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**MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 11, 2009**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Marsha Miller, Orin Schumacher, Steve Smith

B/CC PRESENT:

GUESTS PRESENT:

PUBLIC PRESENT: Jan Nelson

Kai Williams called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jan Nelson suggested that since there have been no appointments to the committee by the BCC that the election of new officers (item XIII) be delayed until next month at a special meeting. Kai Williams said that she was going to make the same suggestion. John Sundquist suggested that calling an additional meeting would require returning the committee to a monthly meeting schedule. Jan Nelson said that the bylaws allow members to request special meetings. Kai Williams suggested that there are additional factors to consider on this topic, and asked if Ms. Nelson had any other comments. Jan Nelson said that since it's the time of year to get some maintenance done regarding our subcommittee. We need to meet with the BCC or legal staff to determine how to set up plans to deal with private parties using illegal spraying. We need to have a full committee to approve or comment on those plans.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: James LaRue moved to approve the Minutes of January 21,2009, as written/corrected. Ross Penhallegon seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

Williams suggested that agenda Item IV (Review Subcommittees for Retention or Deletion), Item V (Review Suggestion to Form Invasive Subcommittee), and Item VIII (Election of New Officers) be moved to the next meeting in May 2009.

Sundquist supported the suggestion, but wanted to know more about Item V; that is, what is currently being done about invasives. He wondered if this could be covered in the IVM Coordinator Update.

Williams asked if this topic could be covered by the IVM Coordinator during his presentation.

Schumacher responded in the affirmative.

Motion: Williams moved to move agenda Items Nos. IV, V, and VIII to the May 2009 meeting. Sundquist supported the motion provided there is not an April meeting as will be discussed under Item X. Sundquist seconded. **VOTE:** 4 in favor. Motion Passed.

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IV. REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEES FOR RETENTION OR DELETION

MOVED TO MAY 11, 2009 MEETING AGENDA

V. REVIEW SUGGESTION TO FORM AN INVASIVE SUBCOMMITTEE

MOVED TO MAY 11, 2009 MEETING AGENDA

VI. DISCUSS INVASIVE PLANTS PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND FUNDING

Sundquist stated that he was thinking, as an example, of how the Garden of Horrors at the County fairgrounds was used. Perhaps an exhibit at the fairgrounds (or a traveling exhibit) could be used to educate the public at different times of the year to show the most dangerous plants, what they look like, and provide information on reporting locations of invasive weeds and how the County deals with them. It would be a really cool project. And the only worry that people might have is what if the weeds go to seed? He suggested that there are folks around that are ready to deal with that problem; such as, the Master Gardeners, the VMAC committee members, and the maintenance crew. We should not let that concern get in the way of a beneficial public outreach. He suggested that this idea be run by Commissioner Sorenson, whose district covers the fairgrounds, and the rest of the BCC to see what they think of the idea. Submitting the concept to the BCC would show that the committee has taken a step forward in its attempts to deal with invasives. The BCC could participate in the process by asking the committee how much funding would be needed and how much ground space would be needed for a flower bed. LaRue expressed his concern that an invasive plant is an invasive plant, and that it may spread from the educational garden area by means of seeds or underground root systems. Then it would be everywhere and how to get rid of it. How do you make sure this doesn't happen? Place a bamboo barrier around it as a root barrier? This is a concern.

Sundquist stated that it would require monitoring, but they already have beds of daffodils and other plantings that already have concrete borders. Since they already monitor those beds, one more might work. The BCC now acts as the Fair Board, too.

LaRue stated that there is a Fair Advisory Committee.

Williams suggested an interpretive board with pictures of the plants during different seasons. That would be something she'd like to see as an alternative to a garden.

Penhallegon stated that there have been several things at the fairgrounds such as gardens. And if we're going for the maximum opportunity to reach 20 to 30 thousand people during the week of the County Fair, they have to know that the information is there for viewing. He thinks that the Register Guard garden section could print that every other month a fact sheet will be provided that will specify what is being looked for during the next couple of months leading up to the fair. Then we will have an opportunity to tell the commissioners that for the next six months we will educate the public on specific invasive weeds. This would provide a very directed way of accomplishing the goal to educate the public. For example, when Purple Loosestrife was accidentally planted in the fairgrounds, it quickly spread. There are ways of doing this, but we have to be careful.

Sundquist said that he was thinking about Purple Loosestrife and educating the public to show them what it looks like. We would just have to guarantee to all those worried about invasives that the project is under control. He didn't think that would be too difficult. We could tell them that we're working on it and ask the master gardeners and staff to help us keep them under control. It would be a pretty straight forward thing to keep them under control. Ideally, it would be integrated into media, and the public made aware that there is a problem. It should work great. We don't have to come up with exact plan tonight, but I would think that we could ask the commissioners what they thought of this educational benefit. He asked where the previous adaptive garden was located at the fairgrounds.

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Penhallegon stated that it was in front of the Wheeler Pavilion. It was severely ravaged by the public, even though it was in concrete and had signage.

Sundquist asked if people carted it away.

Penhallegon said that they pulled all the veggies and were very destructive.

LaRue suggested that maybe the garden should be surrounded by metal for protection.

Schumacher said that if you drive out Greenhill Road or Roosevelt it's already covered. They can see it every week standing in the roundabout. Actually, it's the Barger roundabout. We tried to landscape it in the past, but failed. It's hard to plant. Sixty percent failure the first time, forty percent failure the second time, the third time had a fifty to sixty percent failure rate. And then it became a four-wheel drive area and the attempt was abandoned.

Motion: Sundquist moved that the committee should advise the commissioners to see if they support the idea of an educational garden at the County Fairgrounds.

Williams asked if there was a second to the motion. There was no second for the motion.

Sundquist said that we could email the commissioners in either of two ways: officially from the committee or by informal email. He also thinks that there should be other gardens that attract school walking groups and other groups for educational outreach, too. One could explain how photosynthesis works and one could explain how forests work. This would be a good thing. Maybe this has already been tried, maybe an adaptive garden didn't work, maybe this won't work, but it's worth a try.

Penhallegon asked if an interpretive walk was already done at Mt. Pisgah.

Williams stated that they had some at the Churchill Gardens, but that it only received limited attention by the public. Of course, Mt. Pisgah does get more activity, but not as much as the fairgrounds during that particular week.

Schumacher stated that he would not feel comfortable taking this to the commissioners, as there are no details to answer their questions at this point. There are too many questions; such as, what is our plan, how are we going to maintain it, and what are the costs involved? An informal email session with the commissioners would be okay, but nothing formal. Lane County is different from the city, as they have dedicated urban ground crews. This would be a high maintenance project for us that would need a detailed plan that specified start up costs, labor costs, and maintenance costs.

Sundquist stated that he hoped that VMAC would be the responsible party.

Schumacher stated that would be a reason that this should be a group presentation to the commissioners, whenever we're ready to present and answer their questions.

LaRue said that this is a limited opportunity to grab people's attention. The fairgrounds are busy during fair week, but not as much traffic on a daily basis. A volunteer group would be needed to take care of it without supervision, but it would be a volunteer group with good intentions and sometimes as time goes by volunteer groups let things slide. He suggested coming up with another concept to educate the public: Giving out handouts at the fairgrounds or erecting flip sign boards on a kiosk with solar panel powered lighted pictures.

Miller suggested utilizing a booth at the fair for educational purposes.

Schumacher said that the County booth is used to distribute information. Education is key and should be pursued by the committee. Reader boards are a good option if it's outside of a graffiti area, as they have been tried before by the County. They do work. We need to find best option that provides the most bang for the buck.

Sundquist agreed that there have been problems in the past but that the committee should try to plan out a positive educational outcome. We need to promote that some weeds are noxious and dangerous and this is what they look like. We should not let past problems limit the response.

Penhallegon continued the discussion by stating that he would be willing to speak to the Register Guard newspaper about public outreach.

Williams said that she supported reader boards and weed tours at high use sites, if budgeted.

Sundquist stated that the fairgrounds are busy every day of the year, not just during the fair.

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Penhallegon said that the fairgrounds could be asked about potential use.

Schumacher answered Jan Nelson’s questions of when is the fair (August) and if the County booth deals with vegetation issues? Not solely, as it is a Public Works booth that covers many areas of the County. The Sheriff or Land Management or other areas of the County can be presented at the booth. Weed training could be presented with bagged weed examples and flyers, but perhaps a year-round garden is not the best solution. There are other groups putting on weed education tours, too.

Penhallegon said that the other groups that put on education tours are usually other governmental agencies and they are useful for education. If they could meet at a consolidated area, then could go with the theme of the tour or to the weeds in the ground.

Schumacher stated at the botanical gardens educational field walks they introduce the weeds that are being presented for education. Locations like Mt. Pisgah that has established areas and hiking trails, that type of education is possible. However, establishing a weed garden at the fair doesn’t make sense to him.

Penhallegon said that we could contact Mt. Pisgah.

Schumacher said that they could tell the public if you want to see what’s growing, take a hike. Getting involved in established programs, like Mt. Pisgah, to see what outreach programs are developed is a good idea.

LaRue said that the public outreach could be done by having them pull weeds.

Williams stated that it appears that everyone agrees with the concept.

Miller suggested that this might be good discussion for an invasive subcommittee (Item V) to address, if such a subcommittee is formed. Then they could bring suggestions to VMAC.

Williams said that there was a lot of good brainstorming on this subject. She said the group was ready to move on and that this subject will be discussed with postponed Item V at the next meeting. She then stated that it was time to move to the next item.

VII. DISCUSS 2008 FY EXPENSE REPORT

Schumacher passed out “Activity Cost Summary” spreadsheet to committee. He stated that this will help the group understand the code-based categories. And that they might have seen this spreadsheet before. He explained that the first column in the spreadsheet was the “code” and that the column headings are the categories. He suggested looking, due to time constraints, the Labor Hours, Total Cost, and Accomplishments categories. He then stated that page number one covers the general categories, page number 2 starts to cover the division’s primary activities; such as, mechanical brush mowing, manual brush mowing, tree removal, top trimming work, vegetation control testing, mulching project, safety strips, and all other primary activities.

Williams said that under Accomplishments the L-H stood for Labor Hours, but asked about the other abbreviations.

Schumacher answered that L-H equals labor hours, RSM stands for Road Side Miles, and ACR stands for Acres.

LaRue asked what “null” and “unknown activity” meant on the first line of the spreadsheet.

Schumacher answered that “null” probably stands for something that was a coded in Purchasing that they couldn’t put anywhere.

Penhallegon asked if the \$2,177,412.74 was the total cost for the year.

Schumacher answered that it was the total figure for the Calendar Year (Jan 1 – Dec 31); however, there are some contract services that aren’t shown as they are different activities.

Sundquist asked if this information will be used in the budget process that will be used to compare this year to next year.

Schumacher answered that he hasn’t worked with Miller on the budget process yet, but this and other spreadsheets are available for that process. He then mentioned that he receives reports every few months called “Performance Counts” from Mike Russell, and Schumacher said that he utilizes those reports to compute the “Cost Per Mile.” As an example, he mentioned mechanical

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brush mowing in fiscal year 05/06 was \$1,894 per road mile on both sides of the road. Keep in mind that brush mowing is the slowest work and costly operations in Vegetation Management. Then in 06/07 it went up \$3,019 per mile, but you have to blend in to that figure that we purchased new tractors in 06/07, too. This makes the cost in the first year of the purchase fluctuate up, but it'll go down over the ten year depreciation period. And in 08/09 the cost will be down to the \$2,100 level. These tractors are a very expensive fleet. In contrast, grass tractors were \$107.53 per mile in 05, \$178.59 in 06, \$176.58 in 2007 (with new tractors in 2005), and now down to \$127.06 in 2008.

LaRue asked if purchasing a new tractor every two or three years as opposed to all at the same time would result in a better cost.

Schumacher answered no, as they're on a ten-year depreciation schedule. A three year or ten year turnover wouldn't help the cost. And the County purchases on a work-needed basis and for the most efficient use of the equipment.

Sundquist asked if it was difficult to produce the spreadsheet in the calendar year format as opposed to the fiscal year format.

