

MINUTES & APPROVED 7/23/96
 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.

February 14, 1996
 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

LEADERSHIP TEAM
 MEETING

Lane County Fairgrounds'
 Meeting Room #2

PRESENT: John Ball, Steve Carmichael, Steve Cornacchia, Ellie Dumdi, Chuck Forester, Jim Gangle, Mike Gleason, John Goodson, Bobby Green, Sr., Doug Harclerod, Bob McManus, Rob Rockstroh, Jerry Rust, David Suchart, Bill Van Vactor, Cindy Weeldreyer and Teresa Wilson present. **Facilitator:** Lauren Chouinard. **Recording Secretary:** Zoanne Gilstrap.

1. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW/BCC Priorities (from 2/13/96 BCC Process Session).

Green stated that the Board had met yesterday for their process session for establishing goals (see material on file). He remarked that he felt the meeting was very productive. Green said they discussed several issues and offered a brief summary of the outcome.

A. Small City Meetings.

Green stated that due to the fact there have been many scheduling frustrations, a decision was made to send out an invitation to the small cities offering them an opportunity to come to Harris Hall to hold the meetings in more of a town hall public forum setting.

B. Standing Committees.

Green remarked that they reviewed the standing committees and, in particular,

discussed the SAVE Committee. He explained that there was discussion around the fact that some department managers felt that more should be paid from the central administration fund. It was determined that it had always come from the departments in the past as the whole idea was that a SAVE award was awarded for saving money within the department.

Van Vactor asked if cash should continue to be awarded for recognition of employees.

Wilson said that if there was not a demonstrable and obvious savings to the County, then, although it may be a very good idea, a plaque should be awarded, not a cash payment.

Green said they also looked at other types of recognition. He suggested a Lane County watch. He said the thrust of the conversation on this issue was how to recognize the value of County employees. He commented that a subcommittee will review this issue.

A decision was made to discuss this further when Cornacchia arrived because he is the Board member of the SAVE committee.

C. 15-Minute Policy.

Green explained that the 15-minute rule was in place for the efficiency of the Board. He said that it has been noted that at times it is difficult for staff to say no to a commissioner.

Rust defined the 15-minute policy as a limit of 15 minutes for commissioners to take up staff time and, if their request goes beyond that amount of time, they need to get Board approval.

Van Vactor noted that this concept was more difficult with ongoing projects. He explained the 15-minute rule kicks in when staff feel that a commissioner starts to go in a direction different than that they have been instructed to go by means of prior board action and said the employees need to speak up to the commissioner and request to visit the Board as a whole.

Wilson asked if this was workable and reasonable with the commissioners.

Green said it worked for him. Rust replied it was fair and thought that it was good policy. Weeldreyer recognized that everybody's plate is full and commented that this was a way to give commissioners a guideline to make sure that the priorities that have been established are kept.

Suchart commented that at times, Board assignments are made to employees without department managers being directly aware of them. He believed that there should be some process whereby before an employee is assigned to a task or a task force, the department or division managers are asked how that request will affect the overall workload within that department.

Van Vactor asked if there should be some process where there could be involvement from the affected department head or whether the Board should be able to make the direct assignment.

Rust stated that he would like to hear from the parties that are impacted and thought the department should have input.

Green said he was comfortable with the way the process worked right now. He noted that if the department manager has a question to a direction that the Board is given, then he or she needs to come back and confirm that assignment. Green stated, however, that he does not want to infringe on staff and would like to see that staff person come back to the commissioner and ask if it is a priority.

Suchart said that, in addition, some employees are picked for committees over and over again resulting in other staff doing their workload. He believed it would be appropriate that department managers are asked how an assignment would affect their department especially if an employee would be required to be gone a lot.

Chouinard remarked that he believed the issue here was that the Board should try to be sensitive to particular staff people that tend to be involved in a lot of things and, therefore, have a hard time getting their regular work done.

It was decided that Commissioners would try to talk with department heads regarding the impact of these assignments and, if this should be overlooked, department heads should contact the Commissioner regarding questions or problems with additional time requests.

D. Reclassifications with Diversity Policy

Green explained that the Policy & Procedure Committee was asked to review whether there should be an effort to reclass an employee to a greater position when more than 50% of the person's work is out of class. However, he stated that, at the same time, there is the need to be consistent with current affirmative action laws. He said the question was whether reclassification should be a new job posting to allow it to be opened up for recruitment or should that new classification be internal. Green said his concern was that they are consistent with the law and legal tests concerning that issue.

