



The board expressed their appreciation for Lauren's work and dedication to the board and the district.

1. Board Self-Evaluation Discussion – *Don Horton*

Executive Director Horton said the board typically does a self-evaluation every January at the board workshop. This year, the self-evaluation was done in October with SDAO/SDIS, the insurance carrier of the district. SDIS offered a four percent discount on the district insurance policy for the evaluation and provided an opportunity to discuss how the board is functioning. The board reviewed the evaluation, which was very favorable and discussed the recommendation for partnering with local agencies.

2. Park Services Update Integrated Pest Management Program – *Mike Duarte, Jeff Amaral and Sasha Sulia*

Mr. Duarte stated the IPM program uses effective and multi-faceted pest control strategies that are safe, cost effective, sustainable, and minimizes the negative impact on the environment and human health. It is not a single pest control method, but rather a series of pest control evaluations, decisions and controls, the four steps of the tiered approach include:

- Prevention – standards, planning and design and plant selection
- Monitoring and Thresholds
- Cultural and Mechanical Practices – proper maintenance practices with irrigation, turf, hand weeding, pruning and debris removal
- Control – live trapping rodents, pheromone traps, biological, organic pesticides and synthetic pesticides.

The board asked questions on how staff makes decisions on what to use. They also inquired about the balance of creating nice landscaping and health concerns.

Mr. Duarte explained that the district considers first the least toxic method to treat park areas. Costs are also a consideration including the cost of product, labor and how long it will last, there is also special consideration put into the cost of doing nothing. Physical impact is carefully thought out in regards to how something works, how it affects the soil, how long it lasts in the soil and if there is concern that it spreads. Everything is measured and products are carefully selected for the type of park, i.e. dog park, parks near the river, etc.

Mr. Amaral said the district has a legal obligation to manage noxious weeds as dictated by the City of Bend, Deschutes County and State of Oregon. Mr. Amaral explained that noxious weeds are a continuous problem. They displace native species and sometimes spraying is the only option because alternate methods can actually spread the weeds.

Mr. Duarte explained that staff uses a variety of methods depending on the species to control weeds in ornamental beds, tree wells, fence lines and turf. Manual hand pulling, string trimming and edging, mowing and spray applications are all used for these areas. For turf areas, it is not efficient and yields

poor results to hand pull weeds. Turf fields are spot treated as necessary, very little spray is used and often these areas will be treated once people are no longer using the fields. Weeds in these areas can cause problems if unaddressed, they can catch in cleats and trip up athletes and attract stinging insects. Trails and natural spaces are cared for with hand pulling, string trimming, prescribed fire, biological controls, increasing competition and herbicides.

Mr. Amaral said the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) issues a pesticide applicators license. This license is managed by ODA and provides certification on laws and safety, and ornamental and turf areas. The licensing requires eight credit hours on average per year. This is not a required license; the district has participated voluntarily and made it requirement for certain staff.

Mr. Amaral said the label is the law, employees must follow the label on every product. The three levels on products are:

Level 3 = Caution

Level 2 = Warning

Level 1 = Danger

He further explained that the district does not use level 1 products and when these types of products are used, more than 90 percent of the time the district is using level 3. Mr. Amaral said he is always looking for new (better) products by talking to colleagues, attending trainings and testing for success. Ms. Sulia added that the signal words of the levels indicate toxicity for the applicator and indicate what the applicator should wear for caution, not the effectiveness of the product once it is applied.

Mr. Duarte explained the different types of herbicides:

- Selective - Kills target plants that are listed on the label. Leaves all other plants unscathed.  
Example = Broad leaf
- Non-Selective = Kills actively growing vegetation by contact or by a systemic mode.  
Example = Glyphosate  
Organics = burn down, not systemic
- Pre-emergence – Kills weed seeds before they germinate.

He added that the use of organic products often leads to more applications because the spray only burns the top part of the plant, it grows back and then the organic product has to be applied again.

He spoke about the challenges of posting signs too far in advance because it takes away some flexibility. He showed a sign that staff posts when a park area has been sprayed and committed to posting signs sooner and said staff would work on updating the website with the information.