Schumacher replied that it was not difficult and that the information can be easily displayed in either time period. The data is available for any time period or parameter needed.

Sundquist asked if he budgeted forward with this information or with his perception.

Schumacher said that he looks at it to determine how can improve the program, why are these costs going up or down and what steps he can take to address those costs. Miller and other staff look at this information as a line item tool in the budget process.

Miller explained that this is one program in one division of a four division road fund. Budgets are looked at two ways: 1) By division. Orin is in Road Maintenance so we look at the Road Maintenance budget, we look at the Transportation Planning budget, we look at the Engineering & Construction Services budget, and the Administration budget and those are all divisions that are under the umbrella of the Road Fund. 2) We look at them all together as the Road Fund because we have to manage it as one fund. We don't get into this kind of detail in the budget, but this kind of detail is really important as it fills in the blanks.

Schumacher said that his boss expects him to look at our program to see how to make it better. He looks at these types of machines, sees that they're \$1,000 per mile, and wants to know the reason that is happening. He looks at the detailed reports that are ten or hundred pages per line with details on how many hours are committed to them. He tries to summarize and tell his boss, Arno, why the costs are going up. It's like trying to describe the indescribable. It's hard to put activity-based costs into words.

Sundquist asked about Miscellaneous, code 024, the third line down on the spreadsheet as it's the biggest single expense.

Schumacher said they are put there by another department, as his department doesn't use that code. His department cost codes everything as 208. They never use code 024. That may be Fleet charge that's based upon material services. He has nothing in that realm. The most frequent purchase he makes in the small items category is chain saws, every now and then. His biggest budget has to be Fleet. This must be a Fleet expense, as they add into the budget.

Miller wondered why they don't call it a Fleet charge.

Schumacher answered that he enters everything under 3636208 or 99 percent of it and that 024 is not a code he uses. Since that code is used and is a large figure, it must have come from Fleet. He said that since they have three new tractors, that's exactly what that charge must be. He has three new 6300 series tractor combos and he looks at the number for brush mowers and he guarantees that what it is.

Sundquist asked if this was pretty straight forward to get these numbers, so at the break of the year he could provide comparisons with previous years.

Schumacher said that would be very easy to do and provide in any format desired.

Sundquist asked what L-H meant in the spreadsheet.

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Schumacher replied that L-H stands for labor hours.

Williams asked about the Threatened & Endangered (T & E) Site Maintenance budget item.

Schumacher answered that past practice caused the blackberries to dominate the sites. In 2007 we started brush mowing all the sites to bring them back to how they should look. They will be mowed every other year to maintain the sites. We don't have a lot of true Federal reinstatement in the right of ways, but we twenty-eight sites impacted with Plants of Interest; such as, *Sidalcea Campestris*, which is a pretty pink flower that is all over Lane County. We also have another version of the plant that has dark purple flowers. The State and Feds never had them listed, but they were noted as Plants of Interest seventeen years ago when a contract worker went out to identify the T & E sites and marked all those sites as Plants of Interest. The County took that information to protect them all. Now when we do a project area, he has to determine what plants are there to see what protection is needed and coordinate that information with the needs of the project. We do have thirteen sites regulated by the Feds. The Willamette Valley Daisy, the Bradshaw's *Lomatium* and the Kincaid's *Lupine* are the three types of flowers we have in Lane County that are state protected.

Williams asked if there were any additional questions. Since no one has any more questions, we'll move on to the next agenda item.

VIII. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF ILLEGAL ROADSIDE SPRAYING