Harclerod said they certainly want to make sure they are meeting the requirements of the law. However, he said that if a position is posted and someone else is hired, there would then be the displacement of an existing county worker and he believed the union would have objections to that.

Green noted that the question was whether it was a new job or a promotion.

Rockstroh stated that employees would have to compete for their own job over hundreds of applicants for a reclass. He said he would not post on a reclass unless he was doing a reorganization.

Green stated that the Policy and Procedure Committee has been recommended to review this item.

E. County Counsel Staffing Level.

Green observed that there was a recommendation from Van Vactor to increase that department by one attorney. He said there was agreement that this new attorney needed to jump in and hit the ground running. Green stressed this was not an on-the-job training situation.

Van Vactor stated that the Board does want the support of the Management Team and said it will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

F. Public Service Building and Annex/Roof Situation.

Green said this organization needed to bite the bullet and take care of the roof. He explained that there will be structural damage as well as liability if any employees are hurt by the roof falling.

Harclerod warned that no one knows what is going to happen with the levy and making a commitment before then might be risky as the roof money might be needed somewhere else.

Van Vactor commented that this problem also emphasized the need as part of the indirect study to make sure funds are developed so that when things wear out, there will be available funding without having to take funds out of operations.

Green asked that when the estimate is done, the difference between a 20- and 30-year life be included as far as costs.

G. Developing Priorities

Green commented that in their discussion of developing priorities, they realized there were a lot of things that have not been completed. He stressed that there should be no new projects until old business is completed.

- Evaluation System.

Green stated that one of the things this old business included was the evaluation system. He stressed that all evaluations need to be brought up to date and kept current. Green said it was important to hold the manager's feet to the fire on this issue.

Cornacchia said that allowing evaluations to go longer than a year is unsatisfactory. He noted that the management team has made a commitment to reduce tardy evaluations by the end of June.

Cornacchia said they talked about possibly redoing the evaluation system but warned that that process would involve a significant amount of collective bargaining.

Ball commented that the management team is committed to completing all evaluations but added that he believed the Board needed to understand that until the evaluation process is actually redone, this is simply a squirrel-cage exercise. He stated that the evaluation process and forms are obsolete.

Chouinard explained that his department also had this problem. He said they went through a massive process because they realized they were out of date. Chouinard stated that they put together an AFSCME joint labor task team who did a survey that went out to all employees. Chouinard reported that this survey asked questions about evaluations of the employees and requested their comments to be used as data feedback. He noted that they also had a consultant come in and work on public safety performance evaluations because different departments had different circumstances to measure.

Weeldreyer requested a fixed date for consideration of this issue. She stated this was a topic of discussion at the last goal setting session.

Rockstroh stated that the concept of employee evaluations is extremely important but that the bigger part of the problem was that he hated to spend a lot of time on evaluations when there were no career opportunities and he still would not be able to promote people any differently. He believed that there are basically average and above average employees and he felt he ought to be able to pay them differently. Rockstroh stated that he did not believe in the graded series.

Green stated that evaluations are effective tools for measures of discipline and termination.

Rockstroh responded that he understood the negative aspect of evaluations but he would like to do something that is positive also. He said in regards to the measures of discipline, they were very weak because there are employees that are really bad and have been bad for years but it does not show up in the evaluation. He reiterated that he does not like a 7-graded series and stated that his excellent employees are still paid the same as average employees.

Cornacchia agreed that there needs to be a system that differentiates between hard-working employees and employees that come in, do their job and go home.

Wilson noted that one of the things that department managers do with the really good employees was to assign them more work which oftentimes causes them to burn out. She noted that their strength and dedication are rewarded by asking them to put in even more hours. Wilson agreed that she would like to see some kind of reward system that is the carrot but she does not want a punitive system.

Cornacchia said that he would like to see a change of thinking as far as managing for excellence as opposed to managing for mediocrity and said that right now our evaluation system manages for the middle and that provides no incentive and no reward system.

Gleason stated that the focus can be on that reward system with efforts to gain productively by getting ordinary people in situations where they can perform extraordinary work. Gleason stated that he has always resisted trying to find the extraordinary person and build an organization around them because either they leave or they are one dimensional. He believed it was important to get all the people leaning on each other so that the productivity of the business is the focus and then reward the team assignment.

Rust stated he would like to see this set as an all day session and bring in resources and engage bargaining units to do a major workshop around this item.

Carmichael commented that management and labor groups are getting together and as a result, there are models to look at regarding performance-based pay and pay for teams, etc. He suggested spending a day looking at some of those models.

Rust said he wanted to get research started and get this on the work plan in the next few months so that something can happen next spring. He stressed that he does not want to lose this for another year.