Ms. Sulia spoke about the research that she did on the practices of other agencies. She contacted the founder of Non-toxic Neighborhoods, Kim Conte. Ms. Conte referred her to the City of Irvine, since they are a city she has worked with to convert to organic pesticides. Ms. Sulia spoke about the park specific information that she got from Irvine and commented that she learned a lot from them. They are currently using 2 organic products that are a level 2. The City of Irvine is using a lot more product as a result of the change to using organic pesticides. Irvine does have one park (a dog park) that they are not using any products. Irvine had to hire 6 additional people for the parks and 18 for the city for

weed pulling and management. Ms. Sulia also pointed out that by using level 2 products, public perception can be misconstrued. The types of safety equipment worn by the applicator for level 2 is much greater than level 1 products. For example, when the public sees an employee spraying wearing level 2 precautionary gear, the public assumption is that the spray that is being used is toxic to the park patrons; when in reality it is protecting the applicator from risks associated with handling the product. Roundup is actually a level 3 caution and does not require protective gear like level 2.

Ms. Sulia also spoke about a Portland, Oregon experiment. They had a staff member that organized a large pool of volunteers to do manual work in the park to make the park pesticide free. The program expanded to five parks, then they lost the funding for the coordinator and most of the volunteers and today they are back to one pesticide free park.

Ms. Sulia mentioned a couple of other examples, but ultimately when plans were compared to the district, there was not a lot of difference in the plans indicating that the district is heading in the right direction. Other challenges she mentioned is public misconception that all spraying near park areas are district staff. There are many landscapers, HOAs and agencies that are using products around Bend.

Executive Director Horton pointed out that Roundup is probably the most common herbicide used in the country. It is used to spray schools, city areas, private landscaping and in farming. He said if you have eaten bread, it was likely grown in a field that was sprayed with Roundup. He said the annual use of Roundup by the district is about 958 oz. (less than 7.5 gallons) for 700 acres of land. Mr. Duarte answered a question by a board director about why other agencies would be moving away from Roundup. He explained that lawsuits in California are driving agencies away from the product even though the science has not shown that Roundup is dangerous. Ms. Sulia said that other agencies may be changing due to public pressure. Irvine is satisfied with their results, but many other agencies are not.

The board indicated that they are in favor of more education about what the district uses, when products are used and the tradeoffs for using alternate products and transparency to the public with better signage and website presence. It was also mentioned that the board supported a trial of a pesticide free park.

Executive Director Horton shared his concerns with trying to go pesticide free. He said that the district can and will do a better job with education, posting and signage.

### **VISITORS**

Leif, Enakai and Sam spoke to the board about the bike jumps that they built in Sunset View Park. The boys said that they live in the neighborhood and worked very hard to build the jumps that they like to ride their bikes over. They said that the jumps are fun and their friends liked them too. They would like to know what happened to the jumps because they are gone and would like the district to replace them by spring of 2020.

Executive Director Horton said he did not know what happened to the jumps they made, but he would find out and get back to them.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Meeting Minutes – 11/05/2019

***Director Hovekamp made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Director Méndez seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.***

## **BUSINESS SESSION**

1. Approve Cascade Natural Gas Easement in Jaycee Park – *Brian Hudspeth (15 min)*

Cascade Natural Gas made a request a year ago to install a natural gas line that would run through Jaycee Park. Mr. Hudspeth said this would require an easement and showed a map of the area for the easement. He said due to the size of the easement, board approval is required. The easement agreement included an appraisal for the land for \$16,173. Cascade Natural Gas has agreed to pay this amount, if approved, they will pay to record the easement and deliver copies back to the district.

Executive Director Horton mentioned that the district cannot build anything on top of the easement and said the need to do so is slim.

The board asked about the impact to the neighborhood. Mr. Hudspeth replied that the impact should be minimal. Part of the street will be closed for the equipment, but the boring process is fast.

***Director Hovekamp made a motion to authorize the executive director to negotiate and execute a utility easement to Cascade Natural Gas for an underground gas line across Jaycee Park. Director Kropf seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.***

2. Adopt Resolution No. 432 - PERS Employer Incentive Fund Update and Resolution No. 432, Approving a Lump Sum Payment to PERS – *Lindsey Lombard (45 min)*

Ms. Lombard said she would like share to some background information about PERS. She stated that PERS is a retirement plan that combines defined benefit and defined contribution plans. The pension program is the defined benefit portion of the plan which is funded by the employer, and provides employees a lifetime pension, based on a calculation. The calculation considers how many years an employee has in the PERS system and their final average salary.

The IAP is the individual account program, which is the defined contribution portion of the plan, and is funded by the employee 6% contribution. This comes out of the employee's pay, unless the employer picks-up the 6% for their employees. The District stopped picking up this contribution for its employees effective January 2014.

