City of Cottage Grove

VOTERS' PAMPHLET

March 13, 2012 Special Election



This pamphlet contains information about the measures on the Special Election.

This Voters' Pamphlet is provided for assistance in casting your vote by mail ballot.

Additional information about the election and ballot measures is available at: www.cottagegrove.org.



Mail Ballot Voter Information

The March 13, 2012, Special Election will be conducted by mail ballot.

All ballots must be received in the Lane County Elections office or at a designated drop site by 8:00 p.m. on election night. Postmarks do not count. See page 2 for drop box locations.

All county election offices are considered poll locations on election day and are open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The address of Lane County Elections is:

Lane County Elections 275 W. 10th Avenue Eugene, OR 97401

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VOTER INFORMATION

NOTICE TO VOTERS

The voters' pamphlet was produced by the City of Cottage Grove and only contains information related to the City of Cottage Grove.

To reduce costs, we are mailing this voters' pamphlet using bulk mail delivery sorted by those who live in the Cottage Grove City limits. This means that some residents who have a "Cottage Grove" address may receive a pamphlet with city information even though they are not eligible to vote in the election.

We apologize for any confusion this may cause.

If you have any questions regarding the voters' pamphlet, please call the Cottage Grove City Recorder's Office at (541) 942-5501.

If you have any questions concerning voter registration or drop box locations, please call Lane County Elections at (541) 682-4234.

DROP BOX LOCATIONS

Lane County Elections – 682-4234 275 West 10th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97401 Drive-By Ballot Box – Enter from Lincoln St., West side of Elections building.

24 hours every day until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day

Cottage Grove Community Center 700 Gibbs, Cottage Grove, OR 97424 Drive-By Ballot Box in front of building 24 hours every day until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day

VOTER INFORMATION

General Voting Requirements

To register to vote you must be:

- A resident of Oregon;
- · A United States citizen*; and
- 18 years of age or older.*
- * If you meet these criteria before the election, contact Lane County Elections for more information about registering.

New laws require that people must provide identifying information to register to vote.

In order to vote, you must be registered to vote by 5:00 p.m. of the 21st day immediately preceding the election.

You must update your registration if:

- · Your name changes for any reason; or
- Your residence or mailing address changes for any reason.

Absentee Ballots

Any registered voter who will be temporarily out of the county, state, or country may apply for an absentee ballot. By law, ballots cannot be forwarded.

You may request an absentee ballot from Lane County Elections by applying in person, by mail, or by fax (541) 682-2303. Applications are available on the Lane County Elections web site, http://www.co.lane.or.us/elections. Applications must include:

- Your name;
- · Your Lane County residence address;
- The address to which the ballot should be mailed:
- For which election, or if all elections you wish an absentee ballot;
- If you are requesting a ballot early, what range of dates you will be absent;
- Your signature.

You may file an application for an absentee ballot at any time prior to the election; however absentee ballots will not be mailed to voters whose applications are received later than the fifth day before election day. Those absentee ballots must be picked up in person.

Your voted ballot <u>must be received</u> by Lane County Elections or at a designated drop site by 8:00 p.m. on election day. *Postmarks will not be considered.*

Call Lane County Elections at (541) 682-4234 for more information.

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-186

Caption:

Requiring City wide vote on capital investments and municipal maintenance

Question:

Shall voters approve all maintenance budgets over \$50,000 and capital investments over

\$250,000?

Summary:

Currently purchasing decisions of \$250,000.00 can be made by the City Council. A yearly budget is developed by staff and presented to the Budget Committee for approval. The City Council holds a public hearing to receive citizen comments on the budget prior to final adoption of the budget. The budget includes items with annual maintenance budgets which may exceed \$50,000 depending on work to be done, or emergency repairs to be made. This proposed initiative would require a vote by the public at least once a year to approve the budgets and possibly more frequently if a need arises. There may be an additional cost determined by Lane County Elections to the City for

each election.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-186

I already vote. I voted for the Mayor and City Councilors at the last election. Those in office serve our community well and have had to make some tough decisions. They make decisions in the best interest of the entire community.

I see the Mayor or Councilors at school events, in the grocery store, at church, in my neighborhood and at work. I can talk to them about what is happening in the city. And they really do listen. They spend time studying the issues.

There is no reason for us to waste tax dollars holding election after election to vote on running our city. What a waste of money. What waste of time. That's why I voted for the Mayor and Councilors. They truly care about our community and have been elected to make those decisions. They make all those decisions at public meetings and only after talking about the actions in several meetings. If you are concerned about money being spent, call them, talk to them, write them, attend a meeting or elect someone else.

Voting to spend money will lose millions of dollars of grants because of the delay. It will waste thousands of dollars on election costs. It will make it even slower for our government to fix roads, clean parks or even sweep our streets.

By the way, buying the armory was one of the smartest decisions this city has ever made and will benefit us as citizens for many years to come.

Paid for and submitted by: John R. Patterson

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-186

I am a member of the Cottage Grove City Council, but I do not speak on the Council's behalf. I have submitted this argument as a private citizen only.

The ballot measures presented to you in this election apparently stem from a profound misunderstanding of how our city government operates. As a result, every one of these measures is fatally flawed, as each would create unintended consequences that may not be immediately obvious to the general public. I will, unfortunately, have to confine my specific remarks to this measure only, as \$50 per voter's pamphlet argument stacks up pretty quickly.

The biggest and most insurmountable problem with Measure 20-186 is that it doesn't finish what it begins. It requires the city to submit the budget to voters... but what then? According to state law, we are required to have an approved budget by a specific date each year. What happens if the voters say no? Do we simply violate state law, or do we ignore the voters and pass the budget anyway? If the former, how long do we think that sort of thing can go on before the state intervenes? If the latter, why go through the public expense of holding an election at \$8,000.00 to \$14,000.00 a pop?

This measure -- just like the other four on your ballot -- is simply not well thought-out, and its passage would represent a triumph of knee-jerk reaction over rational thought. These measures shouldn't just be voted down; they should be carried to Mordor by hobbits and flung into Mount Doom. Of course, I'll just ask you to do the former.

Questions? By all means, contact me and I'll be happy to address them. My email address and phone number are available on the City of Cottage Grove's website, and I would be more than happy to speak with any interested citizen on this issue.

Paid for and Submitted by: Jake Boone

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by the City of Cottage Grove, nor does the City of Cottage Grove warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-186

The originally stated intent of the maintenance portion of ballot measure 20-186 was to have any new acquisitions with an annual maintenance of over \$50,000 approved by the voters. The problem with the current measure as it is written is that we now will not only have to send to the voters any new acquisitions that have a projected annual maintenance of over \$50,000 but also every budget passed by the city. The expense and time for these processes are not warranted. The budget committee, which is comprised of seven community members and the seven members of the city council, meet annually to decide if the prepared budget is acceptable or if it needs to be modified. The city council then adopts the budget. Both processes require public hearings. Then there's the possibility the voters will turn down a proposed budget. It may not be possible to send another budget to the voters before July 1st when the city is required by the state to have an adopted budget in place.

The requirement of this measure to refer to the voters any purchase of more than \$250,000 is also unwarranted. This measure will require the city to refer items to the voters like: rebuilding a street, installing traffic signals, the purchase of the Vactor truck last year to name a few. Would we then also need voter approval for grants? The Chambers Bridge was, for the lions share, a grant. Would the bridge then also be sent to the voters?

Ultimately the expense of each of the previously mentioned elections would needlessly cost the tax payers a great deal of money. These elections would run tens of thousands of dollars a year. A better way to address an expenditure the City is preparing to make is to speak to your City Staff and City Councilors. They will take your comments into consideration and you can hold your elected representatives accountable at the polls.

Paid for and submitted by: Mike Fleck

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF BALLOT MEASURE 20-186

Voters should have a direct say in how their money is spent when it comes to paying for high-priced public projects - and paying for the upkeep on those projects.

