

# Mary's River Estates Road District

## 2009-2010 Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2009 7:30 PM, Philomath Library Meeting Room

Meeting Attendees: Rich Kaestner, John & Linda Radetich, TR Gregg, Brian Bach, John Borowski, Yvette Spitz, Mike and Lisa Miller, Rich Veronen, Sha Sifford, Robyn Lillehei, Lee Kitzman, Laura Berman, Linda Waymire, Bardon Maginnis, Mike Pinckard, Mike Belli, Paul Krause, Lori Nunn, Andy Evans, Jim Tice

Review of Columbine request for quote, recommended improvements: Jim Tice, ED Hughes. Jim was previously asked to inspect Columbine from the end of the pavement at the top of the hill to the junction with Queen Anne drive. Concerns that had been noted previously at RD meetings included lack of visibility and road mis-alignment creating near head on conditions at the top of the hill, narrow and steep roads, washboarding and poor drainage/culverts. Jim's proposal is attached. He discussed the need to re-align, straighten and widen out to 22 ft (current road is 14ft) for the 1250ft of Columbine, achieve consistent grade by putting in rock in low areas and removing from higher area – leaving ~1000yds of dirt and trees in existing right of way, extending 4 existing culverts and placing and compact 2200 tons of rock for a subtotal of \$52,250. The lower end of Queen Anne was also assessed including excavating and achieving consistent grade for the lower 250ft section, including hauling dirt on site within right of way and placing and compacting 100 tons of rock for a subtotal of \$3760. Of course, parts of the job could be completed as smaller, separate projects, such as the widening out the road at the top of the hill. <scanned in copy of proposal attached entitled "Columbine EDhughs proposal">

### Public Comments & Questions:

John B: Personally don't want paving – expresses concern over increased speed. Would like to see more detail of the proposed work – a schematic.

Sha S: How much money would be saved by not going wider as much (<22ft)? Reply: going to 18 or 20' wide might save ~ \$5K. However, fire support and forestry generally want to see at least 20', so Jim strongly recommended 20' wide be the minimum.

Bardon: Strongly supported proposal – in line with the plan to improve the roads.

Linda: Would there be many curves left when finished? Reply: mostly straight now, we'd widen out at the top of the hill to the downhill side to fix the head on situation & prevent driveway issues on the uphill side. Otherwise, mostly like it is today; pretty straight.

Mike M: What's the bid expiration date? None marked? Reply: as long as the price of rock is stable, the job bid is pretty stable through the end of the year.

Bardon: Would you be willing to work out a payment plan in November time frame, as that is when the majority of next years taxes are deposited. Reply: probably no problem.

Linda: Would the rock base be different for a paved vs. road gravel? Reply: not really, 1' of rock is recommended driving bed, probably good for 20 years. The rock base is usually looked for by the county.

Linda: What about the cost of tree debris removal? (This was not included in the bid). Reply: debris cleanup ~ \$1,000./ 30 Yard dumpster and \$450./ dump truck load.

A request was made to see if we could get some visual aides put out in the area to mark the approximate road width of the bid (22'). Reply: that would be OK, Andy E will work with Jim to get some stakes put in place to help residents visualize the possible work.

Jim was thanked for his time to come in after hours and to have a good dialog with the MRE residents. Jim left at this time.

### Budget Hearing:

- Introductions
- Presentation of Budget Message (Linda Waymire). Linda reviewed the purpose of this meeting to review the approved budget and solicit public input. The budget message was read and the general fund expenditures (form LB-30), resources (form LB-20) and special fund requirements (LB-10) were reviewed. Summary table is below. <The budget message/description is posted on the website and LB forms should be posted soon.> Please see the LB forms for the details.

<u>Expenditure Category</u>	<u>Total Budget 2009-2010</u>	<u>Last Year (2008-2009)</u>
Materials and services	\$32700	\$41700
Capital Outlay	\$78,500	\$116,500
Operation Contingency	\$6000	\$6000
Total	\$117,200	\$164,200

- Expenditure notes: the materials and services will probably change (go up) as we don't appear to be able to get planned patch and paving and ditch maintenance work completed this year and it will roll into next year.

<u>Resource Category</u>	<u>Total Budget 2009-2010</u>	<u>Last Year (2008-2009)</u>
Estimated cash on hand July 1	\$60,000	\$38,000
Expected taxes received	\$56,000	\$74,000
Estimated Interest	\$1200	\$2200
Possible loan	0	\$50,000
Total	\$117,200	\$164,200

- Resource notes: **Reflects lowering of tax rate from %2.9414 to %2.206**

Also, a special fund was created to budget Fire Evacuation Funds: \$852 from general fund to provide matching funds to qualify \$848 Special districts grant for a total of \$1700.