Sundquist said that he had provided the committee copies of the Health Advisory Committee's (HAC) recommendations, as was requested at last meeting by Marsha Miller. He stated that Mike Koivula, who had attended the HAC meeting on August 14, 2007, brought some information to the subcommittee meeting on September 11, 2007. Mike reported that he, along Lynn Bowers, had presented the illicit spraying problem to the HAC. And that the HAC responded that they fully supported that direction be given to the County road inspectors and the Road Maintenance Manager to include inspections for non-authorized herbicide spraying on County rights of way. They also supported addressing these unauthorized sprays by the following methods: 1) Search of County records to determine the owner of the adjacent land. 2) Writing a letter to the landowner noting the unauthorized spraying and informing them of the IVM and Last Resort policies. This should be a friendly, informational letter with a contact name and number for vegetation control issues that the owner might have should be included in the letter. 3) Noting the location and date of the illegal spray, the date of the follow-up letter, and any further discussions in a database accessible to the public. 4) Follow up to ensure that illicit spraying has not reoccurred. 5) Contacting the County legal staff to see what further actions should take place if the spraying reoccurs. 6) It was also recommended by the HAC that this request be delivered to the BCC during the public comment period of a regular board meeting. All members of the HAC, including the Chair and staff, agreed that this was a good idea and voiced their support for this process. He then stated that he assumed that the HAC has minutes from that date that could be used to verify these statements. In terms where this committee could take this issue, the last time this group was discussing speaking to the commissioners or sending the information to the commissioners to continue to tell them that this is an important issue and that we propose some kind of action. A letter should be developed to send to people and that we could ask the Illegal Spray subcommittee to draft such a letter to bring back to this committee.

Schumacher asked who was on the Illegal Spray subcommittee.

Sundquist stated that the Illegal Spray committee currently consists of himself and Jan Nelson, but is ready for new people.

Williams asked since the subcommittee is only you two at the moment we could just ask you now to produce the letter or it could be submitted at the next subcommittee meeting.

Sundquist & Jan Nelson both responded that they will go ahead and work on it without waiting

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for the next subcommittee meeting.

Sundquist stated that he remembered discussion at the last VMAC meeting whether or not the group wanted to bring this back up with the commissioners. He stated that he wasn't exactly sure why we wanted to bring it up to them, except that we thought that there might be some kind of vote that was to be put off until this meeting. He asked if anyone else recalled that discussion.

Schumacher suggested that it might in the minutes from the last meeting.

Sundquist responded that he didn't see it in the minutes, and asked Nelson her recollection.

Jan Nelson stated that a group of us (four or five) as citizens, since we weren't on any committee, met with Commissioner Sorenson and this was one of the topics of discussion. He suggested that we write what they call a "one pager" to go to the County Administrator, Jeff Spartz, at that point and they deal with it from that point. That's what she took from that meeting and asked if Sundquist agreed.

Sundquist agreed with her recollection.

Miller asked about the meeting with Commissioner Sorenson.

Jan Nelson stated that a group of us met with the commissioner about several issues and this was one of them discussed with him. We wanted to know how to proceed with this and he suggested a "one pager;" that is, one page describing what we want. It is submitted to Jeff Spartz and then something happens but she didn't know the exact steps after the submission. She thought that it does go to the BCC in some form, perhaps as a consent calendar item.

Sundquist stated that he didn't recall if the County attorney had to be involved.

Jan Nelson said that she thought that came after the BCC received the letter.

Miller stated that the "one pager" is one of the new things developed by the BCC. It is something that typically then goes to the BCC after it's received, if the larger committee recommended bringing it up as a public comment issue.

Sundquist said they did that as he recalled.

Miller said that since this is something that has not come to the larger group, but this would be some direction from the BCC if it did. If the BCC wanted us to do something with this issue, like building a program around illegal roadside spraying, we would have direction to do that.

Sundquist asked if it was to be accomplished by John Petsch's organization as the "hammer."

Schumacher & Miller both responded in the affirmative.

Jan Nelson stated that it might also be a complaint-driven process. She also said that some of us who live in the countryside that have observed areas that appear illegal herbicides were used, that we would then follow this process to report the problem in an amicable method by ourselves.

LaRue asked if that would be like a vigilante committee.

Sundquist responded that it wouldn't be with torches and pitchforks.

Jan Nelson stated that these are roads that we travel, that we get complaints on, or we have a complaint. That's how licensing boards work. Then there's a process to follow to deal with it.

Penhallegon said he was concerned that only a portion of the VMAC committee would be involved and not the total committee, that there is a need to determine why are people doing this, and for what purpose is it being done. If you look at the reasons why those people are doing this and some people are not, again since vegetation is primarily being mowed, there's a lot of stuff along the roadside. In particular there's a lot agriculture product, that he could vouch for, and on Morningstar Drive that there is a definite purpose as they need to control certain weeds, for example grass seeds. If they do not control that, then the acreage then is not certified for seeds. All signs that he sees is that people do this because it's not to the level that meets the potential, because, again, Orin has "x" dollars to do "x" amount. They are responsible citizens but they have to deal with a lot of nasty weeds. The difficulty is determining if they're doing it just to do it or are they doing it for an economic reason. And that would be a good step to determining those two levels. If we're talking letters, that takes money. We could spend all our time going down in an educational mode and that would be better than getting attorneys involved. He is concerned that this is a "hammer effort" if attorneys are involved. What are they really doing out there?

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How are they actually affecting someone? Those people that don't want it done, and that's understandable, but then there are those people that do want it done. You have both sides. There are those that want it done and need it done, and also those that feel that it's not to be done. It's not a consensus that this is something that everyone is saying what I've been saying, that this is something that needs to be done. Just because someone sprays something does not mean that it's negative or affects anyone in any way shape or form, as that cannot be proven. Sundquist stated that he wasn't going to prove anything. Also, that the HAC brought up the attorney issue.

Penhallegon said that you brought it up to us.

Sundquist asked if that meant it was brought up in the HAC information provided to this committee.

Penhallegon replied that you said that we need to do x, y, and z.

Sundquist said that it's an illegal activity; it threatens the health and welfare of people because we don't know what was applied; what the reentry guidelines are or what chemicals were used. This is illegal activity being done by unlicensed applicators.

Penhallegon said that he didn't know that for certain.

Sundquist replied that it is an illegal activity because right of way is not on their property. If they are spraying off of their property, it is an illegal activity. If they say that they are trying to prevent loss of certification and their crops from being cross pollinated, it still is an educational problem. That they think the County has to bear the brunt of them keeping their crops from being pollinated and that they should be able to illegally spray to keep their crops pollinated. Their perception of what they're doing doesn't make it become in any way legal. It is an illegal activity. The HAC was of consensus that it poses enough of a danger, as per their risk analysis for health problems and this is why they wanted to bring it forward. His personal action plan might also include preparing a letter for the newspapers to remind people that this is the law, that there are reasons for the law, and that there are ways that the County can maybe help them understand that they don't have to spray the ditches – there's other things that they can do.

Penhallegon asked what the other options were.

Sundquist replied that they could let the grass grow in a non-competitive, low-maintenance environment according to the County's Integrated Vegetation Plan.

Penhallegon asked what was meant by "non-competitive."

Sundquist replied it's one that won't allow cross-pollinating species to take hold. If they need to mow their right of way, they need a facilities permit and perhaps we could make them a deal on it. If they present that they are a hardship case and this would help them out, then he thinks that the County could meet them halfway to give them a Facility Permit to mow.

Penhallegon asked if the permit would let them spray, too.

Sundquist replied in the negative and that it's against the County's policy to spray. He said that we can't cut anybody else loose spraying for the County because it's not for the County, as the County has a different vegetation management policy.

Williams asked who could answer that question, since right now we aren't spraying and it isn't legal or possible for someone to spray in the right of way.

Schumacher responded that the current policy is strictly for the road right of way. In the case of such an application as is being discussed, it would be against current policy. Facility Permits are required for people to do other work in the right of way, but the permit system is fee based so realize that the incentive quickly goes away when it costs them \$250 for the permit.

Sundquist agreed that is the current policy, but that maybe the County could waive the fee.

Schumacher responded that that would be question for the permit people to answer how or if there would be a fee waived for something like that, but that there would be a huge hesitation to do that since it would open the door for everyone else that wants their fees waived, too.

LaRue said that if staff from the County sees someone mowing in the right of way, they could stop and ask if they had permission to do it. If not they would be told that they have to pay \$250

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to mow four feet out here, but that it seemed ridiculous.

