

**MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 13, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Melotti, Ross Penhallegon, Mike Koivula. Jan Nelson, John Sundquist, Peter Graham

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kai Williams, Jim LaRue

STAFF PRESENT: John Petsch, Orin Schumacher, Debby Woodruff, Marsha Miller

B/CC PRESENT:

GUESTS PRESENT:

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Koivula called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Melotti moved to approve the minutes of July 9, 2008 as amended. Sundquist seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

J. Nelson asked if Schumacher had met with both the Board & Health Advisory & Schumacher stated he had not met with the HAC, but had met with the Roads Advisory Committee.

Sundquist asked to have a regular Vegetation Manager's Report on the Agenda. Schumacher stated that he will do that on future agendas.

J.Nelson asked to move her agenda item (#IX) up on the agenda since she has to leave early.

IV. BOARD OF HEALTH – VMAC BOARD PACKET - SCHUMACHER

Schumacher explained that the Board voted 5-0 for Public Works to come back to them on August 20th with a proposal to restructure or disband VMAC. He submitted 4 alternative options on the Board Packet.

1. Disband the committee & direct all issues regarding roadside vegetation management to the Roads Advisory Committee (RAC) & any health related issues to the Health Advisory Committee. That would include no additional staffing. This stems from a year ago that the Commissioners put a halt to filling any vacancies on committees. They want to downsize all committees.
2. Disband the committee & put Board designated volunteers from the public on the committees.
3. Look at the volume of meetings. Keep the committee the way it is but less frequency of meetings.
4. Take no action and change nothing.

Schumacher read the recommendation staff gave to the Board:” Staff recommends the Board of Health review and select the option that is appropriate to Board goals. The VMAC is a Board created entity and it would be inappropriate for staff to provide a recommendation regarding a committee that was established to act as a liaison group to the Board of County Commissioners. County staff will support in full any decision made by the Board of Health regarding VMAC. Should the Board of Health choose option 2 or 3, the appropriate Board order will be placed on a future Board agenda.”

Schumacher explained that this would go before the Board of Health.

Sundquist asked if the vote by the Board was an official vote.

Schumacher stated it was and it was unanimous.

Sundquist asked for a show of hands by members voting to keep the committee and if members would want to serve on the committee.

Members all stated their votes on whether to disband, whether they would want to serve on the committee and which option they chose.

Motion: Sundquist made a motion that members indicate what their choices would be on the 3 issues.

Koivula seconded the motion. VOTE: 5 in favor, 1 against

Options:

1. disband VMAC
2. continue to serve on VMAC
3. choice of the 4 options in the board packet, paragraph 1, item 4

Sundquist: no, yes, #4

Graham: no, no, #3

Melotti: yes, no, #1

J. Nelson: no, yes, #4

Koivula: no, yes, #3.75

Penhallegon: yes, no , #1

Melotti stated he thought other committee members who are not present at this meeting, be given the opportunity to be heard.

Koivula stated that they have every option to communicate and what the committee already has so far should be presented to the Board.

V. ITEMIZED COST OF VMAC - ORIN

Schumacher handed out Cost Summaries, 1 from 2006 and from 2007. Orin explained how to read the summary and what the information means in regards to VMAC and vegetation costs.

VI. ILLEGAL SPRAY COMMITTEE – J. NELSON

J. Nelson stated that she contacted the Dept. of Ag. and they don't want to deal with it and don't have the time and money. They are responsible for enforcement. She contacted Fleenor and he expressed a lack of interest at this time. She wants to contact a friendly commissioner who is willing to help decide how to handle the illegal sprayers.

Melotti suggested J. Nelson contact NCAP (Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides). They may be able to help

J. Nelson suggested possibly using handouts. She is postponing any activity until after the growing season.

Penhallegon explained that the problem is there is no entity to enforce the no spray problem. He explained that education may be the way to deal with it.

VII. NSA COST – SUNDQUIST

Sundquist stated that VMAC voted a year ago to support the ending of the steel post that delineates the no spray areas. At the last meeting he brought up the point that there will be no more spraying for the indefinite future and this would be a cost savings. No more maintenance would be required on the post and they are all listed on a database. The spray markers aren't accurate so why not take them out now.

