



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

October 5, 2023
6pm

In person and virtual meeting options.
In Person: City Hall, Council Chambers
Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88308344363>

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve September '23 Minutes
3. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
4. Friends of the Forest Update
5. Staff Report
6. Parks Commission Update
7. Other Business

Adjourn

Minutes of the Meeting: September 7th, 2023

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Tabb Stringer, Nathan Schwark, Kit Gerwels

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Steve Phillips, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and via Zoom and called to order at 6:00PM

Minutes: August minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

None

ACFL Plan Update

For context, earlier in the year, the board had a discussion on how to best update the Forest Plan. They outlined a plan to allow for lots of public comments while meeting the deadline of a draft by 2026. In the first couple of meetings it became clear that there was a need for dedicated meetings just for the Plan update. Kit proposed to the Board to have additional meetings for the Plan update and allow regular Board meetings for routine ACFL business. The proposal was for 3 meetings on the first Tuesday of October, November and December. There can be additional meetings scheduled if there is a need from the public. Kit made a motion to set the three additional meetings dedicated to the Plan update and public comments. Brian seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor. It was clarified that all existing public and written comments would be included in the process going forward.

ACFL Trail Committee-Special Use Request:

John Meehan was not in attendance but had called to express his thanks to the Board for their time and effort in reviewing his proposal. Bob has spoken with the Parks Council sub-committee, and they were hesitant to offer guidance without hearing from the Forest Board. At this time, staff recommends that the request is denied until the Forest Plan is reviewed and possibly changed. The Board took a vote on approving the request for allowing a trial period to test out the two stroke motorcycles. All Board members voted to deny this request. Kit added that the intent and direction of the request is appreciated, and that the discussion should continue.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Ellie Kravets will attend Forest Board meetings until a new Executive Director is hired. She reported that they had Trail Ambassadors every weekend through Labor Day. They are starting their fall field trips for kids and various community hikes mid-month. The number of participants for 2023 is surpassing 2022.

Staff Reports:

Steve had nothing to add to his report. Kit expressed his gratitude for Steve and shared that Steve's care of the trails was very noticed and he will be missed. Bob added that Steve's legacy in the ACFL will be long lasting and thankfully the department will not be losing him or his knowledge. He will still be a part of the Parks staff and his skills are much appreciated.

Bob shared that he did get a request for a wedding to be held at Heart Lake on trail #23. They anticipate having 16 people in the group and will not be bringing in anything to the site. They will not block access to any other trail users. Bob noted that their group is going about this the correct way and is a smaller group than many that use the area. Bob added that the team is glad to be beyond Labor Day and ready for a slower season.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting. The Rotary Club was in attendance to share their design proposals for the top of Cap Sante. They are wanting to make the space more ADA accessible. Part of the project will be to post signs at the bottom, encouraging people to use the trail and not drive to the top. The estimated cost for the project is \$550,000 and they have raised \$395,000 currently.

JoAnn also shared that the Anacortes Senior Activity Center is celebrating 50 years on September 30th.

She reported that the WA park restroom will have a gravity system instead of a pump station, cutting down on the cost. The City is still in talks with Habitat for Humanity on the W 5th lot. Parks staff are looking at the W 6th lot for a park with the assistance of an RCO grant. While out on site, neighbors approached and expressed support and excitement for the park.

Other Business:

The e-bike study has been completed and the data given to staff for organizing into a report. Darby and Bob are working on this and will have it to the Board hopefully in early 2024.

Adjourn at 6:29pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

September 2023
Assistant Director's Report
Bob Vaux

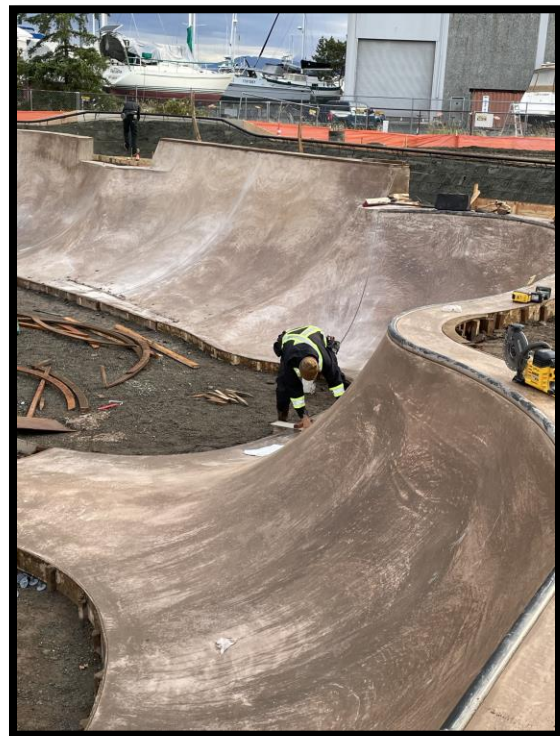
Submitted: September 28, 2023

Ben Root Skate Park (BRSP) daily visits now showing rebar in preparation for shotcrete. Grindline team making great strides. We do have the Janicki folks back on site as the focus begins to shift to the pump track.

While the pump track is proving to be a bit of a challenge to build, both the Janicki and Grindline teams are coming together in the pursuit of this new BRSP element.

On Sept 25 the Shotcrete team arrived on site and began filling in the bowl. Am told these folks are the best in the business, which makes us all feel better about the weather challenges that showed up on this same day. The first 30 yards look great!

Shotcrete work continues and all involved are happy with the results.



