

# ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 22, 2015

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sean Barrett, Kent Fleming, Ellen Mooney, Jim Wilcox, Tom Poage.

**STAFF & OTHER PRESENT:** Lydia McKinney, Dan Ingram, Bill Morgan, Marsha Miller, Orin Schumacher Commissioner Farr

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeff Paschall

Barrett called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

I. **Public Comment** – n/a

II. **Approval of Minutes – May 27, 2015**

Motion: Wilcox moved to approve the minutes as written; Fleming seconded; all present voted in favor, motion carried.

III. **Review Request to Alter Haul Route on Rattlesnake Road – Lydia McKinney & Dan Ingram**

(See attached memo provided with the agenda materials)

McKinney said staff received a request from a property owner to re-route truck traffic off of Rattlesnake Road. This request stems from a land-use decision a few years ago for Parvin Butte Quarry to operate and use the road to and from, in addition to the logging trucks and other truck type traffic. The Hearings Official for this land-use decision didn't agree with our transportation recommendation of improving the road, and the quarry has since moved forward. The property owner believes there is a safety concern because of the grades, curves, bus stops along a portion of this road. The property owner had also made a request to the superintendent of the Pleasant Hill School District regarding posting bus stop signs. That request was then bundled with other Pleasant Hill School District concerns and a review request was sent to the Lane County Traffic Section. As a result of the subsequent review, the Lane County Traffic Section installed "School Bus Hours" warning signs providing warning for the area on Rattlesnake Road between M.P. 2.29 and 3.10. After much staff time in the field, analyzing options, and detailed engineering evaluation, staff is not recommending approval of the request to re-route trucks from Rattlesnake Road. From a health and safety standpoint, it would not be any safer to route truck traffic onto Lost Creek Road. McKinney said the TSP update process did identify this road as a priority, but there are other roads that meet stronger safety need criteria than this road.

IV. **Safety Discussion/Enforcement- Jim Wilcox**

Wilcox presented two road safety philosophies, stemming from the last meeting where safety on Highway 126 and the roles of enforcement and engineering were brought up. The goal of bringing this up is to look at things a little differently than we have, by exploring

the roles of engineering and enforcement. There is a mantra that exists, stating we have educated people on what's expected of them as drivers; we have roads that are design-engineered; encouragement of good behavior is provided; and enforcement is in place. Wilcox said its important to look at where we put intelligence in this system and believes there are two philosophies:

1. Enforcement: relies on the operator as the locus of control/ the starting place of where a correct or poor decision is made. People respond differently to this threat, and there's always the risk of the halo effect – it works well while it's happening but has little or no effect after it stops. Enforcement requires ongoing efforts, more resources, and effects people differently because of our own personal dialogues (“*I’m a better driver than the average person*”). Wilcox said studies show people respond differently to enforcement.
2. Engineering: relies more on intelligence in the system to keep us from making mistakes such as strategic placement of controls in a vehicle design, passing lanes in the road, rumble strips, reflectors, flashing signs, calming devices, etc. Engineering helps drivers be more aware of their surroundings when something makes drivers feel they need to pay more attention. Engineering is interesting because it's always there – regardless of whether you have your intelligence with you or not (such as being impaired). It's always in effect, requires no resources, and is fully operational vs. enforcement.

Wilcox said there is a tendency to believe if we just enforce more than people will speed less, follow the rules of the road, drive with insurance, not drive impaired, etc. Wilcox noted that enforcement doesn't have the same impact on being impaired or falling asleep at the wheel because the locus of control is now lost once asleep or impaired. You also become more willing to take risks when impaired (a potential fine might not be so impressive if you are impaired.) Wilcox said studies show people respond differently to enforcement; for example, women respond more to the threat of enforcement than men, and someone who may have a fast car may not be inclined to follow the speed limit. Wilcox noted these examples to help us see what is actually captured by enforcement. Enforcement has a halo effect, diminishing its impact after removed. Virtually within 8 weeks of it being gone, there is no effect. Wilcox said enforcement functions like an addiction...we need more and more of it to have an impact; whereas engineering does not have a halo effect. Wilcox reiterated the goal of this conversation was to look at things a little differently in the role of engineering vs. the operator's role and the source of intelligence.

McKinney said this is an ongoing discussion in conjunction with the Lane County Safety Plan project. McKinney said there is a lot of discussion at the LaneACT and MPC meetings on the idea “Vision Zero”. Rob Zako is putting efforts into getting the word out on Vision Zero. Vision Zero acknowledges people are flawed and that we do make mistakes. Vision Zero says “there is no acceptable amount of deaths on the road” and there are road design solutions that can be made. Vision Zero is focused on pedestrians as the most vulnerable road user. McKinney believes it could be interesting to have Rob Zako attend the September meeting to talk with the committee about Vision Zero and his research. McKinney said this may help inform the committee as we move forward into the Safety Plan discussions. The Committee verbally indicated they'd like to do this at the next meeting.

V. **Ongoing Discussion on Road Maintenance Service Changes – Orin Schumacher**

Schumacher provided the attached list of potential categories impacted that the residents will see over the next 1-5 years.