Schumacher explained that the field marking could go away and they could use a computer system to upload the information. They discovered some problems with that and some changes still need to be made. He does want to get the signs out. If there was a need for a no spray program in the future again, they could mail them out as they usually do and ask some new questions relating to their tax lot. They would get more specific information on a new form. Removing the signs would eliminate vandalism, mechanical damage and mowing would be more efficient.

Sundquist stated that at the last meeting, Schumacher did not support this program. He stated that Schumacher opposed going to a virtual system.

Schumacher explained that he did not oppose his own proposal.

VIII. LIGIN ISSUE - PETSCH

Petsch handed out a MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) on Lignosulfonate. He explained that the road crews have been using it for dust oiling for at least 4 years on about 26 miles of gravel road. Each year they try to get those gravel roads hard surfaced so they don't have to dust oil. J.Nelson explained that Jan Wroncy had stated that this product has dioxin in it and the lignin is a wood bi-product and dioxin comes from chlorine used in pulp mills so then lignin would have dioxin in it.

Koivula stated that based on the MSDS, dioxin is not listed.

Petsch explained that Sure Crop is the company the lignin is purchased from.

Schumacher explained that this issue is not a vegetation issue, but rather a road issue.

Petsch explained the crews put gravel berms up when they are using the lignin to prevent any possibility of runoff. He explained that this product has been approved by NOAA Fisheries and is biodegradable and organic. It is applied on a regular basis based on the list. Not every gravel road is done.

IX. UPDATE ON N. GAME FARM - MELOTTI

Melotti explained he had nothing to update other than the County crew did a marvelous job mowing there. He looked at the site more closely and decided that manual removal was not feasible. He suggested this item be removed from future agendas.

Schumacher explained that with their new tractor, they have been able to do a much better job.

X. UPDATE ON ODOT – SUNDQUIST

Sundquist stated they had requested records and does not know if they plan to integrate the IVM program into the no spray proposal. He believes the unanimous vote from VMAC favoring the proposal helped to get it there. He is trying to arrange a meeting with some ODOT vegetation people to get more specifics. This is regarding the ODOT no spray area on the coast and Hwy 101. All of state maintained roads in Lane County would be part of this program at a cost of \$2.5 million for staffing, equipment, etc.

Koivula stated he would like to see a presentation on this program.

Schumacher explained that this came about as ODOTs response to reduction of chemical use. Lane County is the model county. The OTC (Oregon Transportation Commission) approved this budget option package. He was invited to the "Oregon Statewide Invasive Species" meeting with about 200 people and Governor Kulongoski. He stated there were attorneys from the EPA, and other agencies at the meeting.

XI. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT REPORT - SCHUMACHER

Schumacher stated that they have purchased new weed eaters. They have completed the guardrails in Zone 1. Blackberry bushes are already growing over the guardrails. The City of Eugene is now working on them too. He stated that he has another Board packet which asked for additional funding for staffing. He asked for 7, 6 month employees. He will be able to use these people year round. He explained how committed the crews have been to get the work done. They have been getting a lot of positive feedback and comments from the public. He explained the new policy regarding wild flowers and that crews mow them if they are intermixed with the grasses, otherwise they leave them. The public has been very positive to this change. He explained that the proposal to pull the no spray post will be most likely in the winter time. Sundquist asked about the tour the committee had talked about at previous meetings. Schumacher explained that the committee needs to put this together and he will get the van and they can take a tour. Sundquist is interested in getting invasive weed ID plots at the County Fairgrounds so the community can see what the weeds look like and get more information on them.

XII. ROAD MAINTENANCE UPDATE - PETSCH

Petsch stated that by the end of next week all the chip sealing will be done. This was about 100 miles of County roads and 47 miles of ODOT roads. The fish culvert projects are in full force until mid September. They have about 4-5 projects to complete. They did one at Siuslaw Rd recently. They try to get grants to help with cost when available.

XIII. UPDATE WORK PLAN

Discussion/Action topics added and work plan will be updated and distributed at next meeting.

IV. NEW ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – WED. SEPT 10, 2008

1. Itemized cost of VMAC – staff
2. IVM report
3. Work Plan Update
4. Lignin – John
5. Discussion on Board's Decision

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Debby Woodruff, Recording Secretary