Chouinard suggested scheduling a work session in March where assignments can form.

It was decided to schedule a work session in the next one to two months to review the list and make some decisions. Suchart will get information from the University regarding what others are doing that we are not doing.

- **Improving The Image and Credibility of Lane County.**

Green stated that another priority discussed came from a document created in 1987 entitled "Improving the Image and Credibility of Lane County." He stated copies would be provided. He said many of the department managers and commissioners that prepared this document were present today. Green thought there were many good things in it as far as what Lane County can do. He gave an example of the area of communication and said there was a suggestion of sending out a newsletter because there was a concern that the only time staff finds out about Board action is through the news or on T.V. Green noted that there is now talk of doing a newsletter online. He stated that he and Weeldreyer will look at this document as part of their system review to talk about some of the things that have not been done.

Van Vactor stated that Green's comments tie in well with the action the Board took regarding the public information officer.

- **Public Safety Coordinating Council**

Regarding PSCC, Cornacchia talked about their priorities. He said there is a state mandate to continue on the path to coordinate and improve our system which is being described as groups of systems not yet interrelated or connected. He said the PSCC can provide a better way of communicating between jurisdictions and between departments to get a better product in the criminal justice system. Cornacchia explained that the PSCC is putting together a 1145 application for money. He said there is an agreement between the two cities for a small amount of funding of staff and that the PSCC is trying to identify what the work program is and what the staff level requirements are going to be. Cornacchia stated that as there are more future budget considerations, this item in the budget should have a priority. He stressed the need to get the message out that the PSCC is going to get that work program in place and is committed to an adequate level of resource to keep it going.

Green agreed to follow up on these priorities and will have a check-in every six months with the next one in August.

3. Department Interfacing with BCC-Presentation:
What does the "Team" need to do to make a more positive environment for presentations to BCC?

This item was taken out of order.

Green talked about the fact it is not always a pleasant experience for some people to come before the Board. He asked what the Board could do to make staff's job easier.

Rockstroh responded that he did not think the Board had to change much. He stated that he argues with commissioners and said that they should have good honest dialogues and should be able to disagree publicly despite being televised. He thought that should be a ground rule. He stated it was important that there is always a forum where they can disagree.

Ball stated that that is not a feeling that is shared anywhere near unanimous among the management team. In fact, he said there was some concern about how the dynamics turn in discussions before the Board. He felt there was a need to work on a dialogue where managers can get a clear sense from the Board about their expectations.

Rust said that if commissioners have a question that is damaging or embarrassing, that they should pick up the phone before the meeting and discuss it.

Cornacchia agreed with Rockstroh and stated that debates can occur in forum with sincerity and candor and, if management can incorporate that into delivery, there should not be any of these problems. He felt that if both parties approach with everything on the table and can allow for open debating, then you get a good product. Cornacchia stated that the commissioners do not want to please, they want to be convinced.

Weeldreyer said they also discussed tone used when engaged in dialogue and a commitment was made to strive for respect in terms of communication.

Suchart commented that very often a staff person may feel that the Board is not paying attention because they are either engaged in conversations with one another, watching the clock, writing or reading. Suchart stated that most of the time, all five commissioners will not be looking at the person and paying attention.

Ball remarked that a lot of things that come to the Board are not really necessary and suggested that maybe that is something to review so that the discussions that do come will be important.

Gangle said that when he brings something before the Board, he would like some feedback from all members of the Board.

Gleason said it might be helpful to set time limits for presentations and then re-enforce that time limit. He agreed with Ball that it is time to clear the clutter.

Weeldreyer suggested a process setting for this issue.

2. DISCUSSION/Lane County Goals.

- Visions

Weeldreyer stated that the Board has not done long-range planning to set a vision for the organization although individual departments have done a good job of setting departmental vision.

Weeldreyer asked how many departments have a vision statement and if there should be a vision statement in addition to the Lane County mission statement.

Chouinard explained that generally mission statements are what you do, how you do it and who you do it for and a vision statement is a picture of the future, what you want to be, what you are striving to accomplish a goal.

Rockstroh believed it is important for Lane County to recognize how broad and diverse it is. He noted that to a certain degree, each department head runs a major corporation and within those corporations are divisions that are run very differently.

Weeldreyer said that part of what she would like to see by having guiding principles that support a mission/vision statement is to tie that into the budget process so that resources are allocated based on what Lane County says it is going to do.

Chouinard said (referring to the difference between mission and vision statements), he thinks it is good to get feedback and input on what the mission and operating principles are but said he believes it is the leadership team's responsibility to manage the vision statement.