Ms. Lombard played a video that explains PERS and the funding deficit.

The video is found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMw2KsVj1Us>

Ms. Lombard explained the history of decisions that were made that created the large deficit in PERS funds. She said there have been multiple attempts to reform the PERS system, but the reforms have been ultimately rejected. Recently, in the 2018-19 legislation, a bill passed that created the Employer

Incentive Fund (EIF) and a mechanism for the EIF matching funds from the state. Funding for the match was included in a second bill that had four initiatives:

- EIF was funded with an initial amount of \$100 million to match employer contribution to side accounts
- Individual Account Plan (IAP) redirect of funds. This redirects a percentage of the employee’s IAP (which is the 6 percent that district employees pay) to pay for future pension benefits, reducing the employee’s overall retirements
- Final average salary (FAS) is limited with a cap of \$195,000
- Removal of the current limit of hours that a retired employee can work for a PERS employer for the calendar years 2020-2024, the employer will be required to continue the employer contribution and will be directed toward reducing the unfunded actuarial liability (UAL)

Ms. Lombard stated that the IAP redirect and FAS have been challenged and are under expedited review, but the Oregon Supreme Court has not yet agreed to hear the case.

Side accounts have been used as a tool for PERS employers to make a voluntary lump sum payment to PERS and offset a portion of the employer’s future PERS contribution rate over 20 years. The goal is to reduce future PERS costs, earn higher returns on the investment, match pension funding with costs, and amortize over a 20-year period. Ms. Lombard said it is not risk free and the investments could result in the loss of capital and the money set aside cannot be used to provide future services.

Ms. Lombard next talked about the state match program. The state has committed to matching 25 percent of the side account. The first round of applications was opened to PERS employers with a UAL that exceeds 200 percent of their payroll. The second round is open to other agencies on December 2, 2019. These applications are accepted on a first come first served basis. Ms. Lombard showed a slide that explained the benefits for the district to invest \$1.5 million into the fund and receive a match of \$375,000, projecting over \$3.2 million dollars in savings over 18 years.

Ms. Lombard spoke about the other local agencies that are planning on applying for the matching funds as well. She showed this slide that outlines their plans:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Maximum Amount to Receive Match</u>	<u>Potential Contribution</u>	<u>Related Match</u>
BPRD	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 375,000
City of Bend	11,200,000	4,700,000	1,175,000
Deschutes County	20,000,000	15,000,000	3,750,000
Bend La Pine Schools	31,300,000	1,000,000	250,000
City of Prineville	1,200,000	800,000	200,000
	<u>\$ 65,200,000</u>	<u>\$ 23,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,750,000</u>

The board asked if this match will be offered again. Ms. Lombard responded that it is likely that it will be and said the district should be saving money to take advantage of it. The board discussed some other options for using the money, like paying down debt for Juniper Swim and Fitness Center. The board ultimately concluded that making a lump sum payment and accepting the matched funds would be the best use of the funds.

**Director Hovekamp made a motion to adopt amended Resolution No. 432 Approving a Lump Sum Payment to the PERS Employer Incentive Fund in the amount of \$1,500,000. Director Méndez seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.**

**\*Director Hovekamp amended resolution 432 to reflect the amount of \$1,500,000.**

Director Schoenborn said the board needs to approve a process to appoint the board position and two budget committee members. He read the ORS that dictates how the appointment for the board position shall be appointed. The board discussed the process that has been used in prior appointments. Since the community will not be able to elect someone to the open seat, the board expressed their desire for an open and fair process. Directors Kropf and Hovekamp volunteered to craft the applicant questions. Interviews for the open seat will be discussed after the board sees how many people have applied.

The two openings on the budget committee are to fill the vacancy left by Director Méndez and the expiration of a term, Larry Kimmel has requested reappointment and Deb Schoen, who was selected as an alternate this past year, is also interested in the position. The applications for these seats will be made open to the public.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:**

Executive Director Horton asked the board for personal information that is needed for a Medicaid application. The application allows the district to apply for reimbursement funds for the therapeutic recreation programs.

**PROJECT REPORT**

**BOARD MEETINGS CALENDAR REVIEW**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER** Director Hovekamp expressed his thanks to Director Sprang for a job well done and said he will miss her. The board echoed his sentiments.

**ADJOURN 10:20p.m.**



Prepared by,  
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Executive Assistant

  
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Ted Schoenborn, Chair

  
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Nathan Hovekamp, Vice-Chair

  
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Jason Kropf

  
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Ariel Méndez