Engineering Justin (Justin Symonds has been our Engineering inspector and project management partner on this. Can't say enough good things about him) and I did a site walk-through with the Janicki leadership team, putting some final thoughts together for the eventual wrap up landscape plan. Janicki will have an updated proposal for us soon.

Darby, Jonn and I met with Rachel Muntean and Josh Gates, working on ideas for further Ben Root **Skate Park improvement project fund raising**. We need one final push to get us comfortably to the ribbon cutting.

Samish Nation / COA Hike: Denise Crowe and I bid ACFL Steve “farewell” and thanked him for all of his great work. Our South Cranberry loop on a Thursday afternoon crossed paths with a variety of happy trail users, and all dogs on leash!!

Motorized Trail Committee Rep John Meehan and his daughter demonstrated the sound differences between a 2009 4-stroke and a 2023 2-stroke with stock exhaust. Demo was conducted on Whistle Lake parking lot access road. Bottom line; it’s the operator, not the machine. Same theory applies to all user groups. Looking forward to the continued discussion.

Parks Tottenham and I spent some Labor Day weekend time searching for the latest forest residence of a couple of individuals we have been moving along for the past few years. They have made camps in a variety of places from SHIP to the ACFL. Pretty sure we found their recent activity not too far off the Mt. Erie Summit Road, near the upper third. We contacted APD who did not have the staff to join us, so will reach back out in a few days.

We did encounter some rock climbers on #214 and had a good discussion about no climbing on those rocks, as well as current and future climber issues on the mountain, i.e., unnecessary new routes continuing to show up and keeping hardware safe. Also discussed how various landowners/managers use permits to regulate numbers.

Finally, thanked Devanne for coming back this summer and filling key shifts when we had no one else. She finished up in the woods on Sept. 3.



On Sept 15 we were able to **revisit the homeless camp** mentioned above, along with two APD officers. Nobody home, but the bunker structure is one of the most elaborate ever found in the ACFL. Parks Manager Johnston, Myles and Steve from her team, and I spent a couple of hours just pulling the brush off the top of the bunker, along with a complex system of tarps, bungee cords and wire. It is going to be quite a haul moving out of there. Pictured is most of the haul from the camp. Thanks to the Parks Team plus Recreation Travis for making this happen.

Tottenham and I also spent some time on a beautiful #239 morning working on a hazard tree removal plan.

Labor Day! Parks & Rec's favorite holiday 😊

Attended monthly safety meeting with Parks Crew. Good review of summer challenges.

Continued my **regular meetings with the Friends of the Forest**, this time with Development and Outreach Coordinator Ashleigh Ellsworth-Keller. The Friends had a great summer, educating the masses and doing great work with so many ACFL visitors via their Trail Ambassador program. Much appreciated.

FoF Community Programs Coordinator Ellie Kravets and I met to discuss her upcoming winter hike and activity schedule. She also presented a great idea for holly eradication in the ACFL and will be discussing this further at the next Forest Advisory Board meeting.

Shout Out to Steve Lange in Engineering for working with me on the Washington Park restroom project. His review of the Civil Engineer work and getting us very close to bid documents is greatly appreciated.

Shout Out to COA GIS Manager Rob Hoxie for always being available, and especially working with me on a variety of complicated property line issues involving trees, both private and publicly owned.

September Forest Advisory Board meeting comes and goes in 30 minutes. Thank you Steve Phillips!! It will be a busy next 3 months for the FAB.

Thank you Darby for putting together our public notices for the Oct, Nov and Dec Forest Plan update meetings.

Began work with Planning on **#220 bridge replacement** project. Thank you Steve P for some great introductory documentation.

Parks Tottenham and I did some on-site recon work as well.

Also **working with Planning** on a tree jurisdictional issue in the Marine Heights neighborhood.

September Parks Commission is mostly a discussion of capital projects, and how we might pursue them.

Parks Mgr Johston and I **met at Washington Park with local Washington Trails Association** (WTA) volunteer Richard Mellon and Arlen Bogaards, WTA Northwest Regional Manager. We discussed this winter's trail project. R. and A. will get back to us with their top three choices. The working concept is to continue to improve the "outer loop" trail. You may remember they got off to a great start on this last winter.

Responded to a new Marine Heights homeowner with some tree concerns in the adjacent ACFL. Will return to the site with Arborist Steve.

Thank you Heritage Bank Trail Crew!



Heritage Bank crew: Thanks again for all your expert help in Rotary/Cap Sante Parks yesterday. We covered lots of ground--200 feet of fencing and 2 kiosks weather-proofed, more than a mile of trail pruned, multiple bags of garbage removed and the base area trailhead weeded and spruced up. Pretty good for a single afternoon, I think.

We could not have done all these necessary improvements without your effort and energy. On behalf of Anacortes Rotary and our community of park users, please accept our sincere appreciation. Kindest Regards, Tom Decker, Anacortes Rotary Centennial Project chair.

We must now bid farewell to **City Engineer Tim Hohmann**. He is truly one of our best and brightest and has been a critical link in the success of several recent Parks projects. We wish him all the best and are thankful for all he has done for the City of Anacortes.

Jon and I are working with the new Public Works Director along with remaining staff on moving forward.

There is no specific ACFL maintenance report this month, as Steve has returned to the main body of the Parks Crew. He and the rest of the team continue to respond to a variety of issues in the woods.

Director Lunsford and I have been working on a replacement plan which has taken more time than we had hoped. There should be some action on this front soon.

Leave Taken: Sept 5, 19-21