

MINUTES & NOTICE OF BOARD ACTION

LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



This document, upon approval in a public meeting by the Board of County Commissioners, serves as official minutes of such meetings as required under the Open Meetings Law, ORS 192.650.

Pursuant to notice made by mailing agendas to news media, a selected list of jurisdictions and individuals in Lane County, a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held.

Questions should be directed to The Board Office Specialist 3, ext. 4203.

November 26, 1991
1:30 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Harris Hall
Main Floor

Chair Jack Roberts presided with Steve Cornacchia, Ellie Dumdi, Marie Frazier (on speaker phone) and Jerry Rust present. Judy Haldeman, Recording Secretary.

1. ORDER 91-11-26-8/In the Matter of Appointing a Replacement to Senate District Seat 21

Roberts read the rules for this appointment from the Secretary of State's Office (see material on file). He stated that three names had been forwarded to the Board of Commissioners by the Democratic Party; Bill Dwyer, Lee Beyer and Bob Reuschlein. These candidates were interviewed last Thursday by the Board of Commissioners.

Rust commented that these were three high quality candidates; two with state-wide political value. He stated that Bill Dwyer would get his vote today. Frazier commented that these were all good, quality candidates and that she would vote for Bill Dwyer because of his background, first-hand knowledge of state functions, his independent thinking and outstanding political savvy. Dumdi commented that she appreciated that there were three outstanding candidates and that Dwyer had the broadest experience and background. She stated that Dwyer had the best grasp on the issues, fiscal understanding and interest in agriculture and water concerns. Cornacchia commented that knowledge of issues and the system is important and Dwyer has shown that he has both of these qualifications and would represent the District well. Roberts concurred with what the rest of the Board had said regarding the quality of the candidates and added that he would have liked to have had a woman's name forwarded as well. He stated that Dwyer has served in the state legislature, Beyer in local government and Reuschlein at the grass roots level. He cast his vote for Bill Dwyer.
MOTION: To cast a unanimous vote for Bill Dwyer. Rust MOVED, Dumdi SECONDED. VOTE: 5-0.

This meeting recessed at 1:55 p.m. to reconvene at 2:02 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION/Homeless Camping

Rust introduced the ad hoc task force - Steve Mo, Glenwood; Georgette Moore, representing homeless mothers and homeless action network; Patty Rogers, Willamette National Forest; Hal Conner, concerned citizen from Cottage Grove; and Jim Weiman, US Forest District Ranger from Cottage Grove. Rust stated that he and Frazier convened meetings to discuss homelessness and camping. He stated that this group did not view camping as a viable alternative to shelter in Lane County, but the group was responding to what is actually happening. A camping alternative represents only one tenth of one percent of the solution. The Forest Service commented that this type of activity was not in the Forest Service mission and, in fact, may hamper their mission of providing quality recreation for visitors and campers. The group recommended a scattered site program with some degree of monitoring, sanitation, water and garbage management, and some layer of supervision with 25 maximum campers at any site (park sites are not the target).

Frazier stated that she wholeheartedly supported this concept and would like to see all of the details before the next steps are taken. Rust commented that he would ask for staff analysis of the proposal.

Hal Conner asked the Board to consider the reality of the situation, start slowly and recognize the need. He stated that he was hopeful that progress could be made.

Georgette Moore commented that this had restored her faith and commented that some families can handle the woods; she was hopeful that they would be good caretakers.

Kevin Hayden commented that it was gratifying to come to this meeting and to have the homeless invited to participate. He thanked the participants and the Board.

Steve Manela, Senior Program Services Coordinator, commented that camping is a reality in Lane County and this option could provide some dignity in a grass roots way. He stated that the County had added to the capacity of the emergency shelters this year, but it continued to see fallout from the recession with people choosing to camp. He suggested that the County provide help to the social service agencies and have them work out the details among themselves.


Cornacchia commented that there were suggestions that the County be the lead agency and provide funding for a minimalist program which puts the County in an active role on the camping issue. He mentioned that there would be sub-standard health conditions and that there was a lack of law enforcement personnel currently in the rural areas. He stated that he had concerns about the liability to Lane County for those that would encounter a health problem or anti-social behavior from others. Bill Van Vactor, County Counsel, said that since 1987 the Oregon Supreme Court has dispensed with "duty" after a series of cases and ruled that the test is

foreseeability. In a circumstance where there are limited funds and certain policy decisions are made, the County can be placed in a position where the defense of discretionary immunity can be asserted. He clarified that this issue needs analysis before action is taken.

Dumdi asked what the cost of a half-time case worker would be and Steve Manela, Senior Program Services Coordinator, replied that it would cost approximately \$10,000 per year through a contract with a non-profit agency. Cornacchia asked what the limitations would be on the camping and who would set the criteria and the policies. Rust responded that each agency would administer its own rules on its own properties. This program would be a way to manage the situation which is currently occurring with no supervision, sanitation or structure. Jim Weiman commented that approximately 30 people are camped on the ranger district at any given point in time and that this would provide an opportunity for these people to get to a central location where the Forest Service could manage their needs and provide them access to social services. He stated that the intent of the Forest Service would be to deal with the category of homeless person that is not homeless by choice and to provide a staging area for other opportunities in the future.

Van Vactor suggested that the group look at Department of Health or state-wide regulations regarding campgrounds. Roberts commented that state health requirements need to be reviewed along with administration, funding and liability issues. MOTION: Conceptual approval of short-term camping on public lands outside city limits and to direct appropriate staff to prepare a report on the health, legal, funding and administrative issues inherent in this proposal. Rust MOVED, Dumdi SECONDED for discussion. Cornacchia commented that he could not conceptually approve this without the information and he would appreciate if this motion were confined to the direction to staff to do the analysis. Rust commented that he could strike conceptual approval from the motion. The second concurred. There will be a preliminary staff report on December 18. Roberts commented that he appreciated the work that has been done on this and added that he was skeptical of camping as a solution, though he would give conceptual approval if the details can be worked out. VOTE: 5-0.

There being no further business, this meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.


Judy Haldeman
Recording Secretary