



Lancaster County Weed Authority

Brent Meyer

Lancaster County Weed Superintendent

Budget Discussion



Lancaster County Weed Control

- ▶ Enforce the State of Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act for Lancaster County including the City of Lincoln.
 - All Noxious weeds are required to be controlled by the landowner.
- ▶ Enforce the Weed Abatement Program for the City of Lincoln.
 - Weeds and worthless vegetation must be kept below 6 inches by the property owner.

Staff

- ▶ 3.0 Full-time employees
- ▶ 1.4 Seasonal employees
 - Brent Meyer – Superintendent
 - Pat Dugan – Chief Inspector
 - Jasmine Slezak – Account Clerk III
 - 7 Seasonal Inspectors

Lancaster County Weed Control

- ▶ 50/50 cost share with the City of Lincoln

Cost to County/City

▶ Total Budget	\$408,091
▶ Revenue	63,500
▶ Total Expenses	\$344,591
▶ Cost to County	\$172,296
▶ Cost to City	\$172,296

Dedicated funds = 77.7%

▶ Salaries & benefits	281,885	69%
▶ Uncontrollable	35,631	8.7%
◦ Workers comp (\$4,790)		
◦ IS & GIS (\$24,967)		
◦ VOIP (\$1,000)		
◦ Liability & Vehicle Ins(4,874)		

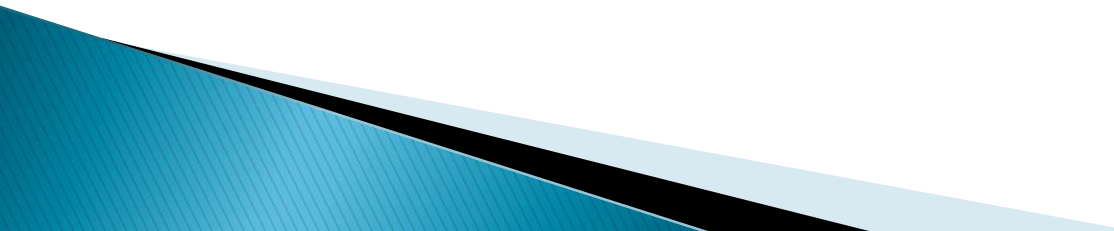
Controllable Operating Expenses

- ▶ *Noxious Weed Force Controls
- ▶ *Weed Abatement Force Controls
- ▶ Office supplies
- ▶ Vehicle repairs
- ▶ Motor fuels
- ▶ Phone and tablet usage
- ▶ Postage
- ▶ Copying
- ▶ Office equipment
- ▶ Building repairs
- ▶ Utilities
- ▶ Janitorial

*Vary depending on the year. Are offset in Revenue




What Services does the Weed Authority provide?

- Property values, tax protection
 - Protect landowners from invasives spreading onto their property
 - Inspections and Enforcements
 - EDRR, Early Detection – Rapid Response
 - Services to the taxpayers
 - Education & Outreach
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Noxious Weed Program

- ▶ The failure to control noxious weeds on lands in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock and to the welfare of residents of this state and which may devalue land and reduce tax revenue;
- ▶ County boards or control authorities are responsible for administration of noxious weed control laws at the county level

Weed Abatement Program?

- ▶ By Interlocal agreement in 1996 the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program combined with Lancaster Counties Noxious Weed Program.
 - ▶ Lancaster County Board of Commissioners are responsible to carry out the Combined Program.
 - ▶ A move that created a more efficient and stronger agency.
 - ▶ Making it more convenient for the citizens of Lincoln and Lancaster County.
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Inspections

- ▶ Entire County – Public and Private
- ▶ 2016 Inspections
 - Noxious Weed Inspections – 3,378
 - Weed Abatement Inspections – 6,210

