



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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

February 1, 2024
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. Annual Board Chair Election
3. Approve January '23 Minutes
4. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
5. Little Cranberry Lake Update
6. 2026 Forest Plan Update Discussion
 - a. Public comment review schedule
7. Friends of the Forest Update
8. Staff Report
9. Parks Commission Update
10. Other Business

Adjourn

Minutes of the Meeting: January 4th, 2024

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

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and via Zoom and called to order at 6:02PM

Introduction of new ACFL Maintenance Technician:

Bob introduced Jamie Burroughs to the Board and public in attendance. He shared that this was the Parks department's first "blind hire" and was a very competitive process, but Jamie quickly rose to the top of the pool. He is a local resident and AHS graduate. Jamie spent five seasons at Deception Pass state park and then three years at the Skagit County Transfer Station. He is excited to get back into parks and give back to his community. The Board extended a warm welcome to Jamie.

Annual Board Chair Election:

Kit moved that this item be tabled until the next meeting when all members are present.

Minutes: December minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

Tom Glad spoke and quoted the following from the ACFL Forest Plan: Whistle Lake, Heart Lake and Little Cranberry Lake watersheds should be managed to maintain their pristine and/or fragile environment and to preserve watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, aesthetic values, and recreational uses with priority for residents.

This policy should have precluded/excluded the plan to build a boat launch facility on Little Cranberry Lake. (In the local vicinity, boat launch facilities are readily available at Heart Lake, Lake Erie, Lake Campbell, and Washington Park.)

Mr. Glade also reminded the Board that Gene Murphy was celebrated with the 2008 Yeoman Award for Environmental Stewardship from Evergreen Islands. He also went on to discuss his many years of financial support of the Skagit Land Trust, as well as the ACFL's Conservation Easement Program. Tom also suggested that the ACFL close at sundown to protect the wildlife.

Brian asked if the ACFL is supposed to close at dusk and Bob stated that it is 10pm for all parks and the forest lands. In the 1990's, there was a push to change the time to dusk, but there was no support for the change.

Mark Nihart spoke about bike riders at night and looking at the liability to the City. Even without the ability to enforce the closure, the ordinance would protect the City.

2026 Forest Plan Update Discussion: Public Comment Review Schedule

The window for public comment was closed yesterday. Since December 21st, there have been 14 new comments that will be compiled and posted soon. There are 65 comments from 46 people. Staff is now preparing a matrix for Board review. The February meeting will host Jonn Lunsford and a presentation on the Little Cranberry project. The timeline was generally laid out to facilitate presentation to the City Council by Fall of 2025 with the Board stating that adjustments could be made as needed.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Ellie was in attendance and reported that they have filled their February Day Camps and have a waiting list at this time. They are preparing for the next session of their Naturalist program with registration opening mid-January. The holly pull in December was well attended and the volunteers have asked that programs like this continue.

Staff Reports:

Bob shared that next month the Board will have Jamie's first maintenance report. Bob reported that Jamie is getting help from Steve in this transition and training. Bob met with the Friends of the Forest regarding the March volunteer work party and the potential to add more. All Parks staff are spending time in various areas to increase cross training. Staff are watching the weather reports and with the snow often bring the ATV users to Parks and the ACFL.

The Board asked about how often staff come across off-leash dogs in the ACFL. Bob responded that it just might be the biggest challenge facing City staff. There is a City ordinance that makes the charge a misdemeanor.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting. December brought many activities in the Parks and Recreation department. Parks Board members Chris and JoAnn attended the public meeting about the Cap Sante look-out. There were neighbor concerns about increased traffic and parking.

Other Business:

Bob gave the reminder that next month's meeting will be discussion about Little Cranberry.

Adjourn at 6:43pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

January 2024 Assistant Director's Highlights

Bob Vaux

Submitted: January 25, 2024

WASHINGTON PARK RESTROOM PROJECT

Work fired up January 2nd, with Lisser doing the surveying for the CXT unit site and the sewer line. Engineering Tech/Inspectors Justin Symonds & Kristen Hannon working with me on this project, and we met with Blackfish Civil Infrastructure job site supervisor and company VP, Mike Reid on site. 18-20 trees were cleared over the next couple of days, logging company working diligently to stay within the project boundaries and minimize impact.

The week of Jan. 8th sewer line digging and connection work begins. Weather impacts progress a bit, but work moves forward. As of Friday afternoon, the contractor has crossed the park entrance road and is on their way to the park shop.