- Also presented was the tax rate comparison chart from last year's budget hearing (posted on web site) and highlighting that MRE has the highest rate in Benton County and among the highest in the state.

Excerpts were read from a document describing previous special election results for a 10 yr construction levy for MRE roads in 1998 which failed 67 to 29 <see attached scan entitled 'Chronicle of Taxes.pdf'>. The data was presented to show that historically the majority of residents in MRE were not willing to support the intent of a road construction levy. There was some deliberation as to the applicability of this document to the current meeting.

- Public feedback on budget & approved tax rate

Bardon: Asked 'what is the goal of the road district?'. This budget threatens capital improvements initiative.

Linda:

Bardon: Reduction in taxes has minor impact on take-home pay (\$14/month?). Stated there has been a long term plan documented to widen and pave all MRE roads.

John B: Didn't know of any plan to widen and pave roads.

Mike M: Road district budget preparation for the last 2 years had no stated long term vision or goal. That was why the separate group was initiated; to recommend a stated goal, among other things.

Yvette: Had continually asked for documentation (plans, minutes, financial statements) for some time for previous periods and hasn't obtained what was desired.

TR: Believes there was clarity (at one time) and has since been misplaced.

John B: Agrees safer roads are good, but doesn't like: forest being pushed back, more erosion, walking being less safe, doesn't agree with the need for road widening on Columbine, aesthetics of paving. Hasn't seen accidents due to gravel, but would be OK with a community decision. Taxes are an issue in these tough times, but not a big problem.

Bardon: Likes the paving: less noise, much less dust, quicker response time for emergency vehicles (story of ambulance response time).

Andy E: Not sure whether to pave or not, but he'd like to have it. However, maybe not to 20' wide. Since car passing is an issue, we should look at options like a single lane with turn-outs. This helps direct traffic into one space, pedestrians into another, slows traffic. Care could need to be taken to ensure adequate line of sight for turn-outs.

Lee K: Been here since 1977, the road improvements have made the roads less safe, not more, at least at my house. More noise, drivers at 35-40 mph. We need more group consensus before making further capital decisions.

Brian B: We need to define what is "done". Can each area be brought up to what they want? Also, gravel doesn't prevent people from speeding.

Bardon: There is no speed limit on gravels roads via the county.

TR: Had a technical question: Are we able to have the 3 commissioners vote (or re-vote) on the budget or not (or do we need the whole budget committee).

Robyn: Had talked to Gordon Tiemeyer (Oregon Department of Revenue) recently. The process that we are following is that the committee was formed and recommended the budget. At that point (now), the governing body (the 3 commissioners) decides at the hearing whether to change the budget or not. If they decide to change, a new hearing is needed.

Bardon: Made a request to the governing body to raise the tax rate back up (to what it was last year).

Andy: His personal thoughts on this is: we went through a process during the 3 previous budget committee meetings and there were reasons for what we did.

TR: (group agreed that it was appropriate to move up the RD agenda item on " Majority representative of Queen Anne Drive to present results of survey and positional statement"). <see attached documents "QueenAnneMay5th2009.pdf" and "Queen Anne positional Statement.pdf">. TR read the attached positional statement, and discussed how he recently conducted a gathering of Queen Anne residents for a discussion on the paving of Queen Anne and the generation of the attached documents. Positional statement:

*"As residents and homeowners located with frontage on Queen Anne Drive in Philomath, Oregon as well as members of the Marys River Estates Road District, we the undersigned are providing the commissioners of the MRE Road District this statement to provide a record of our consensus and intent. It is our intent to make clear our decision that we want the Road District to continue the work of developing and completing improvements on Queen Anne Drive consistent with the hard surface paving completed elsewhere within the District."*

TR stated a similar effort was made in 2005 with similar results, expressed concern that the Queen Anne residents interest were inaccurately represented in previous meetings and cited meeting notes referencing 'community resistance' in the budget decisions are being made in disregard to the residents clear mandate of almost four years standing. He also apologized for not having this data to present at any of the budget committee meetings. Finally, a request was made to the MRE RD commissioners to allocate funds immediately and without further delay to complete improvements.