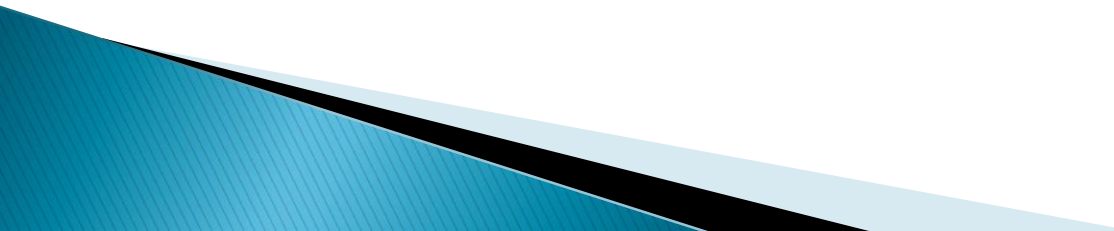
Enforcements

- ▶ 2016 Enforcements
 - Noxious Weed - 16 / \$4,764.82
 - Weed Abatement - 258 / \$51,083.15

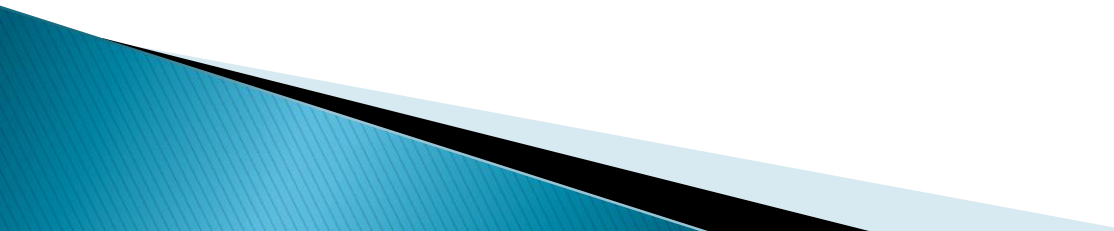
Customer Service

- Complaints – 1,763
 - Website
 - ACTION Center
 - Phone
- Title Companies
- Register of Deeds
- Treasurers Office

Cemeteries

- Oversee the mowing on 6 abandoned cemeteries
 - Issue contracts to all the volunteers that either mow or cut trees.
 - \$1,000 per year comes out of our budget for cutting the cemeteries.
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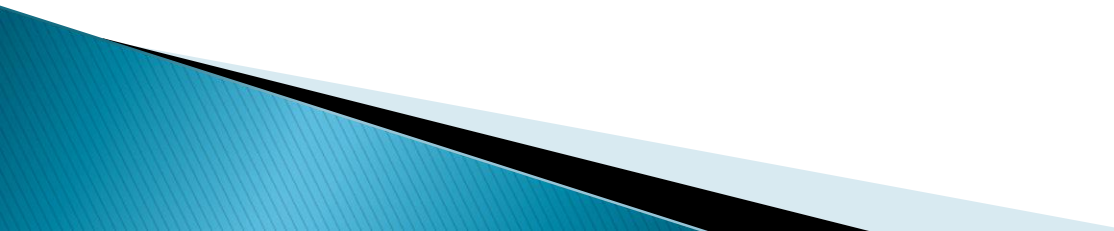
Roadsides

- Manage the mapping and treatment of noxious weeds on all County Roadsides.
 - Our office treats small infestations of leafy spurge, phragmites & sericea lespedeza.
 - Hire contractors to treat the larger areas.
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Railroads

- ▶ Coordinate noxious weed mapping and control with both Burlington Northern and Union Pacific for noxious weed control.