Schumacher responded that a one time in his career with the County he issued a “stop work” order that is an 8 ½ ” x 11” laminate sign that says to stop what they’re doing and to call our service department before any further work resumes. Once there was a tree company that decided to drop a huge one hundred and forty foot old growth tree across the road in a highly populated area which caused the neighbors to call the County to immediately address the problem. He went out to see the problem and all he had in the car was the 8 ½ “by 11” laminate sign. He explained what they were doing was wrong and that a Sheriff’s deputy could be called if they continued the work. He further explained to them that the County crew would be brought in to clean up the area with traffic control in a safe manner, that they would be billed for the work, and that they need to get permit to continue the rest of the work. And that a bond and insurance would be required before a decision is made to grant or not grant the permit. Permits are important as they set the stipulations that must be followed. Roadside mowing is one of those things being done by people, wrong or right, in the right of way because we’re not getting out there to satisfy their needs.

Sundquist said that we aren’t psychologists, so it’s not our job to satisfy their needs.

Schumacher said that he’s not trying to be a psychologist. He’s just saying that people are doing things that we’re not doing so they need to, or that we aren’t satisfying their need(s) in some fashion.

LaRue said that his entry on Alvadore Road has, sometimes, three foot tall grass in the right of way that blocks his view so he chops it down.

Williams said that this discussion is gone over the allowed discussion time and asked if we should move to the next item.

Sundquist responded that he was ready to move on, but that this topic will come up at a later meeting so we shouldn’t put it off. In the meantime we’ll try to figure out for the next meeting something for the newspaper. And that the subcommittee will draft a friendly letter to be used in that type of situation.

Williams said then we’ll move on to the next agenda item.

IX. ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

Schumacher prefaced his report by saying that every year, even with the continued moratorium not to use herbicides; the annual report is still needed. He then added that this is the annual report that he was planning to try to present to the board in April after a March meeting, and that’s why it is included as an attachments in order for you to provide comments.

Sundquist asked if he felt like the annual report was a lot of work for the limited amount of result.

Schumacher responded that he did ask himself why he was doing this, as it seemed more related to the fact that we were using chemicals. That seems to be the basis of the report.

Williams said that she liked the report tables and said that they would be useful, not the amount sprayed as we’re not doing that now, in the future if we look back to see what was successful or not successful. It provides a record of what was going on.

LaRue noted that only two unsuccessful non-herbicide control methods were listed on the report.

Schumacher answered in the affirmative and said that there were some interesting cases. For example, a couple of years ago there was a project to put in the Gate Creek bridge, which is a low-lying bridge over Woahink, and we used native plants; such as, grape, alder, cedar, and a bunch of plugs like skunk cabbage. The first year it was beautiful, but when we went back we couldn’t find any plants. It was one hundred percent bare, as probably something churned up the soil, but this was unusual and that he’d never seen it happen before.

Sundquist stated that it was good to see all the projects that worked.

Williams stated that she was excited to see the positive outcome of the vegetation control efforts.

Schumacher mentioned that the committee should be working with the homeowner’s community along Game Farm Road for a vegetation project in that area.

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Williams suggested that the North Game Farm Road project should be agenda item on for the next meeting.

Sundquist asked if it would help the projects to put chips over the cover.

Schumacher responded that it would probably not help as it is slick, and if we put much over the chips it would end up in the ditch. Hydro seed will be applied at a later date.

Motion: Williams moved to accept the annual report. Penhallegon seconded. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

X. DISCUSS BCC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MONTHLY VMAC MEETINGS

Williams opened discussion of this item, but mentioned that she would have to leave prior to the conclusion of the meeting due to a prior commitment.

Sundquist said that tonight's thirteen item agenda, even with the postponement of three agenda items, leaves too much business to take care of tonight. He believes that there was an understanding that if this situation occurred we would ask the BCC to reschedule the committee to monthly meetings. He thinks that we are at that stage now, but he'd like to hear some discussion tonight and that he would definitely put a motion to the group to do that.

Penhallegon said that with good time management and focus the committee has been doing quite well with the current meeting schedule.

Williams said that she was happy with the current meeting schedule, and one benefit of the current system is that it allows people involved in the subcommittees to meet during the available alternate months when this committee is not meeting. She would not be opposed to holding a special meeting if needed, but that overall she is satisfied with the current every other month schedule.

Penhallegon said that adding a month would not be of benefit over the long term. He thinks that the committee is being successful on its current meeting schedule.

Schumacher said that he also likes the current meeting scheduled.

Motion: Sundquist moved to ask the BCC to change the VMAC committee to a monthly meeting schedule and to hold a special meeting in April.

Schumacher said that according to the rules that the committee chairperson may call special meetings, provided advance notice is given at the regular meeting or in writing by the secretary and posted in the mail.

LaRue asked if a special meeting was called what would we do.

Williams responded that the meeting would be on the second Wednesday of the month, she presumed, and the topics would include whatever items were on the agenda for the next meeting. An alternative would be that a short, thirty minute meeting could be called to discuss subcommittees.

Sundquist suggested that it could be for election of officers, too.

Williams agreed that the special meeting could be for election, too. She added to clarify, if a special meeting is held in April it would be to discuss postponed agenda items IV (Review Subcommittees for Retention or Deletion), V (Review Suggestion to Form an Invasive Subcommittee, and XIII (Election of Officers).

Sundquist stated that he thought that a full meeting could be used for these agenda items, but that he would go along with a short meeting if that was the decision.

Williams asked for opinions for the members.

LaRue said that he would be unable to attend an April meeting.

Penhallegon said that he had planned his yearly calendar on the current meeting schedule.

Williams said that she would not make a motion for a special meeting, but she would suggest that at the next meeting in May that this item be brought up for discussion and a possible motion as New Business, assuming that the we'll have the additional members at that time.

LaRue said that the group could not do anything else except approve reports, as there is not a quorum present.

APPROVED: _____

Schumacher responded all that is left on tonight's agenda are reports, so there is no problem.

XI. ROAD MAINTENANCE REPORT

Schumacher said that he could report to the committee as Nelson was not present. Current work includes ditching work and shoulder repairs on Deerhorn Road, the Alvadore area, and on River Road. Also work is being done on Hills Creek Road for slide repair and realignment. Then they will shift to work on McKenzie River Drive by Belknap. Snow removal is still ongoing in certain areas as well.

LaRue asked if the roads will be sprayed and then sanded.

Schumacher said that it is rock, not sand, that is applied to the surface for chip seals, and that there are different types; triple shot, single shot, etc., which is how many layers that are applied.

XII. IVM COORDINATOR UPDATE

Sundquist asked about the pulling of the no spray area posts.

Schumacher answered that it was still being done but that it's not a priority item. We have someone do it occasionally.

Sundquist said that the last year the County was not mowing for seed head suppression. He asked if that would be done this year, and will the mowers be washed between invasive sites on a regular basis or was that phased out, too.

Schumacher answered that the County does not have a vehicle washing program. Sometimes the vehicles are air blown. He's heard that some of the other agencies have vehicle washing stations or put that requirement in their contracts for logging operations on Federal land. This item has been discussed for the past decade without conclusion and that the County is aware of the issue. He thinks that the main reason is that our tractors move so fast and frequently, he doesn't know how to accomplish it without committing a lot of time to check tires, undercarriages, etc. every day. At this time he doesn't have any plans to do vehicle washing. To answer his seed head suppression question, that is State mandated and that we do what every other County and ODOT does; which is, that we will validate our mowing operations. He added that he didn't know how the County could target seed head suppression for the 2,600 miles of roads located within Lane County.

Sundquist asked since he has areas, such as in Blachly, that have Meadow Knapweed and since you have invasive overlays, isn't it just a matter of timing.

Schumacher responded that we do have targeted areas more for manual control where we have the high infestations. Yes, we are seed head suppressing, but on a County basis it's just not feasible with limited resources. No other county is doing total seed head suppressing

Sundquist asked when you are doing manual work on invasives, are those identified and known areas and what are the major weeds are targeted.

Schumacher responded that those areas are targeted if there is a higher or known need to prevent spread, and that we do a lot of Broom, Knotweed, and a lot of Knapweed work. Those are the three primary weeds targeted, excluding Blackberries.

XIII. ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS

MOVED TO MAY 11, 2009 MEETING AGENDA

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

FINAL

APPROVED: _____

Steve Smith
Recording Secretary