get down you start seeing light cracking and things like that we'll crack seal. We'll go through with our paving program, typically a year before; we'll go smooth out any rough spots and any other problem spots. He's identified all the roads we'll be working on in 2010.

LaRue said that we're still saving money by hitting them early.

Nelson agreed and said by hitting them early, that's where you save the money. The City of Eugene has backed away from their preservation program, so now they're facing hundreds of millions of dollars as every fix is now an overlay.

X. ILLEGAL ROADSIDE SPRAY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Williams suggested this item be postponed to the next meeting because Sundquist had to leave early.

LaRue said that he agreed but that he had one comment. We should have somebody from the County go to one of the grass seed farmer's meeting to express our concern about illegal roadside spraying and how can we work together to solve it. He's spoken to a couple of farmers and they've said to let them know when it gets to that point, but he says then it's too late. He has noted a lot of spraying this year on Alvadore and Clear Lake Roads. It's far more than he's ever seen before. He thinks that if we can approach the problem from a positive angle by saying that we understand that you have to make money but what you're doing is against County Code. However, they say that the County hasn't done anything about it so they'll lose the value of the seeds.

Nelson said that they could come down and talk to their commissioners, too. If you force that or educate them on what they're doing is illegal, it's no different than them coming down to the commissioners.

Williams said that it is important to work together.

POSTPONED TO JULY 8, 2009 MEETING

XI. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND FUNDING

DELETED: DUPLICATE OF AGENDA ITEM VI.

FINAL

APPROVED: _____

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Steve Smith
Recording Secretary