Winter and Storm Event Response: These impacts include reduced staffing and ability to respond adequately and to events that come our way, as well as reduced materials. Sanding materials, which is what we use for ice events, will be reduced as these materials add up to a significant amount of money. Additional service changes will be limiting our focus in storm response to Level One and Two priority roads (arterial and collector roads) which mean focusing on the life-line routes; if time and resources permit, we can move onto the next layer of roads. Schumacher stated we will be losing six more staff members this fall, which pretty much decimates one of our crews. This reduction means we will be reorganizing where we have people staffed and will impact our ability to have people available to respond to storm events. By reducing staffing, we will reduce the level of service and streamline. One example could be when we respond to clear a road, we will only clear the road from one fog line to the other, instead of doing the extra service of clearing the trees and debris off of the sides of the road and leaving them sit for a couple months or so.

Preventative measures: The slurry seal contract was cancelled for the Springfield area. Crack sealing doesn't appear to have immediate impacts. Crack sealing may become one of our new primary options to lower costs, and is the most cost effective, prevention measures we can do. Blade Patch, a shorter version of an overlay and one of the highest cost materials, will be reduced significantly. Overlay projects have been impacted with two projects cancelled in the Springfield area. Chip seal has been significantly reduced from a typical 80 miles of road this year to just 40. Schumacher said the Chip Seal program is the most concerning because a 50% reduction of maintaining our roads is huge and we will be seeing those impacts in a number of years. We were already not able to preserve roads at the frequency we'd prefer.

Materials changes: Schumacher said they've changed from coated rock to uncoated, which is a significant difference because uncoated rock has natural debris in the mix and doesn't always bind to the road. In addition to this, they are using an emulsified oil mix instead of hot oil for the first time.

Street Marking and Signs: we will change our annual striping of every road, focusing more on the priority one and two roads and then rotating by just selecting a zone within the County to stripe. This means more faded markings, which could have safety impacts. Sign cleaning will only happen when we go out to do required reflectivity standards inspections. Schumacher said they are working on software possibilities to streamline sign inventory processes. Of the 22,000 signs in our inventory, downed non-regulatory sign response will be down much longer now – such as “deer crossing”.

Vegetation Management: All three primary functions will be reduced. Grass mowing reduction brings fire safety concerns as well as encroachment, site distance, and visibility issues. Safety strip mowing will be reduced to just the initial 8-10' of the sides of the road and we won't be doing a full-depth mow that people are used to. Brush mowing will be dramatically reduced as it's a very costly program (woody vegetation doesn't go away as easily). Schumacher is greatly concerned because we've done such an effective job in the past of keeping our roads maintained in this category, but now it will all come back with a vengeance. Tree work and pruning will be reduced. An example will be not responding to a call regarding a tree branch hanging down and hitting the top of an RV. Instead we will reduce our response to safety hazards and abatement issues.

Large Projects/Fish Culverts/Failures and Slides: These are handled by our Bridge and Projects Crew. This crew was impacted nearly 50% by the budget cuts. Schumacher added that typically we respond to a slide and develop a long-term solution for that area; however, it's likely that will go away, making road closures and detours longer while crews just do the basic patch work.

Leaf Collection: Schumacher doesn't see this being reduced because we have an IGA in place with the city of Eugene, and the cost isn't huge in terms of materials, we have NPDS storm permit requirements to meet, and not clearing the leaves would plug-up our entire system.

Urban Rural Sweeping: The urban road sweeping will continue be provided due to NPDES storm permits requirements, but not as much will be done in the rural area roads.

Roadside Ditching: This is one of the largest services we provide in the fall and winter to keep water draining in rural areas without storm systems. This will likely be a 20% reduction due to staffing.

Driveway Apron Paving: This is a great service we've been providing to residents, but it's also costly and time intensive. The way these are done will be adjusted.

Wilcox said this message of "Safety vs. Public Benefit" should be a Public Relations message to educate residents on the County's efforts. Mooney feels the opposite and this is an opportunity to go back to folks and clearly say these are the reductions. Mooney added if we go back and say "oh, you are still going to have....." it can give people the sense that the County didn't need the funds after all. Mooney said people need to know these issues are real and the money was needed. Wilcox said regardless of how it is put together, a message needs to get out there and should also include the cascade affect of these impacts. Wilcox explained with materials and services reduced, this affects the industry jobs and people in the community. Morgan said staff will be discussing concerns with legal counsel about risk and discretionary immunity (if someone has an accident on a road and blames us.) Schumacher clarified the list provided is to be adjusted as things move forward and he invited the committee's feedback.

VI. **Discuss and Schedule the Annual Roads Tour – Orin Schumacher**

Schumacher and Morgan are considering focusing on things that are already in bad shape and share anticipated outcomes. The tour will be scheduled in place of a regular committee meeting on August 26. Meyer will poll the committee to select a time that works best.

**OPEN/ ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – (September)**

- September meeting: Rob Zako to share info on Vision Zero

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.  
Christy Meyer, Meeting Recorder