Work continues on the holiday shortened week of the 15th. Also, a snow day on the 17th kept the site quiet.

The pace picks back up the week of the 22nd. The sewer and water lines are both installed, tested and ready to connect. The vast majority of my time this week spent on site at Wa Pk.

On the 24th the new CXT unit was put into place. This step proved to be quite a challenge for our contractor, but the CXT team took on a leadership role and made it happen. Successfully!

ACFL

Doing my best to get into the woods with Jamie and expand his new employee training regimen. We have spent time in the 300's, done some hazard tree evals at a private residence adjacent to the North Heart Unit, and spent some time on the northwest end of 247 as well as 248. Here we were able to review Mt. Erie rock climbing protocol.

Early reviews from Jamie's new co-workers are very positive.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK

Director Lunsford, Parks Mgr. Johnston and I met with Skate Park Rachel. We discussed the on-going fundraising work that Rachel's non-profit is doing and explored some options on how to publicly acknowledge the pledge a ledge program. We are looking at a variety of plaques and painted signs.

We still don't have lights, nor a firm commitment from Janicki when they might show up. The major breakdown seems to be with the manufacturer.

FAREWELL TRAVIS / DARBY ON VACATION

It was tough to say goodbye to our Rec Coordinator and erstwhile high school football coach. Travis received lots of well-deserved press for his team's achievements on the football field, but I really enjoyed having him as a co-worker, sharing a wall with him during his brief but positive time in A-town.

Darby took off on vacation shortly after we lost Travis, and somehow became "stuck in Mexico." You hear about these things happening, but...anyway, Jonn, Nicole, Dustin and I have been doing our best to keep the front desk staffed and the phones answered in their absence. Ultimately, happy for both of them.

And thank goodness for Darby's return!



James Burroughs
ACFL Maintenance technician
January 23, 2024

ACFL Maintenance Report: January – 2024

Introduction

Hello to all, I would like to introduce myself to anyone I haven't had the opportunity to meet yet. My name's James Burroughs. I started as the new ACFL Maintenance Technician on December 11, 2023. I grew up and graduated from high school in Anacortes. It means a lot to be able to come back and work for Anacortes and give back to the community that has always been great to me. Some of my previous experience includes multiple seasons with Washington State Parks at Deception Pass State Park, where I fell in love with parks and learned many valuable skills. Over the last month I've learned so much information about my hometown and the ACFL that I never realized growing up here. My predecessor Steve Phillips has been a fantastic resource of knowledge over the last month. It was overwhelming my first day looking at the vast number of trails I would be responsible for. However, over the course of the month the overwhelmingly large task has become an exciting way to take ownership of my hard work. Excited to continue working hard in the ACFL to provide an incredible resource for the community to enjoy.

Maintenance Activities

Trail clearing: 212, 215, 126, 21, 304*, 28*, 218*, *118, 248, 247, 115, 210, 224, 231, 207, 129, *10, 12, *20, 302, 300, 117*

***: Multiple trees**

Sanitation: Garbage and recycle collection in ACFL, Cleaning of ACFL Restrooms at Heart Lake and Whistle Lake, Litter pick up in ACFL

Sign installation: Mount Erie Road closed sign, Private Property sign on trail 248, Trail closed sign at former trail 132

Trail Drainage: Trails 23, 300, 20

Beaver rounds: Inspections of water areas such as 32nd St swamp, 108 Bridge, Mitten pond beaver deceiver and Ace of Hearts creek. Removing debris in these areas as necessary per permits.

Violations in the ACFL

Trash can vandalism: 1/2/24 at Heart Lake Boat Launch the trash can and fishing line recycler was blown up with fireworks creating a large amount of litter, reported to Anacortes Police Department.

Structures: Took down large structures that were built off trail 107, stripping of ACFL tree bark was used in the making of these structures.

Campfire debris and litter: The parks department was notified of campfire debris and litter that was off trail on 126 which we located and cleaned up.

Dirt bikes in ACFL during winter: During our snowy days I located dirt bike tracks in the snow at Trail 20, I was unable to locate or contact those involved.

Dogs off leash: Made multiple contacts with people in ACFL with dogs off lease, some were more willing to participate in ACFL rules than others.

Meet and greets

Met with Friends of the forest and Fidalgo Trail Riders to discuss future work parties.