Citizens should have the right to approve or disapprove all large capital investment expenditures or those expenditures, which have large annual maintenance costs. Those investments (buildings, roads, parks etc.), which require large amounts of the Cottage Grove citizens' money, should be examined thoroughly and planned for accordingly, with the ongoing maintenance and operations costs calculated carefully.

The best way to ensure the best expenditure of large amounts of public money is with a public vote on those expenditures. The voice of the people must be heard. They are the ones paying for these projects, after all.

Despite what some have said, this will not hamper the everyday business of the city or the availability of money for emergencies because it only requires a public vote on measures over \$250,000 or when ongoing annual costs exceed \$50,000.

Nor does the cost of a citywide vote have to be high. The cost can be held to a minimum by careful planning to hold the elections on the four main election days for Lane County elections, spreading the cost over multiple elections and ballot measures.

The cost could be between a few hundred dollars and a few thousand dollars, but any time or money needed to hear the voice of the people is time and money well spent.

We are in a time of true financial need. Our city officials should listen to our citizenry before investing large amounts of public money.

Rob Scoggin Hans M. Johnson Sue Rosenthal

> Paid for by: Write On

(This information furnished by Rob Scoggin on behalf of Write On)

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City of Cottage Grove Voters' Pamphlet March 13, 2012 Special Election

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-187

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-187

Caption:

All final planning decisions shall be made by City Council

Question:

Shall all final planning decisions be made by the City Council?

Summary:

The Cottage Grove Development Code has four types of planning decisions: Type I are made by staff based solely on code standards approved by the Council; Type II are limited land use decisions made by the Community Development Director after public notice; Type III are made by Planning Commission after a public hearing; and Type IV are policy decisions made by City Council after public hearings at Planning Commission and City Council. All applications are appealable for a fee ranging from \$200 (to Planning Commission) to \$400 (City Council). Appeals can be made by anyone who has submitted written or oral testimony. This proposed initiative would change this process to require all permits and planning decisions be approved by City Council after two public hearings.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-187

Currently every planning decision can go to the City Council. However, the items only go to the City Council through the appeal process. The passage of the Ballot Measure 20-187 will make every planning decision go through the process all the way to the City Council.

This action will take away property rights from every citizen. Every action no matter how small or simple will be required to go through a ridiculously long process. If you want to start a small cottage industry in your home, an action that can be approved in a matter of days currently, it will take months if 20-187 passes.

If you want to start a new business in an existing building downtown, currently you could have all your approvals in a matter of days, with the passage of 20-187 you will have to wait to a month to schedule a public hearing before the Planning Commission. Then wait at least another 3 weeks to schedule a public hearing before the City Council.

Ballot Measure 20-187 will make government slower. It will make it harder for you to improve, change or develop your property. Making it harder to use, improve, change or develop your property takes away your property rights.

Vote no on Ballot Measure 20-187 and keep it simple to use and improve your property. Protect our property rights vote no.

Paid for and submitted by: Stan Simonsen

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF BALLOT MEASURE 20-187

The Cottage Grove established a city planning commission with the original purpose "to act as an advisory body to the city council and to make known to that body its decisions on items within the commission's authority and to refer findings and recommendations for request which require the council's final action."

Over time, the commission's authority has been increased, allowing it to make final decisions on land use matters, leaving the elected city council members to hear appeals, at a cost of \$400 to the person making the appeal.

This measure would return final land use decisions to the original code, giving the council members the final say. The commission would return to an advisory role. Elected officials, accountable to the people at the ballot box, should be making final decisions that affect all of us. These decisions should not be left to an appointed commission, accountable to no one.

Returning to the original code will add 2-4 weeks to the process, allowing more time for Cottage Grove citizens to have their say at public hearings. This measure also eliminates the onerous \$400 appeal fee.

Page 4-4 of the city's development code states that building permits are not applicable to the four types of planning decisions, they are building code regulated. There are other permits that are regulated like conditional use, access and hillside development permits.

Some people are concerned that this measure, requiring a public hearing before the council, will increase the cost of land use applications. By eliminating the fee, the cost will actually be less to the citizens and ensure decisions will again be made by those accountable to the public.

Rob Scoggin Hans M. Johnson Sue Rosenthal

> Paid for by: Write On

(This information furnished by Rob Scoggin on behalf of Write On)

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BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-188

Caption: All Planning Commission members shall reside within Cottage Grove

Question: Shall every member of the planning commission be required to reside within the city limits

of Cottage Grove?

Summary: Currently the Planning Commission consists of 7 voting members appointed by the City

Council. Two members may reside outside the city limits. The members living outside the city limits must reside within a six-mile radius of the city limits or have/own a business or property within the city limits. This proposed initiative shall require the Council to only consider appointment of citizens that reside within the city limits of Cottage Grove to the

Planning Commission.

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF BALLOT MEASURE 20-188

Residents of Cottage Grove should have preference over non-residents to serve the City planning commission.

We make choices to live inside or outside the city based on our lifestyles, desires and the taxes associated where we live. Living within the six mile limit is often outside even the urban growth boundary.

Why should non-residents have the same privileges as the residents of the city?

Most of the issues that come before the planning commission are residential in nature.

Business owners who live outside the city often have large investments in the city and are concerned with the welfare of the city. They should have a voice in the city.

Those business owners have four major organizations where their voices can be heard: the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic and Business Investment District, Cottage Grove Economic Development Corporation and the Cottage Grove Community Development Corporation. Their interests are well represented and their voices are clearly heard.

However, having representation in the city through organizations like those listed above is far different than having the power to make decisions on land use that have no direct affect on them.

That power should rest solely with the city residents.

Rob Scoggin Hans M. Johnson Sue Rosenthal

> Paid for by: Write On

(This information furnished by Rob Scoggin on behalf of Write On)

NO ARGUMENTS WERE RECEIVED IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-188

City of Cottage Grove Voters' Pamphlet March 13, 2012 Special Election

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-189

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-189

Caption:

Water rates applied exclusively for system maintenance

Question:

Shall water rates be set to cover only the maintenance of the water system in place on

February 14, 2011?

Summary:

Water rates are set by the City Council after input and deliberations. The proposed initiative would require the City to calculate the cost of maintaining the current system as of February 14, 2011, and bill customers at that rate. That rate has not been

determined.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-189

The issues concerning measure 20-189 are:

- The current water rate system was developed in a two and a half year open process involving the public via forums and work sessions with the aid of a consultant.
- This measure doesn't specify how the City will fund the maintenance of any development built after February 14, 2011.
- This measure will negatively impact economic development because the ability to maintain those improvements will be in question.
- The developer of a sub-division puts in the infrastructure and SDC fees cover any upgrades to the current system. Why is there concern about that addition to our City? Those new rate payers will cover the maintenance of the new development.
- If the expenditures for water debt service, which are built into the current rate system, can no longer be collected from the water bill then those expenditures will come from the general fund.
- Current debt service from the water funds are approximately \$800,000 a year. The loss of \$800,000 from the general fund will result in many cuts to valuable city services. Those cuts will include at a minimum: the Library, the Community Center and broadband services.
- 20-189 states: Water rates applied exclusively for system maintenance and 20-190 states: Water rate based solely on customer consumption – they seem to contradict each other – both state Water Rates will be
- We understand that water bills in our town are high.
 The Federal Government establishes clean water
 regulations, which are good for us, but they don't
 offer any assistance with the upgrades to our water
 treatment plants which end up costing several million
 dollars to build. The result is that debt service for
 millions of dollars ends up spread over 3700 some
 odd customers adding almost \$18 a month to our
 bill in addition to the cost of providing clean water.

Paid for and submitted by: Mike Fleck

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF BALLOT MEASURE 20-189

This measure will ensure that taxpayer money collected through water rates is used solely for the current pure water system and the maintenance on that system.

A vote for this measure is a vote to prohibit funds raised through water rates to be temporarily transferred to pay for other items in the City's budget.