Rick V: Stated he participated in the recent Queen Anne resident meeting but had issue with his freedom to speak at that meeting. Had concerns with the meeting that some of the landowners (not residents) were not counted, but agreed that even with that the majority still favored the improvements. Also noted that not just the Queen Anne residents were impacted; all taxpayers, walkers, other drivers. Urged caution as you can't undo paving. He liked the idea of an area for pedestrians. Noted that numerous low cost alternatives to asphalt were discussed (single lane, chip seal), but no endorsement. Asked whether traffic count warrants paving? Doesn't agree that safety mandates paving.

Laura B: Asked how the meeting came about.

TR: Queen Ann meeting invites were sent out by email to Q-A residents and RD commissioners (only Robyn attended), plus some extra effort to reach residents that don't use email. Not all attended, but most did. (note that this was not an official Road district meeting).

Robyn: "Community resistance" comment wasn't specific to Queen Anne residents. Also, the budget hearing decisions were done based on projects that were approved, and we have not approved any paving on Queen Anne.

Linda R: Expressed support of TR's statement. Stated that there is work to be done, and lowering taxes does not support this.

TR: A clear request was made to improve Q-A, and lowering the tax rate will interfere with that. Will the commissioners change the budget?

Andy: In my opinion, it isn't compelling enough for us to change the result we came to via the process that we followed.

Mike M: Thanked TR for completing on an action item that was assigned back at last years budget hearing: the polling of Queen Anne's residents with respect to paving, and noted what a difficult issue this is. Also he recalled that the Columbine improvements, being focused on safety issues vs surfacing preferences, were prioritized at that meeting over moving forward with Queen Anne surfacing. At that time, in addition to priority, the Queen Anne surfacing question needed more information gathered in the areas of residence desires, county and emergency service recommendations or requirements, traffic counts, estimates of maintenance savings and an updated project cost. Now that all but the last 3 have been obtained, Mike was more optimistic that the decision whether to pave or not could be reached in the next couple of months. If that decision is made in the positive, then we can plan how to fund it (loan, raise taxes back up next year, or ?). We still have option to fund the work.

Sha: We need to be careful about weighing internal vs external motivations.

Mike B: The safety and steepness were not an issue (in reference to proposed Columbine improvements).

John B: His thoughts: no paving, no widening, safety is OK – but willing to live with community decision.

Mike M: Urged John B & other residents on Columbine to conduct a consensus such as TR did for residents along Columbine unpaved portion.

Paul K: We should notice that costs have only gone up, and they will only go up more in the future.

Mike P: We shouldn't adjust the process until everything is done.

Robyn: The take we had this year was to budget for committed projects. We haven't committed to Queen Anne yet. She reiterated the information received from Benton County Public Works that they were not likely to ever accept the roads into the county maintenance system. Also, we need to calculate and compare projected costs for the options we are considering.

Robyn made a motion to accept the current budget. A discussion ensued that this motion wasn't necessary – unless changed, the current budget will be adopted at the next meeting. No second, motion was withdrawn.

## **Regular Meeting Agenda:**

### Previous Business

Introductions – previously covered.

Review/approve minutes of prior meeting (Mike)- All 3 budget meeting minutes previously sent out were approved, pending corrections submitted by Linda.

Review of current financial information (Bardon)- currently have \$62,855.55 in the bank.

Review status of present construction work and other current business

- Progress on RFP on Columbine (Andy) – covered in initial presentation by Jim Tice & following discussion. More resident feedback on Columbine work:
  - Sha reviewed email inputs from Columbine residents on proposed work. (Sha to summarize and forward responses; post those sometime in the future?).
  - John B – likes narrow road.
  - Sha – agrees area at end of paving needs work, steepness of culverts, but not necessarily widening. Alsea falls road is paved but more narrow than ours with no center line. We should take a look at that. <Mike took action item to check this out>.
  - Mike Belli - <sorry, comments made weren't recorded>

#### New Business

- Majority representative of Queen Anne Drive to present results of survey and positional statement (TR) – covered in Budget Hearing.
- Robyn: SDAO offering consulting services on special districts concerns. 8 hrs of free advice on such things as questioning, planning, recruiting, taking surveys, helping with preparation of ballots and tallying of results. Could be very useful to RD- . Board encouraged Robyn to look into this further.
- Robyn & Mike: With regard to the Benton County Habitat Conversation Plan, the biologist was in our area & surveyed along our roads for the protected species. Robyn spoke to him and he indicated nothing was found, but we've received nothing in writing. Carolyn Menke from the Institute for Applied Ecology has promised to get back to us immediately with guidelines on roadside mowing and ditch maintenance. Until then, that work is postponed.

Meeting adjourned ~ 10:50pm.