

DATE: April 25, 2019
TO: Christine Moody
FROM: Alex Cuyler
RE: Lane County Contract with Smith Dawson and Andrews, Washington DC

Christine: It is my understanding that a member of the Lane County Budget Committee has requested some additional information on the work that is performed on our behalf by Smith Dawson and Andrews. I provide an overview below. If not sufficient, please advise. –AC

Smith, Dawson, and Andrews is a public affairs firm located in Washington DC. Its principals were former employees of the US Department of Transportation during the presidency of Jimmy Carter, and formed the firm in 1981. Lane County has had a 25 year relationship with this firm as part of its so-termed “United Front”. The United Front was the brainchild of Linda Lynch, when she ran the Government Affairs shop at the Lane Transit District. This effort was formed to more effectively secure congressionally directed spending (aka “earmarks”) by developing coordinated projects locally to present to our federal delegation. Earmarks essentially were halted in 2011 and since that time the United Front has worked on policy and budgetary issues. Smith Dawson Andrews has individual contracts with the cities of Eugene and Springfield, the Lane Transit District, Lane County, Willamalane Parks and Recreation District, and the Springfield School District. By arranging our work in this manner, each entity is afforded access to federal lobbyists which would otherwise be significantly more expensive.

Here are a number of examples of their ongoing and standard work:

- Once per week regular phone conference with the firm to update each other on both local and federal issues.
- Once annual trip where their staff (typically three lobbyists) travel to Lane County to meet with United Front staff and elected officials.
- Once annual trip to Washington DC where we collectively schedule and attend some twenty to thirty meetings with our delegation, staff, and agencies.
- A regular (weekly) federal grants announcement targeted at our interests.
- Submission of annual programmatic requests our delegation utilizes for budgetary purposes.
- Assistance with grant applications and letters of support.
- Federal policy and budget research.

Here is examples of current work they have undertaken for Lane County:

- Monitoring the development of Senator Wyden’s Federal Forest Plan
- Energy and Water (one of twelve regular appropriations bills) language to provide funding for additional environmental analysis on Hwy 126W (stemming from work they performed for us in 2017 that secured language in WRDA for Fern Ridge Reservoir (water resource improvements)
- Benefit Cost Analysis research for Territorial Highway BUILD grant with US DOT, application due July 15, 2019.
- Leaburg Fish Hatchery research: Sport Fish Restoration Program, telephonic meeting with staff of Senator Merkley, and research into how USACE sells/donates properties to state or local governments.
- Reviewing the GSA structure to best ascertain how Lane County can partner with the federal government to develop surface or structure parking at 6th and High St.