As an accounting practice, it is acceptable to transfer funds from one budget line item to another within the city budget. However there may be no definite time limit for repayment of the transferred funds or the time limit is so far into the future, the water fund may be left with insufficient funds to take care of the water system.

In addition, future payback does not take into consideration the cost of inflation. Inflation has caused maintenance on the current water system to far exceed the costs of maintenance five years ago and is projected to increase in the future. What costs \$100,000 today, for example, may cost \$200,000 or more in the future.

With an obvious eye toward the vote on this measure, the city's water rates have not increased this fiscal year. However, they are scheduled to increase significantly every year over the next five years, pending the outcome of the vote on this measure.

As the measure summary states, the city must calculate the maintenance on the current water system. The water rates will be used for delivering pure water and maintaining the system and not allow for any temporary transfer of those funds.

Future expansion for water need are paid for by System Development Charges, which are paid for by developers.

That is how it should be and that is what prudent fiscal management demands.

Rob Scoggin Hans M. Johnson Sue Rosenthal

> Paid for by: Write On

(This information furnished by Rob Scoggin on behalf of Write On)

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BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-190

Caption:

Water rate based solely on customer consumption

Question:

Shall Cottage Grove set one water rate for all customers based solely on consumption

using the current residential volume chart?

Summary:

Currently the City Council sets the water rates. There are separate rates based on the volume of use, type of use (residential, commercial, and industrial) as well as meter size. There are also separate rates for those that live within the city and those that are served by city water outside of the city limits. This proposed initiative will set water rates based solely on the residential volume charts effective on February 14, 2011, and will

eliminate charges based on type of use and meter size.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-190

Corporate Greed in Cottage Grove

Throughout the country people are complaining about corporate greed and how those with the money are controlling the government. I never thought that would apply to Cottage Grove. But the ballot measures that are coming to a vote in Cottage Grove show how corporate and self-centered greed is trying to take over Cottage Grove. Certain business owners feel that they should not have to pay their share of costs for water service and that the citizens should have to pay those costs for them.

That is what the ballot measure removing the base rate does. It will not lower the bills of the normal resident. But it will lower the bills of the businesses. The city has different base rates because of size of the water line – most residents have the smallest sized line – but businesses have larger lines that make the City build bigger pipes or treatment plants. The business owners supporting the ballot measure don't want to pay their fair share and want residents to pay that cost.

The businesses also have larger buildings that are closer together with require additional water service to protect their property if a fire occurs. Many of the businesses have built-in fire sprinklers. All connected to the water system that require bigger water pipes and treatment plants. That is why businesses have higher base rates.

Removing the base rates for water remove those costs from the business owners and pass them to you and me.

> Paid for and submitted by: Lindsey Haskell

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-190

Not all users of city water are the same. Some have larger pipes so they can have a lot of water used quickly. Some users have higher needs for fire protection. Some users have high demands at given times.

Landlords run a business and should be charged a commercial rate for their water. They are putting an extra burden on the water system with several families on one piece of property and extra fire protection because of larger structures. The consumption charge does not cover all those costs. Some of those extra costs exist whether they use any water or not because the water system has to be built to handle the needs.

Just like our electric bills or natural gas bills, different users put different demands on the system. Not all users pay the same rates, because they create different costs to providing the service.

Water is no different. It is not fair that a single family dwelling should pay the extra cost of fire protection needed for heavy industry, industrial, or multiple-family buildings/apartments. It is not fair that homeowners pay for larger pipes and capacity because industry needs 4 or 6 inch water lines.

The City Council spent over two years studying the rate structure and made adjustments based on standards set throughout the country that created fair rates for the different kinds of users. Keep the water rates fair and equitable.

With the above information, I would recommend a **No** vote on 20-190.

Paid for and submitted by: Donald P. Williams

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by the City of Cottage Grove, nor does the City of Cottage Grove warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made.

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-190

The issues concerning measure 20-190 are:

- The current water rate system was developed in a two and a half year open process involving the public via forums and work sessions with the aid of a consultant.
- The consultant's findings were that residential customers were subsidizing the commercial customers by a small percentage – the adopted plan increased the commercial rates slightly more than the residential rates to address that discrepancy.
- The City who has to provide for all potential water flows will have to increase water plant expansions sooner without conservation measures. Conservation is not achieved without a rate structure that increases as usage increases.
- In the current rate structure commercial customers pay a higher rate to cover the expense of the fire protection services in commercial zones. 20-190 will set one rate for all customers. This will mean that residential customers water production rates will increase to make up for the loss of revenue from the commercial customers.
- If the expenditures for water debt service, which are built into the current rate system, can no longer be collected from the water bill then those expenditures will come from the general fund.
- Current debt service from the water fund is approximately \$800,000 a year. The loss of \$800,000 from the general fund will result in many cuts to valuable City services. Those cuts will include at a minimum: the Library, the Community Center and broadband services.
- We understand that water bills in our town are high. The Federal Government establishes clean water regulations, which are good for us, but they don't offer any assistance with the upgrades to our water treatment plants which end up costing several million dollars to build. The result is that debt service for millions of dollars ends up spread over 3700 some odd customers adding almost \$18 a month to our bill in addition to the cost of providing clean water.

Paid for and submitted by: Mike Fleck

ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION TO BALLOT MEASURE 20-190

The passing of Ballot measure 20-190 will bring huge cuts to City services which would likely result in closure of the Community Center building and the Library. The Community Center is home to the Chamber of Commerce, Senior Center, therapy pool and meeting rooms for different community organizations. The library budget of \$336,465 would be cut from the general fund in order to pay for the debt we owe for the new water filtration system (Water Debt Service). That payment now comes from the water bill revenue. The loss of 1.17 million dollars from the general fund will result in cuts in valuable city services, including the Library. Friends of the Cottage Grove Library know how important the library is to this community. Libraries aren't just books and a shiny building; they are centers for lifelong learning, public good, access to information and the transfer of knowledge. Libraries are cultural, educational and civic hubs. We cannot afford to lose our public library. The Friends of the Cottage Grove Public Library does not support Measure 90-190 and we urge you to vote no.

> Paid for and submitted by: Friends of the Cottage Grove Library Mary McNamara, President

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City of Cottage Grove Voters' Pamphlet March 13, 2012 Special Election

BALLOT MEASURE NO. 20-190

ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF BALLOT MEASURE 20-190

This measure will ensure greater fairness in cost of delivering water to city residents and businesses.

It would require payment based solely on how much water any residence or business uses. It would not be based on size of the pipe that delivers the water, as is now the case.

If a family of four uses 7,000 of gallons of water a month, why should their rate of pay be more because it was delivered to their house in a 2- inch pipe versus a three-quarter- inch pipe?

The current rate charges businesses and larger dwellings such as multi-family apartments that have bigger pipes at a higher rate than smaller residences. It also charges multi-family dwellings commercial rates.

Why should people be forced to pay for it differently just because of how it gets to them or where they live or work?

Yes, this measure will lower water revenue received by the city. That's a good thing. The decrease should challenge the City Manager and staff to rethink how to pay for water services a necessity of life.

City residents should not be held hostage by threats of city officials to cut services such as law enforcement or libraries.

City management will be required to be innovative in financial matters, to think beyond ideas to just raise rates or lower services especially providing for water.

Some ideas:

Selling or leasing city assets such as the golf course while keeping water rights and the right to release effluent water.

Selling or leasing equipment to other communities or government entities.

Leasing equipment when it is more practical than purchasing.

Selling the expertise of our staff to other communities through consultation fees.

Selling the effluent water at reduced rates to privately owned interests.

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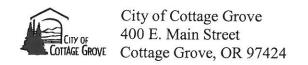
Privatizing jobs when they can be done less expensively than using city staff.

We must be concerned not only for the city budget, but also for every household budget.

Rob Scoggin Hans M. Johnson Sue Rosenthal

> Paid for by: Write On

(This information furnished by Rob Scoggin on behalf of Write On)



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RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

VOTE!

Election Date: March 13, 2012

Published by the City of Cottage Grove