

Minutes of the Meeting: August 1st, 2024

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

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan, Jonn Lunsford

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

Minutes: May minutes approved as written.

Thank you to Geri Rubin: Bob expressed thanks to Geri's 20 plus years of service on the trail committee as the equestrian representative. This role was busier when trails were being developed and built. Her role was very important during Covid as communication with the community groups as social distancing was so important. The Board and community express their gratitude for her time and communication and education. Geri stated that it was her pleasure and honor to serve.

Confirm New Member of the ACFL Trail Committee: Bob introduced the new member and equestrian representative for the trail committee-Trisha Sutton. She has been a part of the team unofficially since the "high-centered horse", always willing to help. She has grown up in Anacortes and is now raising her kids here. The Board expressed their full support and thanks.

Public Comments: Tim Schmidt was in attendance to express his thanks for the opportunity to use the ACFL for motorized bikes. All user groups are able to use the trails for training and strengthening skills, along with the motorized users. This has allowed him to take trips to Joshua Tree and Death Valley and have the skills necessary to ride in those conditions. He states that he will continue to come and thank the Board and staff for the access to the trails.

Budget Update with Director Lunsford: Jonn spoke about the general Parks department budget as well as the ACFL budget. The budget planning is in process for 2025 and will be sent to the Mayor and Council in October and November. The ACFL funds have stipulations on most so they are allocated to benefit the ACFL. The ACFL budget has about \$2000 of discretionary spending for projects each year, this is where tools, gravel, supplies, etc are spent from. Any further spending will need to come from grants or donations. Jonn shared that a grant proposal is being presented to the State at the end of the month for the Heart Lake Master Plan. But this is just the very first step in a long process requiring support from local, regional and state representatives. Overall, 2025 will be another very lean year for the City with property and sales tax down, however staffing levels will not change.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Katie was in attendance and reported that the big news for the Friends was the soft opening of their new building. They are currently open T/W/Th from 10-3. Ellie is leading the kids activities and they expect new exhibits to open in October.

The Forest Discovery Camp is four weeks of 9-4 and they are getting great feedback from this program.

Their annual fundraiser will be on September 28th at Whisteria Gardens. Ellie reported that their Trail Ambassador program engaged over 1000 people to date and collected information from over 1700 this summer season. After Labor Day, that data will be reviewed and presented.

Staff Reports:

Bob reported that we are over halfway through the summer and that Jamie has been a fantastic addition to the team. The seasonals, Rubin and Tenzin, have also been amazing and taken a very invested approach to the ACFL. All 50 miles of trail have been trimmed and much data has been collected. There was also the benefit of having the School Resource officer partner with the crew to help with enforcement.

Unfortunately, there was approximately 250 square feet of Whistle Lake shoreline destroyed. Staff is working with APD to look into this criminal activity.

It has been a very family friendly summer overall as the best enforcement is just having families out and about.

Jamie shared that he is still loving his job, even with the Whistle Lake challenges.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting, sharing that the most up to date information is in the packet. Nicole shared about the prospect of sand volleyball at Storvik park.

Other Business:

None

Adjourn at 7:05pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan