



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

January 2, 2025
6pm

In person and virtual meeting options.

In Person: **Anacortes Library Community Meeting Room**

Zoom Meeting Link:

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

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve December '24 Minutes
3. 2025 Board Chair Election
4. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
5. Heart Lake Master Plan / Grant Review
6. Friends of the Forest Update
7. Staff Reports
8. Parks Commission Update
9. Other Business

Adjourn

Minutes of the Meeting: December 5, 2024

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

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and called to order at 6:01PM

Minutes: November minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

None

Transition Fidalgo: Annual Report

Eric Shen was in attendance to give the annual report on the work done by Transition Fidalgo. Please see attached slides.

The overall message is they are meeting their goals in all areas. They will have a chapter in the next Forest Plan highlighting the citizen science work being done. They are working with the City GIS team to create a public facing dashboard of the data collected. Transition is ALWAYS looking for new volunteers to help with their various projects.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Ellie was in attendance and reported that the Forest Discovery Center is open to the public through December 21st. It will then open back up in May or June for the Spring and Summer season.

All kindergarten students and 3rd graders have been out in the ACFL through the partnership with the school district.

Ellie encouraged everyone to check out their newsletter that is full of important information and dates for upcoming programs and classes.

Staff Reports:

Bob reported that he is working on various permits for work in the ACFL with hopes of streamlining the process.

Questions were raised about the Heart Lake plan, Bob reported that nothing will be known until the end of the legislative session.

A question was raised about the new trail volunteer team. This is made up of Fidalgo Trail riders coaches and leaders. Jamie is training them on trail maintenance and upkeep in order to do independent projects.

Discussion ensued regarding the various parcels of land, private and public and the possibilities of purchasing them into the ACFL.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting, sharing that the most up to date information is in the packet. The last meeting was a discussion on the W 6th

street lot and the hope for a park there, and a community discussion on pickleball. There was a full crowd both for and against the sport and finding solutions for the various issues raised by the neighborhood.

2025 Board Chair Discussion:

Kit brought to attention that the January meeting would need to include the election of a new Board Chair. He is willing to continue in this roll, but is also willing to step down should anyone have interest in the roll.

Other Business:

Bob asked about the date of the January meeting, being on the 2nd and directly after the holiday. Most Board members stated they would be in town and available on that date. It was decided to keep the meeting as usual on the 2nd of January.

Adjourn at 7:28pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan

DECEMBER 2024

Assistant Director's Highlights

Submitted: December 20, 2024

Bob Vaux

APD NEW OFFICER ORIENTATION

Parks Manager Johnston and I met with new Officer Jeremy Carter and worked through our Parks & ACFL basics, in the office and field. As Jeremy is a longtime resident and former Council member, we were able to skip to the best parts. Looking forward to having Officer Carter on the team.

2026 FOREST PLAN UPDATE

Our in-house process of completing a draft to review with the Forest Advisory Board should be ready for distribution a week or two prior to the Feb. 6th, 2025 FAB meeting.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK RESTROOM AND PARKING LOT

This project is picking up steam. Working now with the Civil Engineer (same crew from the skate park improvement project), the CXT restroom folks and COA staff to get the bid package put together. Shout out to City Engineer Logan Lee and Contract Specialist Tiffany Matson for the on-going professional and generous support.

TREES

Did another Grandview East recon trip with Arborist Steve. He will evaluate a stand of mature maple near our east property line.

Met with a Forest Ridge resident who is curious about wildfire protection and living next to tall trees.

Met with Storvik Park Condo HOA re: some nearby trees they would like to work with us on (possible hazard removal and some trimming). Working on a plan.

VOLUNTEERS

ACFL Jamie and I met with some long-time local mountain bikers who put a lot of volunteer hours in on our trails and want to continue to do so. We reviewed the current regulatory requirements as well as volunteer protocol. Really appreciate folks interested in truly selfless work.

BEAVER DAMS

Spent most of an afternoon (+ much of the next morning) with WDFW Area Biologist J. Pyle, reviewing our various beaver dams, beaver deceivers and spillways. She is working with us on making the various HPA processes more efficient.

SAMISH/COA IN THE ACFL

Monthly Samish/COA hike with Denise. Enjoyed a beautiful Morrison Meadow / Big Beaver Dam trip with Denise.

WONDERLAND WALK

The Community pitched in with the Parks & Rec team and put together another free holiday treat for anyone interested. Thanks to all who gave their time.

CAP SANTE VIEWPOINT PROJECT

Filled in for Director Lunsford for a few days, joining Engineering Tech Kristen for daily site visits. Project taking shape and looking good. It will enhance the Cap Sante experience for many.

James Burroughs
ACFL Maintenance technician
December 18th, 2024

ACFL Maintenance Report: December – 2024

This month marks one year of working in the ACFL for me! I have met some great people along the way. I have felt and shared the love that so many have for this beautiful place. I have learned so much this last year and am eager to continue gaining knowledge year after year here.

We had our annual winter wonderland walk, so a lot of my time this month has been spent helping the parks maintenance team gear up for the event. Since we are down a crew member, I am expecting to help more frequently this coming year with the rest of the crew.

My list of downed trees to clear grows by the day, thanks to this wind we have had. I continue my efforts in getting trails cleared in a timely manner. Bob and I met with some avid ACFL users who were interested in doing some more volunteer trail work in a more official capacity. The help from volunteers has been fantastic and a huge resource.

This month I also prepped the Heart Lake Restroom vault for pumping, they pumped out both the functional restroom and the other side's tank. We are working on a plan to remove the tank from the previously blown-up north unit.

We have experienced an uptick in ACFL vandalism the last few weeks. Some of these recent activities include blown up trash cans, tipped porta potties, stolen plexiglass out of kiosks and destroyed split rail fencing. All these things have kept me busy picking up the pieces and reporting to APD. We have installed trail cams in various locations that we feel may help mitigate or identify those who are doing these things. Both Little Cranberry Lake and Ray Auld Dr. kiosks have had the backside of the kiosk's plexiglass stolen out of them. The split rail fencing and planting bed at A avenue/ Trail 10 entrance was damaged. According to the Anacortes Police Department an arrest

was made in that case, but I don't have many details on it. I have Repaired the fencing and planting bed.

Until next time, may the forest be with you.

Maintenance Activities

Beaver rounds: Little Cranberry Lake spillway, Ace of Hearts creek, 32nd St. swamp, Mitten Pond

ACFL sanitation: Restrooms and garbage rounds

Cleared downed trees on trails

Prep for Winter wonderland walk

H.L R. R. pumping

Repaired split rail and planter box @ A Ave.

Installed trail cams

Gravel work on W. 2nd trail

Blew leaves with parks crew @ library

Helped pour markers @ cemetery

American trails webinar

Eagle scout project meeting