Landfills

- ▶ Manage both landfills for noxious weeds.
 - ▶ Provide inspections and mapping of weed infestations.
 - ▶ Coordinate with contractors to treat.
 - ▶ City reimburses us for our labor and contractors.
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Weed-free Forage & Gravel

- ▶ Weed Control Authority is the only agency certified to inspect for weed-free forage and gravel.
- ▶ All State & County roadside mulch requires weed-free mulch.
- ▶ All Federal lands require weed-free hay.
- ▶ WFF – inspections occur prior to cutting.
- ▶ All County gravel, rock, dirt is required to be weed-free.
- ▶ WFG – the pits are inspected to make sure they are weed-free

Outreach

- ▶ **Public Relations**
 - Nebline
 - Monthly reports
 - Newspaper
 - T.V.
 - YouTube videos
 - UNL – Plant Pathology class
 - Billboards
 - Kiosk
 - Booth at Power Farming show, State Fair, Husker Harvest days, State Capital
- ▶ **Presentations**
 - Private Applicator
 - Neighborhood
 - Multi-Agency
 - Engineering
- ▶ **Weed Watcher Program**



Trainings = 1.18%

- ▶ NAISMA \$1,420
- ▶ NWCA \$2,910
 - WMA'S
 - Leafy spurge conference
- ▶ Memberships \$485

Vehicles

Multi-year purchase
/ replacement program



Years 1 – 4

Budget 7,000 each budget

After 4 years purchase 1 new 4X4 pickup

Would cost the County and the City each 3,500 per
year

Vehicles

Multi-year purchase / replacement program

Years 5 – 8

Continue to Budget 7,000 each budget

Year 9 purchase 1 new 4X4 pickup

Would cost the County and the City each 3,500 per year

Vehicles

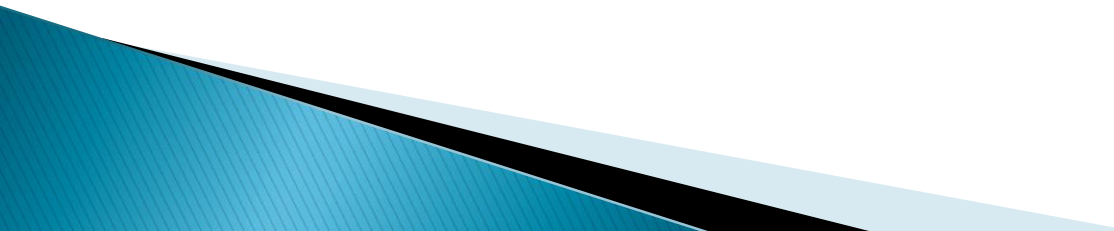
Multi-year purchase / replacement program

Years 9 – 12

Continue to Budget 7,000 each budget

- After 12 years we can trade in the 8 year old pickup and reduce the tax asking by an estimated ½.
- Now for approximately 1,750 per year per department we can always have two vehicles no older than 8 years old.

Other Equipment

- ▶ UTV with sprayer
 - ▶ Trailer
 - ▶ Drone
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State and National

Play Clean Go National Steering Committee

Continue to build the National outreach campaign to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors, but to clean their equipment before the go to the next place.

Nebraska Weed Control Association Legislative Committee Chair.

2016 LB 1038 & 1038A were passed providing 1 million dollars annually to help control invasives along all waterways in Nebraska.

Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force

Appointed by Governor Ricketts to the Task Force and elected by the committee to serve as the Chair.

Innovative

- ▶ Continue to evaluate our program to see how we can make it more effective while being more efficient
- ▶ Example: The “Warning” signs posted on overgrown properties.
 - Speeding up our process.
 - Notification got to the renter quicker.
 - Reduced the number of letters sent by 34.5%
 - Reduced the number of legal notices sent by 31.9%
 - Closed 31% of our open files by posting the notice.
 - In 2016 we received more initial complaints on properties – however our additional complaints were down.
 - Reduced our inspections per parcel from 2.35 to 2.15
 - Saved approximately \$3,265 in postage cost.

Innovative

Looking at a new “Developer” agreement in an attempt to cut down on inspections.

Continue to evaluate new invasives. EDRR

Streamline our inspection process with IS and GIS

Discussion

