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## **The Corporation of the County of Northumberland Vegetation Management Advisory Committee Minutes**

Thursday May 26, 2022, 1:00pm  
Virtual Meeting – Zoom Conference

### **Members Present:**

- Denise Marshall (County)
- Mike Muldoon (County)
- Councillor Bill Cane (Chair)
- Councillor Mandy Martin
- Georgina Brouwer (Director, Willow Beach Field Naturalists)

### **Regrets:**

- Mark DeJong (Northumberland Federation of Agriculture)
- Gigi Ludorf-Weaver (Sustainable Cobourg / Blue Dot Rep. / Vice Chair)
- Richard Ovcharovich (Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge Health Unit)
- Bernard Mayer (Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge Health Unit)

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### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Bill Cane called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

1a. Territorial Land Acknowledgement

### **2. Approval of the Agenda**

Recommended Motion:

"**That** the agenda for the May 26, 2022 Vegetation Management Advisory Committee be approved."

**Moved by** Councillor Mandy Martin

**Seconded by** Denise Marshall (County)

**Carried**

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**3. Disclosures of Interest**

N/A

**4. Delegations**

N/A

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

**Moved by** Councillor Mandy Martin

**Seconded by** Denise Marshall (County)

"That the minutes for the June 22, 2021, Vegetation Management Advisory Committee be approved as distributed."

**Carried**

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**6a. Presentation – Prepared by County Staff to summarize the following:**

- i. Operational & maintenance costs realized during the trial of the Raider equipment in 2021
- ii. Looking ahead to the trial of the Herder in 2022 and County vegetation management this summer
- iii. Summary of the completed inspections of all guiderail inventory locations within the County
- iv. Discuss proposed recommendations to move forward with a Countywide Vegetation Management Plan and the future of the committee.

**6b. Presentation Discussion**

- Chair Bill Cane commented that there are no details in the presentation pertaining to repairs and maintenance of the equipment. Question was asked if County is responsible for repairs and maintenance of rental equipment. Chris Addley (County Fleet Supervisor) responded that County is not charged maintenance costs on rental equipment, however since the Raiber and Herder are attached to a County tractor, the County is responsible to pay for maintenance and repairs to the tractor. If the Herder and Raiber are purchased, then County would be responsible for maintenance and repairs for both the tractor and attachments (Herder & Raiber).
- Georgina Brouwer (Director, Willow Beach Field Naturalists) asked if the

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County has a separate program that addresses noxious weeds. Mike Muldoon (County) responded that the County manages noxious weeds according to the Weed Control Act. Staff investigate locations based on resident complaints on a case-by-case basis. This is not part of an active program.

- Councillor Mandy Martin asked if the Herder and Raiber are cost efficient and if they may be used broadly / elsewhere. Denise Marshall (County) responded that the Herder and Raiber are specifically meant for guiderails. There is no other use for this equipment. If another mower is added to the tractor, we would have to investigate if the tractor is large enough and carry's enough horsepower to deliver two different services with one mower.
- Chair Bill Cane requested County staff to include a rental option when this Issue Paper is brought forward to Council.

**7. Communications**

N/A

**8. Staff Reports with Recommendations**

N/A

**9. Staff Reports for Information**

N/A

**10. Other Matters Considered by Committee**

N/A

**11. Question from the Public**

- Diane Hruska commented that trialing the Raiber sooner last year would have helped with weed control. Diane questioned what the County plans to do for weed control prior to equipment arriving in August. Scott Reynolds (County) responded that the delay relates to ongoing supply chain issues. Whipper snipping and other methods will be used for weed control in the meantime and on a priority basis. Chris Addley (County Fleet Supervisor) added that this piece of equipment is coming from Europe and shipping is difficult due to covid-19. Diane Hruska responded that a late start may affect trial data. This should be noted.
- Diane Hruska expressed concern over recommendation #2 in the presentation. She requested clarification on where County staff may see roadside vegetation that cannot be reached using mechanical equipment. Denise Marshall (County) responded that these locations may include signs and sign post locations. The Herder and Raiber will be successful for the majority of locations, however the intent behind this

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recommendation is to ensure there is flexibility in options for areas not accessible by mechanical means. This would be used as last resort.

- Diane Hruska asked if the committee anticipates any objection from County Council with respect to increased costs by using mechanical means to control vegetation. Chair Bill Cane responded that in the past, Council has actively tried to eliminate the use of certain chemicals for vegetation management and anticipates that they will be receptive to the option of mechanical means. Councillor Mandy Martin agreed and commented that this is reflected in municipalities as well.

12. **Motion to Move into Closed Session**

N/A

13. **Rise and Report from Closed Session**

N/A

14. Next Meeting

- The Committee agreed with the proposed recommendations in the report and having met the objectives in the Terms of Reference, will look to dissolve the committee through Council.

15. Adjournment

**Moved by** Councillor Mandy Martin

**Seconded by** Georgina Brouwer (Director, Willow Beach Field Naturalists)

"**That** the Vegetation Management Committee adjourn at 1:38 p.m."

**Carried**



# Vegetation Management Advisory Committee

Meeting #4 - May 26, 2022

# This presentation will cover:

- ▶ Results and cost summary of 2021 Raiber Trial
- ▶ 2022 Herder Trial Update
- ▶ Results and summary of the 2021 County guiderail inventory survey
- ▶ Proposed recommendations/future of the committee

# Raiber - 2021 Trial Cost Summary (Rental)

## Service Delivery - Investment Breakdown Cost to Rent Summary (Actual Costs 2021):

- ▶ Total Operational Hours: 291 (7-9 Summer Working Weeks)
- ▶ Seasonal Raiber Rental Cost: \$22,000.00
- ▶ County Equipment Cost: \$22,600.00
- ▶ Operator: \$12,000.00
- ▶ Fuel: \$2,300.00
- ▶ Existing Equipment Replacement Reserve: \$14,900.00
- ▶ **Total Annual Service Investment: \$73,800.00**

\*Note that future costs may vary with supply issues & fuel costs rising\*

\*Replacement based on 3% inflation annually throughout service life\*



# Raiber - Cost Summary (Own)

## Service Delivery - Investment Breakdown Cost to Own Summary:

- ▶ Total Operational Hours: 291 (7-9 Summer Working Weeks)
- ▶ Raiber Capital Cost: \$7,700.00
- ▶ Raiber Maintenance/Operational Costs: \$2,300.00
- ▶ Other County Equipment Cost: \$22,600.00
- ▶ Operator: \$12,000.00
- ▶ Fuel: \$2,300.00
- ▶ Raiber Replacement Reserve: \$10,200.00
- ▶ Existing Equipment Replacement Reserve: \$14,900.00
- ▶ **Total Annual Service Investment: \$72,000.00**

\*Note that future costs may vary with supply issues & fuel costs rising\*

\*Replacement based on 3% inflation annually throughout service life\*

\*Would require Council approval through the annual budget process to purchase the Raiber at a cost of approximately \$70,000.00





## Raiber Results

- ▶ Overall successful trial with positive feedback on equipment functionality, ease of use & effectiveness
- ▶ Some areas took multiple passes from the equipment as vegetation was so overgrown
- ▶ Does not cause damage to the guideposts during cutting

## 2022 Equipment Trial Update (Herder)

- ▶ Utilizing Herder for 2022 Vegetation Management around guiderails
- ▶ Anticipate delivery of equipment in summer 2022 with mowing to commence ASAP
- ▶ Expected to be similar costing to Raiber rental trial in 2021
- ▶ The option to own the Herder is anticipated to be similar to the Raiber



# 2021 Guiderrail Inventory Overview



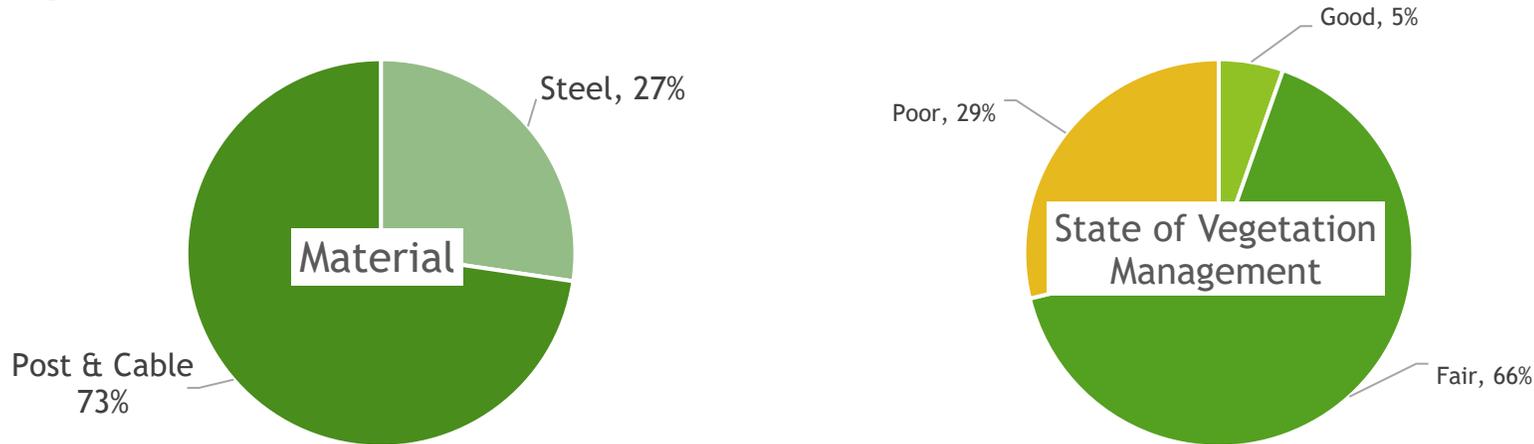
# 2021 Guiderail Inventory Investigation & Summary



- ▶ Students completed site inspections of over 595 individual guiderail locations in 2021
- ▶ GPS logged over 82km of guiderail (not including 2021 Capital Works locations)
- ▶ Utilizing a web application created by the Northumberland County GIS Team, students logged information relating to guiderail material type, length, height and general condition for asset management
- ▶ Students also identified Environmental conditions at each location such as:
  - ▶ Type of roadside hazard (embankments, waterbodies, etc.)
  - ▶ Types and amount of vegetation present (Noxious weeds, trees, brush, etc.)
  - ▶ Condition of vegetation (Needs attention, well maintained or overgrown)
- ▶ All information tracked in a GIS database and presented in an online web map

# Guiderail Inventory - Quick Facts

- ▶ Guiderail inventory is 27% steel and 73% post & cable
- ▶ At time of survey only 5% of locations had vegetation a “Good” state of maintenance with 29% being “Poor”



- ▶ Vegetation within clear zone of guiderail at 64% of inventory locations (weeds, trees, brush, etc.)
- ▶ 26% of inventory adjacent to or crossing wetlands, watercourses & waterbodies
- ▶ 63% of locations are paved or granular sealed up to face of guiderail to prevent vegetation growth
- ▶ Noxious weeds noted at several locations throughout County

# Vegetation Management Proposed Recommendations



1. Once trials are complete, County Staff would recommend that an Issue Paper be brought forward to be considered as part of the 2023 budget deliberations, for the purchase of a piece of mechanical equipment such as the Raiber or Herder to act as the main method of vegetation management around guiderails in Northumberland County. As this would be a significant budget increase above the current allotment, it would need to be approved by County Council prior to purchasing
2. County Staff would also recommend other means such as weed eating or chemical application (Finalson, Clearview, etc.) continue to be used as required for roadside vegetation management in areas that large mechanical equipment cannot be used, or noxious weeds are an issue

# Vegetation Management Proposed Recommendations



3. Based on the recommendations adopted, County staff would develop a County-wide Vegetation Management Plan and the plan will be a living document that can be reviewed and updated as new options and/or information becomes available.
4. County Staff would recommend the Vegetation Management Advisory Committee be disbanded after this meeting, as it has fulfilled its purpose of finding vegetation management solutions which are reliable, cost effective, safe for the public and environment, and not detrimental to County infrastructure.

END

Questions, Comments & Discussion