

W.7.b.

Memorandum Date: January 5, 2010

TO: Board of County Commissioners
DEPARTMENT: Administration, Intergovernmental Relations
PRESENTED BY: Alex Cuyler, Intergovernmental Relations Manager
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Federal Issue Update: United Front and correspondence

I. MOTION

There are two motions recommended regarding correspondence:

- Move to approve letters drafted to the Lane County Congressional delegation regarding community health center funding.
- Move to approve letters drafted to the Lane County Congressional delegation regarding the disposition of federal properties located in Lowell, Oregon.

There is one motion recommended regarding the United Front lobbying effort:

- Move to approve Lane County projects and issues identified for inclusion in the 2010 United Front federal lobbying effort.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

There are three distinct items up for discussion that relate to Lane County's interest in federal issues:

- The annual United Front lobbying effort is scheduled for the first week of March, 2010. Discussion will include a summary of the 2009 effort and a preview of projects and issues for 2010.
- Intergovernmental relations staff has drafted letters to the local delegation regarding two upcoming opportunities in Congress to support additional funding for community health centers. The letters ask that our delegation take efforts to support funding for community health centers by maintaining language in the health care reform bill and inserting language in the jobs bill.
- Intergovernmental relations staff has drafted a letter to the local delegation asking them to support language in the Water Resources Development Act reauthorization that will direct the Corp or Engineers and the US Forest Service to transfer ownership of real property located in Lowell to the City of Lowell.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History **Correspondence**

- The Lane County Board of County Commissioners regularly corresponds with the federal delegation on matters of importance. The most recent correspondence was approved by the Board on October 20, 2009 and addressed the climate change bill debate in the Senate.
- The Lane County Board of Commissioners regularly supports the efforts of Lane County cities that wish to obtain federal properties. The Board previously

supported the transfer of property in Lowell from the Corp of Engineers to a low income housing development managed by the St. Vincent DePaul Society of Lane County.

United Front

- On January 28, 2009, the Board approved the list of projects and policies developed for the 2009 federal lobbying effort.
- At least one individual from the Board of County Commissioners traditionally travels to Washington, DC to participate in the annual United Front trip.

B. Policy Issues

Each of these efforts is ultimately related to securing federal funding for Lane County interests.

C. Board Goals

The Strategic Plan does reference the development of balanced revenue strategies and the pursuit of intergovernmental revenue.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

- Securing funding for the Riverstone Health Center through federal sources will offset limited local resources for this project.
- Securing federal funds through the United Front effort has brought many millions of dollars of infrastructure and other funds to Lane County and has paid for the annual cost of travel and contract lobbyist many times over.

E. Analysis

Correspondance

Health Center funding has been a priority of the Obama Administration and this Congress. The letter outlines Lane County's recent efforts to secure grant funding for the Riverstone Health Center, and identifies two upcoming votes in Congress whereby our delegation may be able to influence the outcome such that increased funding for health center construction may be available.

In Lowell, the identified property has been vacant for two years and the disposition of the property has been complicated by the joint ownership of the Corp of Engineers (land) and the US Forest Service (buildings). Inserting language into the Water Resources Development Act will direct these agencies to transfer the property to the City of Lowell in no uncertain terms. Lowell will then be able to utilize these resources within its ongoing planning efforts.

United Front

During the 2009 United Front trip, Lane County lobbied for a variety of issues and projects. Now that the federal appropriations efforts have concluded, Lane County was successful in securing \$850,000 for public safety related funding.

Specifically, Lane County was successful in securing \$500,000 for the Offender Treatment and Transition Program, and will share in the \$650,000 awarded for public safety technology improvements. These improvements will purchase monitoring equipment within the jail facility, and communications devices for parole and probation staff.

The 2009 effort was instrumental in securing an extension of a federal Department of Labor grant for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Education Center and the elevation in status of the Territorial Highway improvement project with regards to the re-authorization of the federal transportation bill.

These successes were especially gratifying, given that overall congressionally directed funding was down by almost 35% for the federal FY10.

For the 2010 effort, several Lane County projects that were highlighted in 2009 remain on the list. These include:

- The Bioenergy Park request for \$5 million. Plans remain to co-develop this project within the footprint of the Junction City wastewater treatment facility.
- The Healthy Babies initiative remains on this list after receiving strong support from the local delegation. The project proposal will now include the Nurse Family Partnership, a nationally known protocol that shows proven results for at risk families and individuals.
- The Veneta Highway 126 Corridor Study remains on the list for \$4.4 million.

There are several new projects that were identified for 2010.

- Teen Court Expansion. This is a regional effort between Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County to bolster peer courts. Peer courts are proven to be effective at steering juveniles away from becoming repeat offenders, but are not well funded in Lane County. The request for \$750,000 will pay for staff and limited facility and equipment development.
- Sheriff Office Equipment and Technology Improvements. This \$700,000 request for equipment will focus on items that will improve the efficiency of operations within the Lane County jail.

There are several policy issues that will also be included within the auspices of the 2010 United Front trip.

- Support for the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (federal safety net payments).
- Recommendations for clarifying language related to grant funding eligibility based on the definition of rural areas. Current language, linking the definition to metropolitan statistical areas, is highly problematic to Lane County due to the dense urban populations in Eugene and Springfield which impact the very rural nature of the un-incorporated regions of Lane County.

F. Alternatives/Options

Correspondence

Suggest edits to the draft letters.

United Front

United Front projects are initially developed during the summer months. Should the Board have suggestions for future projects, it may suggest those at any time.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board move to approve both the letters and the United Front projects. These efforts are consistent with past activities related to federal issues.

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION**Correspondence**

Each of the bills mentioned in the correspondence to the Lane County delegation will come before Congress in January.

United Front

The annual trip is scheduled for March 1-4, 2010. Appropriation forms are due to Congressional offices in late February. Staff will be developing written support documents for the trip during January and February.

VI. FOLLOW-UP

Intergovernmental relations staff will continue to monitor these issues as a matter of course and is available to provide updates to the Board as requested.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Draft letter regarding health center funding

Attachment B - Draft letter regarding Lowell-based federal properties disposition

Attachment C - Resolution approving United Front projects

Attachment D – Draft United Front project list developed by Smith Dawson Andrews staff

ATTACHMENT A

January 5, 2010

Dear Senator:

Lane County currently operates five federally qualified health centers, three in Eugene and two in Springfield. During 2009 we provided more than 70,000 visits to approximately 13,300 patients – 78% of whom had incomes that were at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. (59% of our patients are at or below 100% of the FPL)

Our two main centers in Eugene and Springfield are expanding and modernizing due to increased demand for health care services. When completed, these centers will be comprehensive facilities that provide high quality and compassionate care for infants, children, adolescents, adults, and seniors. The facilities are central to our efforts to improve quality of life issues for our residents, and assist in our mission to ensure that all Lane County residents have equal opportunities to succeed in life.

The federal government has helped us with this mission. We've received assistance from last year's stimulus funds that were developed in recognition of the increased demand for health care that came along with the economic downturn. It allows us to target at risk populations such as the homeless, receive increased per patient funding, and improve recruitment of qualified personnel through the National Health Service Corporation's student loan repayment program.

We wanted you to be aware that you have two upcoming votes in Congress that will allow you to continue focusing funding into community health centers nationwide.

- The so-called "Manager's Amendment" in the Senate's just-passed health care bill (H.R. 3590) was adopted and now heads to conference committee. There is \$1.5 billion specifically identified in the legislation for health center construction. We urge you to support the language creating a Community Health Center Fund in section 10503, specifically paragraph c.) Construction.
- The "Jobs for Main Street" bill (H.R. 2847) passed from the House on December 20, 2009 and will come to the Senate in early January. This bill currently does not provide any funding for community health centers, but advocates for health centers are proposing that the Senate add such language. Health center construction creates jobs in the short term, and healthy Americans become tax payers and not tax consumers. We urge you to support the position of the National Association of Community Health Centers, and their efforts to include \$2.0 billion for grants for construction, renovation and equipment, and for the acquisition of health information technology systems, for health centers.

It is very likely that some of this funding could make its way to Lane County. You supported our recent grant proposal to HRSA for the Facilities Improvement Project that would have provided Lane County with much needed assistance to finish our renovations

at the Springfield based Riverstone Clinic. Lane County has completed purchase of the actual building, but is seeking funding for the renovations of that facility. We were informed recently that there were 600 applicants nationwide, but only 100 awards were made. Seventeen applications came from Oregon, and only one application was funded. In follow on communications with HRSA, we were told our application rated a score of 92/100. Obviously, the competition was intense. It certainly points to both the need for services and facilities and the level of professionalism with which Lane County approaches our responsibilities in this arena.

We very much appreciate your on-going efforts to support these facilities, and ask that you take advantage of these upcoming bills to ensure that community health center funding is included.

Sincerely,

Board Chair

ATTACHMENT B

January 5, 2010

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

The Lane County Board of Commissioners has become aware of an effort to direct the US Corps of Engineers to transfer select property located in Lowell, Oregon to the City of Lowell through language your office may be able to incorporate into the re-authorization of the Water Resources Development Act. We are in full support of the City of Lowell in this regard, and ask that you pursue such language to the best of your ability.

We understand that Lowell recently submitted a WRDA Project Request Form to your office. This letter is in support of that document. The request outlines a proposal to dispose of the property commonly referred to as the Lowell Forest Service Complex. It is located in the center of Lowell and has been vacant for three years. The buildings have been declared excess by the Forest Service, but because the land is owned by the Corps, GSA can't take any action to dispose of the property until the land is excessed to GSA. Lowell's request is to transfer the property to the City of Lowell without compensation for the purpose of economic development uses.

The Lane County Board of Commissioners is well aware of Lowell's efforts to develop its community. We've previously been involved with property transfers and land use and development planning in Lowell. We believe that the proposed property transfer should proceed as quickly as possible, especially having knowledge of the outcome of delayed federal property disposition in the city of Oakridge.

As always, your attention to the needs of the smaller cities in the 4th Congressional district is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Board Chair

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO. 01-1-

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING LANE COUNTY
UNITED FRONT PRIORITIES FOR PURPOSES
OF FEDERAL ADVOCACY AND SECURING
APPROPRIATIONS

WHEREAS, Lane County has significant and ongoing financial needs related to the provision of a wide array of public services and infrastructure development and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress annually appropriates funding for a variety of public improvements and services; and

WHEREAS, Lane County Government employs an independent lobbying firm which specializes in federal advocacy issues located in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Lane County partners with a number of other governmental agencies to develop a list of potential projects that benefit the citizens of the region in an effort characterized as the "united front"; and

WHEREAS, a local process is followed to discuss recommended projects that are to be prioritized by each partner; and

WHEREAS, the "united front" annually travels to Washington, DC to mutually promote said projects to federal agencies and policy makers; and

WHEREAS, the "united front" continues to be an effort which results in specific appropriations and grants to the partners of the "united front" which have resulted in improvements to public services delivered to the residents of Lane County.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Lane County Board of County Commissioners does hereby confirm the following Lane County projects which shall be placed into the document that outlines the projects for purposes of federal advocacy and securing appropriations. Said projects are outlined in Attachment A to this board order.

DATED this _____ day of January, 2010.

APPROVED AS TO FORM
Date 12/28/09
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CLERK OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Pete Sorenson, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED UNITED FRONT PROJECTS - 2010

ATTACHMENT D

Project Name	Request	Jurisdiction	Current project	Possible Accounts	Notes
Water & Energy					
Wastewater Reclamation System	\$500,000	Coburg	Yes	Interior-EPA-STAG	RUS working on possible new funding package. Decision expected by December 09. 2010 request may depend on answer.
Dorris Ranch Living History Farm	\$1 M	Willamalane & Springfield	No	Interior-HPF/Save America's Treasures Museums & Libraries?	Document National Registry. Need history of funding for Dorris Ranch.
				Interior-Preserve America grants?	
Water & Energy					
Bio-Energy Facility	\$5 M	Lane Co.	Yes	E&W – Energy - EERE	UF partners need to discuss energy efficiency projects and determine highest priorities
WPCF Electrical Generator Upgrade	\$6 M	Eugene, Springfield, Lane Co.	No	E&W – Energy - EERE	
Public Safety					
Police Special Operations Facility	\$1 M	Eugene	No	DHS - FEMA – State & Local Programs	
Teen Court Expansion	\$750,000	Lane Co. & Eugene	No	CJS – OJP – Juvenile Justice	Springfield involvement pending
Lane Sheriff – Equipment & Technology Improvements	~\$700,000	Lane Co.	No	CJS – OJP – Byrne	Combine equipment portions of requests. Recommend no “soft cost” requests (i.e. staff or training) – only equipment.
				CJS – COPS – Tech.	
Education & Health					
Student & Family Support Center	\$500,000	SPS	Yes	LHHSE – HHS – ACF – Social Services	
Springfield Schools Virtual School	\$400,000	SPS	No	LHHSE – Education - FIE	
Lane Healthy Babies-Healthy Communities Initiative	\$600,000	Lane Co.	Yes	LHHSE – CDC - Public Health Leadership & Improvement	
Transportation & Community Development					
Fire Hydrant Replacements	\$250,000	Eugene	No	THUD - EDI	Highlight benefits to low-income neighborhoods.
West Eugene EmX Env. Analysis	\$1.5M	LTD	Yes	TTHUD-FTA-AA	Contingent on possible FY09 Alt. Analysis funds.
LTD Technology Improvements	\$6 M	LTD	No	THUD – FTA-Bus & Bus Facilities	
West Eugene Transportation Study	\$5 M	Eugene	Yes	TTHUD-STP	Partners may need to discuss and narrow requests for roadway projects.
Franklin Boulevard-Glenwood Section	\$1 M	Springfield	Yes	TTHUD-STP	
McKenzie Hwy/Straub Pkwy (126 and Main)	\$2 M	Springfield	Yes	TTHUD-STP	
Veneta Hwy 126 Corridor Study	\$4.4 M	Lane Co.	No	TTHUD-STP	
Middle Fork Willamette River Path	\$4.9 M	Willamalane	Yes	TTHUD-STP/TCSP	
Items for Update/Support (in book or separate fact sheet):					
Forest Legacy – South Eugene Hills COPS Hiring policies – “Rural” definition USACE Water Projects: Metro Waterways/Amazon Creek, Medicare Ambulance Relief Delta Ponds, Springfield Mill Race					

PROPOSED UNITED FRONT PROJECTS - 2010