Hoyt said he did not want to spend a lot of time on the mission statement unless it was going to be changed significantly.

Van Vactor said that tying a vision into the budget in the limited time frame was unreasonable. However, he said, he does think developing a vision statement for Lane County is important if the leadership team is committed to it. Van Vactor said it would be valuable to Lane County to have a vision statement but thinks it would be long and arduous to actually get it.

Weeldreyer said she would spearhead this idea and felt Green was committed as well. She said that she needs a commitment from the organization that this is the direction to move and that this is a priority.

- Values

Weeldreyer referred to the handout in the packet describing Lane County values.

Van Vactor said he thought the value statement was a good statement but he felt there should be a process to get input from employees before it is formally adopted.

Rockstroh said that a value statement had been distributed in Health & Human Services and has been brought before him many times. He commented that it is something that is actually being read and does have meaning.

Weeldreyer asked if it should be formally adopted so that it is a county-wide statement and not just in effect in some departments.

Rust stated he would move to adopt them right now if there was agreement.

Goodson remarked he would like to send them out to employees and encourage them to contribute their comments. He said, if there was agreement by employees, they could be adopted at that time.

Dumdi agreed that they should be circulated among employees.

Gangle said that for values to mean something to employees, they need to provide ideas and be actively involved in writing them.

Forster echoed the need for staff input in this process. He said he would hope that if these values were adopted today, that they do not preclude departments from also having values that relate to their mission and the activities that they engage in on a daily basis.

Van Vactor did not think it was a good idea to send them out for input after they have been adopted.

Chouinard said their department gave direction specifically from executive directors to the division managers to take them to staff meetings over a month or so and talk about them in a group setting where people can discuss them rather than just write comments. He explained that those summaries came back to him and that he then took those comments and created a bigger summary list to take back to the executive management team to be reaffirmed. Chouinard said they were called operating principles rather than personal values.

It was decided to provide employees with the mission statement and the Lane County values, with small meetings set for discussion and input, and employees would also give input as far as whether to call them values or operating principles.

4. Communication within the Organization.

Van Vactor stated that he believed that as the County moves into the electronic age, there is a need for consistent communication electronically and said that would probably mean using some uniform systems. He asked if the County as an organization should make a commitment to switch to Microsoft systems. He said he wants to try to develop a County communication network or some system that is not as expensive as the newsletter but which the County can use to get out essential information. Van Vactor commented that he believed they could get out information very inexpensively and asked for thoughts on how to implement this.

Gangle stated that he had always supported the employee newsletters. However, he is concerned about the amount of staff time and support time it takes to create, print and send out a newsletter. Gangle stated that in the past, there were problems getting information from departments.

Weeldreyer commented about the Public Information Officer position and asked if that person's primary duties were going to be external communication or a combination of internal/external communication.

Van Vactor said he believed the Board needs to make that call and that they should have some discussion regarding that issue. He remarked that it may be a good idea to have some portion of the duties be internal communication.

Rockstroh commented that the County should have someone whose role was internal and who could give weekly abstracts about what action the commissioners took. He suggested sending that out on e-mail. He stated that it would not be near as time consuming as a newsletter. Rockstroh stressed that employees need to know what the County is doing. He said, for example, regarding the levy, employees do not have a clue what is happening other than what they read in the paper.

Weeldreyer stated that as far as scheduling meetings electronically, in an organization that is driven by meetings, it was essential to have an effective way to schedule those meetings to have the greatest participation.

Rockstroh asked if there was agreement that they were going to look at getting a common scheduler. He said he did not know anyone who was on a scheduler.

Hoyt stated that he felt there was a need to get everyone on Scheduler Plus.

5. Improving Employee Productivity.

- **Training Programs**

Weeldreyer said the County is in the process of hiring a new training coordinator and said there was agreement for the need for enhanced training in management for all employees to have a core curriculum that ties in with the standards for performance evaluations.

Van Vactor remarked that he has an even broader vision in terms of training programs. He commented that the biggest chunk of budget is personnel and said that, unfortunately, over the last years of reductions, one of the things that has gone out of the budget has been adequate training budgets. Van Vactor stated that he would like to see the organization develop far more aggressive training programs. He noted that there have been discussions with the bargaining units regarding the possibility of rather than a cost-of-living adjustment, using that one to two percent to provide more training for employees. Van Vactor reported that labor is hesitant right now but said the issue may be raised again in a joint committee process.

Van Vactor asked if there was agreement by the union, would departments be in support of putting that money in a common fund. He said that one of the complaints the union made was that training only goes out to the favorites of management and never to some of the people that really need it. Van Vactor thought that by centralizing the allocation of those funds, they could make sure it is available to all the employees.

McManus stated that the training in their department is pretty narrow and specific to the field. He agreed that there is real value, especially for new hires as far as for explaining what Lane County is, what Lane County government stands for and what services it provides.

Ball stated he did not agree with pulling the function out of the departments. He said that, although the departments try to see themselves as a unified organization, in fact they are very different kinds of departments with very different kinds of functions.

Van Vactor stated that the initial approach was that it would stay as it was, which is decentralized departments with the addition of the training officer in HRMS. However, he stressed that the issues of training favorites is a real problem and they need to sit down and have some specific plan for resolving that issue.

Gleason recommended that this leadership group choose the business practices that need to be refined or changed that would increase productivity. Gleason suggested one might be scheduling. He said with Scheduler Plus, a person can automatically, from their workstation, find out availability, schedule the room and get confirmation back. Gleason noted that scheduling consumes one-third to one-half of a full-time person so it is a major productivity

gain. Gleason stressed the need to determine a topic and invest some money in it. Gleason said that the biggest thing to do was to commit their energies over the next year to something that would increase our organizational productivity as a collective effort and then commit a team of people and resources and provide the training necessary to do that.

Carmichael commented that his training is pretty much individualized to their particular tasks, however, he said he thought the scheduling piece was important. He said a lot of people have Scheduler Plus but do not know how to use it.

Suchart said the comments made here demonstrated that there are different needs for different departments that have different core needs. Suchart said as far as the new training coordinator, his plan is not to have that person do organizational development, conflict resolution or do any more than to set things up for the department. He stated he does not want to see that person get diverted away from the objective of providing training for the overall County and become more involved in the everyday affairs of departments. Suchart stressed that unless he hears differently from this leadership team, this person will be devoted 100% to providing training and meeting training needs.

Rust stated that he agreed with Gleason as far as identifying what is the biggest productivity gain for the County.

Van Vactor said the Management Team will meet and discuss whether to take on an issue and what that issue might be. He stated that he would get a recommendation from the Management Team on this and said he believed the Board and Budget Team would honor that agreement.

Weeldreyer stated that what the Board wanted to communicate was that as Lane County's resources continue to dwindle, the issue of productivity becomes increasingly important and they want to work as a team to approach it in a positive way that benefits the organization because that benefits the people in the county.

- **Standards for Performance Evaluations.**

Weeldreyer noted that this issue had been discussed at length already and acknowledged the need for agreement on setting standards. However, due to time constraints, the team felt they should not put any additional time into this topic today.

6. **REVIEW/Budget Schedule and Role of Management Analysts.**

Schulz said the schedule was broken into four phases. He reported that they are in Phase 1, which started on February 12 and will continue for three weeks. He said this phase consisted of the departments preparing their budgets. He stated they will finish on March 1. Schulz said Phase 2 is when the budget staff reviews individual budgets with the departments. He

said this internal review of the budget is about a three-week process starting on the 4th on March and running through March 22. He noted that election day is on the 18th. Schulz remarked that Phase 3 starts on the 25th of March when the budget staff starts working on the production of document. He continued with Phase 3.1 as being the week of April 15, when they send the budget over to the printer. Schulz explained Phase 4 as being the four-week process of budget meetings on April 23 which is a public hearing, April 25 budget meeting through the May 14 with an approved budget on May 15. He said in the event the levy fails, then the budget staff will prepare flat budgets and not put staff through the agony of seeing cuts in their departments.

Rust stated that he wants to see what the cuts will be if the levy fails.

Van Vactor asked if department managers want to put employees through that stress.

Gangle said there is something to be said about getting the message out early. He noted that employees are adults and that they should be able to let them begin to absorb and adjust and work through the process if doomsday is coming.

Dumdi agreed that it is their responsibility to let employees know what the situation is and what the worst case scenarios are in our organization.

Rust stated that he needs to know the facts about the budget numbers if the levy fails because people always ask "what if" and he wants to be able to say this is what will happen.

Van Vactor noted that this was an important discussion that needed to continue, however, they were running out of time. He asked if they could commit to the agenda team, setting another time for discussion if department directors want to participate in this direction.

6. REVIEW/Budget Schedule and Role of Management Analysts.

Van Vactor suggested that this item be deferred because it had been planned to be a discussion between the management analysts and the Board. However, he explained that because two Board members had to leave early, he did not feel it was a productive use of time.

There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 1:17 p.m.


Zoanne Gilstrap, Recording Secretary