

Minutes of the Meeting: February 2, 2023

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

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Steve Phillips, Darby Jordan

Guests: Asa Dean, Barbara Cooper

Meeting held in person and via Zoom and called to order at 6:03PM

Minutes: January minutes were unanimously approved with the addition of the MOU/MOA to be created with Friends of the Forest.

Public Comments:

Barbara joined the meeting to see what the status of the Little Cranberry boat launch is and was wondering if there will be an opportunity for public comment. Bob responded that the project is only in concept form at this time. There will be a formal public process once the biologist report is complete. This project is a long way from any formal proposition.

2023 Budget Discussion:

Issue on hold as Jonn Lunsford is out sick.

ACFL Plan Update:

The discussion was started last month about the update of the Forest Plan. Bob and Kit brought a draft outline of a timeline to break up the plan into manageable sections for review and public comment. There is plenty of time for the process but breaking it up this way allows for the Board to discuss other topics that come up. There was some discussion about the timing and the June hike and July break. The basic schedule was updated and approved by the Board.

ACFL Dams Update:

Bob has reached out to the engineers that did the inspection. They are very apologetic about the delay and hope to have the report to Bob by late February or early March. The grant is moving along, but is a very long process.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Asa was in attendance to give the Friends of the Forest update. Their school programs continue to run and they have started an after school program. They are hosting community hikes. The youth education will expand with a camp in mid-February during the school half days. They are also hosting a spring break day camp. A Naturalist club is being started. This will allow for more in depth study about maps, navigation, natural history and geology. This will be held every other Thursday with a fieldtrip on the following Saturday.

Wetlands Monitoring

Bob shared that he and Jonn had met with Ellie from Friends of the Forest. There were some big challenges in the previous project so Ellie requested that she be allowed to take water samples back to the office/lab for more detailed and accurate reporting. The Forest Plan states that the Parks Director and the Board must approve of this. Jonn has expressed support for this program. There was discussion about the need for a MOU/MOA as this is a Friends program separate from Transition Fidalgo. Bob and Asa will work up an agreement and bring it back to the Board for approval.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting, sharing the following:

Bob, Tabb and herself met with Geri to speak about a replacement for the equestrian trail representative.

There was an article in the paper about the Trestle. Work continues and is going well, everything remains on schedule.

The skate park 100% construction drawings have been received and it is looking like construction of both the skate park and the pump track will happen at the same time.

ACFL Trail Committee Report:

Bob, Tabb and JoAnn had a good meeting with Geri about the equestrian trail representative. Bob will reach out to the people suggested and see if they have any interest in volunteering. It was verified that the current forest plan does not specify if the member must reside on Fidalgo island. Discussion was had about what would be preferred.

Staff Reports:

Steve had nothing to add to his written report. Tabb asked about the utility vehicle at Heart Lake. Steve shared that the police are aware of this vehicle as well as one at the top of Mt Erie. Nathan asked about the motorcycle group and if there has been any contact with them. Bob and Steve answered that they are in contact with John Meehan who is the representative on the trail committee for this group. He works very hard to communicate and try to keep their group following the rules.

Bob had nothing to add to his written report.

Other Business:

Brian asked about the SHIP trail and the storm damage done there. Bob responded that staff are observing a brand new environment developing and there is no way to predict the changes that are going on. Staff is trying to just keep people out of the area.

Adjourn at 7:35pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan