

Minutes of the Meeting: November 3, 2022

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

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Steve Phillips, Darby Jordan

Guests: Asa Dean, Nathan Schwarck, Steve Charvat

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

Minutes: October minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

Board Member Update:

Bob shared that with Nick Stowe stepping down from the Forest Board, the applications in the Talent Bank were reviewed, as well as new submissions that came in. Tabb reached out to a colleague and asked him to apply. It is expected that the November 14th council meeting will include Board appointments for several positions. Bob introduced Nathan as the anticipated nominee.

Nathan shared that he has been a resident of Anacortes since 1995, living all over the island. He has worked at Shannon Point Marine Center since 1999. Nathan enjoys biking and used to ride motorcycles. Nathan brings a broad knowledge base to the Board with his professional science background and personal enthusiasm for the ACFL.

Public Comments:

Steve Charvat joined the meeting remotely. He is a new homeowner with land adjacent to the Forest Lands. He just wanted to get a feel for what the Board does.

Pacific Northwest Trail Signage:

This trail runs from Glacier to Forks and currently includes a portion of the ACFL as the published route. Asa and Bob met with representatives of the PNT regarding placing signs and kiosks to help direct hikers. These signs were presented at the meeting and the Board expressed support for the placement. A concern was voiced about the additional traffic on the trails, but at this time the estimated number of people completing the entire hike is 70 each year.

ACFL Dams Update:

This project is still ongoing, but Bob was just notified that the Dept of Ecology has deemed the City of Anacortes eligible for the FY22 High Hazard Potential Dam (HHPD) Rehabilitation Grant program. This is FEMA money administered by the State. The COA is working with a consultant on a planning grant. We are still waiting on the report on the dam status and recommendations.

A meeting was held with the Public Works department to share information as this is a project under their scope. The dam was originally constructed by Public Works to allow water to be pumped from Campbell Lake to Whistle Lake as a back up water source for the city.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Asa shared that the annual benefit fundraiser will be held on November 12th at the Transit Shed and this is the main focus at this time. It will be held in person but also allow for an online auction option.

Asa stated that their after-school programs are up and running, as well as the classroom programs. The community hikes are slowing down due to the change in weather.

Parks Commission Report:

Due to a change in the schedule for the Forest Board, there is no update on the Parks Commission at this time.

ACFL Trail Committee Report:

Bob reported that Geri Ruben has been the equestrian representative on the trail committee for decades and she is asking that we put the word out to find a replacement for her. She states that she just does not get out and ride as much but would be happy staying on as the social media contact. Bob will research whether this person is required to live in City limits or not.

Staff Reports:

Steve reported that trail #132 had closure bollards uprooted and thrown into a stream. He has replaced them, but closing a trail typically takes time and repeated efforts.

Bob shared an update from Travis about the project of a small boat launch at Little Cranberry lake. "Lydia from Geoengineers has reviewed the initial drawings for a floating kayak chute and lake access steps. Geoengineers have been contracted to prepare a critical areas report and help with the mitigation process. Parks staff has created a draft for a habitat restoration and water access plan to focus human and canine traffic on a resilient structure, rather than the vulnerable shoreline; and revegetate the shoreline to repair the damage to the shoreline. Staff is working to update initial drawings before moving forward with permitting or public input." Jonn and Travis are working on this project and they will attend a future meeting to update the Board on this.

Bob reported that the annual Dallas Klocke Mt Erie run had about 40 participants on October 29th. Unfortunately, the summit was full of remote control car users. These cars are designed to be off road, and off trail, which is against the rules. The parks staff will again try to reach out to that user group in order to find a way forward, working with both the Parks and Forest Boards.

Other Business:

Brian asked about the tree survey conducted by Transition Fidalgo and the hope of getting an update as we are nearly at year end. Bob will reach out and get that information to include in the packet for next month or have them attend and report about their findings.

Adjourn at 7:21pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan