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Memorandum Date: May 27, 2009

Order Date:

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Orin Schumacher, Vegetation Management Coordinator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: IN THE MATTER OF CLARIFYING THE STRUCTURE AND FUTURE OF THE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (VMAC).

I. MOTION

Discuss and provide Board direction to County staff regarding the future structure and appointment process for the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Board is being asked to clarify the structure and future of the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee at Lane County. The Vegetation Management Advisory Committee currently has five vacancies as it is structured at this time, with four current members serving on the Committee. There has been previous discussion at the Board level to restructure Advisory Committees County wide, looking to reduce Committee member numbers and also to modify the appointment process for future members. Public Works is seeking direction from the Board of Health in moving forward to make the Board directed changes and fill the remaining vacancies on the Committee.

III. BACKGROUND / IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The Vegetation Management Advisory Committee (VMAC) has been operating since the Fall of 2007 with one vacancy, leaving eight positions filled and one vacant with the unfortunate passing of Douglas Mosier. This position had been left vacant based upon discussions at the Board level of looking to reduce County Committee's to a standard level of seven (7) members per committee Countywide. County staff and Commissioners corresponded regarding this matter, and to date no formal resolution has been made regarding the membership numbers for the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee, along with other Committee's serving the Board.

The recent term expirations of Chris Melotti, Mike Koivula and Jan Nelson on 11/15/08, along with the resignation of Peter Graham have left the Committee with five (5) vacancies. A Notice of Vacancy was advertised twice from 11/8/08 to 1/7/09 in accordance with County policy, and a total of four (4) applications were received for five (5) vacancies on the Committee. At the January 21, 2009 VMAC meeting the four

applicants were discussed, and the Committee has put forth its recommendation to appoint Jan Wroncy, Jan Nelson and Marilyn Lowe to fill three of the current five (5) vacant positions.

Recent Board action made fundamental changes to the Committee appointment process and structure of Committee's County wide. Public Works staff is seeking direction from the Board of Commissioners to move forward with the structure and appointment process of the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee. The current Vegetation Management Advisory Committee consists of the following:

Membership Positions:	<u>9</u>	Current Vacancies:	<u>5</u>
Total Applications Received:	<u>4</u>	Term Commitment:	<u>4 Years</u>
Commissioner Rep Mandated:	<u>None</u>		

Expired Terms: Chris Mellotti Jan Nelson
 Mike Koivula
Resigned Peter Graham

Staff Liaison: Orin Schumacher, Vegetation Management Coordinator
 Lane County Public Works – Engineering (682-6908)

COMMITTEE CHARGE: Acts as a forum for public input into the County's Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) Program. Reviews vegetation management needs and related issues and makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Works with Public Works staff to establish vegetation management priorities in keeping with available funds. Evaluates management activities beyond the scope of routine maintenance. Reviews the Program standards and policies, including long-range planning for future Program needs and prepares recommendations for Board action as necessary. Serves as liaison group in representing the vegetation management concerns of the community to the Board and representing Board decisions to the community.

B. Policy Issues

The VMAC was originally intended to represent a broad spectrum of opinions and needs related to vegetation management along County roadsides. Since the Committee's inception, the Board of Commissioners has regularly reiterated its desire to retain a "balanced" membership. "Balance" has been characterized as balance in gender, geographic representation views, and/or education/professional background. The one constant was a desire on the Board's part to retain a balance on the Committee with respect to members' philosophy toward the use of chemicals as a vegetation control method. Lane County Department of Public Works is operating under an indefinite moratorium on the use of herbicides for roadside vegetation management. In turn the issue of balance on this issue may have been reduced, but it is still an issue of importance to specific committee members, and VMAC has formed a sub-committee called the "Illegal roadside spray committee" to act as a forum for herbicide issues within Lane County. Articulation of what constitutes "balance" on the Committee, and the mix of new members that will best further the goal of balance, is a policy choice to be made by the Board of County Commissioners.

C. Board Goals

The County Strategic Plan, Part IV states in part that “Lane County Government exists to ensure the safety and well being of the people who live, work and visit our communities.” Appointment of citizens to the VMAC is part of the County’s effort to fulfill the stated goal of “providing opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making, voting, volunteerism and civic and community involvement.”

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

There is no overriding financial or resource issue associated with these appointments. Members of the Committee are unpaid volunteers, although those who reside a significant distance from the monthly meeting locations are eligible for mileage reimbursement.

E. Analysis

Recruitment efforts have been less than satisfying for vacant committee seats. The County moved forward with two recruitment efforts and only received four applicants. On March 11, 2009, the Committee discussed and voted on the applicants listed below:

Applicants:	Wroncy, Jan	Bowers, Lynn
	Nelson, Jan	
	Lowe, Marilyn	

Following deliberation, the Committee recommended Jan Wroncy, Jan Nelson and Marilyn Lowe to the Board as their choices respectively, to fill the three current vacancies.

F. Alternatives/Options

1. Reduce the Committee from the current level of nine members to that of seven members and fill or appoint remaining vacancies on the Committee.
2. Leave the Committee at the current level of nine members and fill or appoint the remaining vacancies
3. Evaluate the continued need for the Committee and direct staff action as needed.
4. Provide other Board Direction.

V. TIMING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Vegetation Management Advisory Committee has existed with five vacancies for approx. six months. Any appointments or structural changes to the Committee will be

discussed at the July 8th, 2009 meeting of the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Decide on a choice that best serves the needs of the Board.

VII. FOLLOW-UP

Staff will work with the Board of Commissioners in moving forward with any Committee changes or Committee appointments.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

N/A