



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
(360) 293-1918

Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

Preliminary Agenda

June 5, 2025

6PM

Heart Lake Parking Lot

There is no agenda for this meeting. The annual hike with the Friends of the ACFL will be enjoyed by all.

No business will be conducted.

The public is welcome.

There are no virtual attendance options.

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Minutes for the meeting of

May 1, 2025

6pm

1. Call to Order:
6:02PM.
Board Members Present: Gerwels, York-Gilmore, Wetcher, Stringer
Staff Present: Lunsford, Vaux, Burroughs (Jordan set up the room and the technology)
2. April meeting minutes: approved unanimously.
3. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda:*
M. Nihart requested a variety of information/documents be posted on the City website: FAB comments on the Forest Plan, a recent staff PowerPoint presentation and Barrier Busters audit of City facilities from the 1990's.
4. Forest Plan 2026 Update: work on current draft in progress: if staff can have the next draft of the plan available for the June meeting, the traditional June hike with the Friends of the ACFL Board will be postponed. It is highly likely the June hike will take place. The Board and public in attendance are comfortable with the plan being presented at the August meeting. There typically is no FAB meeting in July.
5. Parks & Recreation Budget Update: Director Lunsford did just this, highlighting the approaching June budget retreat to be attended by the Mayor, City Council and Dept. Heads. DL is optimistic there will be funding for the capital projects like the Heart Lake improvement plan, but the operating budget will most likely remain a significant challenge.

In the fall the usual Council budget work sessions with the public are scheduled. DL reminded the FAB of funding partners like the Parks Foundation, funding support from Parks impact fees and the like. He also discussed the ACFL Endowment Fund and the Conservation Easement Program funds that are available for conditioned

ACFL expenditures only. Lunsford also explained that due to explored engineering requirements for the Little Cranberry Lake assisted boat launch that simply end up being more substantial than what we had hoped for, this project is halted for now. Staff may look at a stand along shoreline restoration project on the east side of the lake's north end.

The FAB and the public had some questions for DL...are there plans to repair the wooden observation deck at Little Cranberry? The City will take a look...is the City going to spend money on wildfire observation technology for the top of Mt. Erie? This is in the hands of the Fire Chief...does the City have a budget for expensive cameras to be used for security? Parks do not.

DL also explained that the operational City budget for 2026 will most likely be a "hold the line" budget. The FAB did ask about the recent \$200K donation to the ACFL. DL is hoping to use that for a substantial project, perhaps along the lines of property acquisition or the Heart Lake parking lot improvement project. DL did verify that all Lakeside quarry lease revenue may only be spent in the ACFL.

FAB Chair Gerwels asked DL about the future of a fully commissioned Park Ranger in the woods and parks. He reminded him that the FAB fully supports this. DL emphasized the support for this from Police Chief Floyd. The Ranger would have to technically be a Police Dept. employee due to the law enforcement requirements that exceed the realm of the Parks Dept.

6. Friends of the ACFL Update: Executive Director Josie Henderson mentioned the success of recent Earth Day events in Anacortes, i.e., Procession of the Species, etc. She also explained that the Friends Forest Discovery Center will be officially opening Friday, June 13th, and that the Trail Ambassador trainings are quickly approaching. There are wait lists for the summer camps and the annual fundraising event will be Sept. 27 at Wisteria Gardens.
7. Staff Reports: ACFL Jamie really enjoyed the April Dallas Kloke Mt. Erie Clean Up with local climbers. He gained some important knowledge of the climbing areas as well as the approaches.
8. Parks Commission Update: JoAnn provided her usual report on Parks adventures, highlighting former Mayor Gere's current fundraising work on the Community Recreation Center.
9. Other Business: FAB member Wetcher reminded all of his annual 4th of July evening patrol at Little Cranberry. He encouraged other FAB members to pick a favorite spot and do the same.

Adjourn: 7:02PM

MAY 2025

Assistant Director's Highlights

Submitted: May 29, 2025

Bob Vaux

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK PH II: submitted the Civil Engineering contract request with Mackay Sposito on April 17th. They were also the PH I Civil for Grindline so already have much of the needed baseline data as well as a positive work history with the COA.

At their May 5th meeting the City Council asked staff to look at the Portland Loo restroom unit, rather than the CXT unit we gained permission to install from the Recreation and Conservation Office. This will postpone our design contract while we answer some questions for the Council.

Working the phones with a variety of municipalities on their experience with and recommendations for the Loo units. Also, able to get some information from very helpful staff at the Portland Loo Company.

I did meet with Skate Park Czar Rachel, to discuss some fundraising sign requests. Rachel maintains her commitment to the long-term care of the park, much appreciated.

SEASONAL STAFF: we had one of our ACFL hires rescind acceptance of the position at the end of April, so have reposted and are looking. Same circumstance for our cemetery position.

Good news a week or so later, one of our ACFL seasonal alumni reached out and would like to return for this summer. We are currently making that happen.

On May 15 Lucy S. and Ginny S. reported for ACFL seasonal duty. Great to have them on board. Spending some time with them, as well as Jamie, as we prepare for another ACFL summer.

Nicole was able to find another cemetery worker as well.

WHISTLE LAKE DAM: due to some administrative challenges at both Skagit County and FEMA, our grant funds are currently inaccessible. Public Works leadership have reached out to Skagit County seeking clarification.

FOREST PLAN UPDATE: continuing to work with staff on the next draft of the document.

Good Meeting with Robbie Andrus, re: his canopy study and other Transition Fidalgo related topics, along with contributions to the Plan.

APD PARKS AND WOODS SUMMER ENFORCEMENT: had a good meeting with Capt. Fuller regarding the availability of his patrol staff for the parks and woods this summer. Despite a variety of staffing challenges, he has committed to working with us and providing support when possible.

WEST 6TH PARK: held our second community-based planning meeting, exploring a variety of park designs based upon the input from the first meeting. Almost 20 park neighbors showed up to voice their support for the project. Staff now working on next steps.

DISC GOLF COURSE: Director Lunsford and I met on site with DGC President Aaron B. Good discussion of next tee pad and long-term course goals.

AB also showed us what looks like an active homeless camp along the course. I eventually met with an APD Officer on site, but the site was unoccupied at the time.

PARKS & RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: attended the May 14 Planning Commission meeting with Director Lunsford. Good Q & A session with the PC on P&R goals, policies, etc.

FRIENDS OF THE ACFL TRAIL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM: Joined the Friends and their many T.A. volunteers for annual training sessions. This is a great program that gets better every year. One of the most powerful ways our locals show support for the woods as well as educate visitors, new and old.

PARKS & REC COUNCIL COMMITTEE: had a great session with staff and Council on the 15th. Much appreciated.

NORTH HEART LAKE HOMELESS SHELTER: right off Heart Lake Road, utilizing an illegal brush dump. Parks Tottenham found it, I confirmed its illegality on site and Jamie & the ACFL summer team cleaned it up.

MONITORING FOREST ECOSYSTEMS IN THE ACFL: another great presentation by Dr. Robbie Andrus, and the work he has been doing in the ACFL with all the great volunteers at Transition Fidalgo. Thank You TF! This work will eventually be made public and will hopefully continue long into the future.

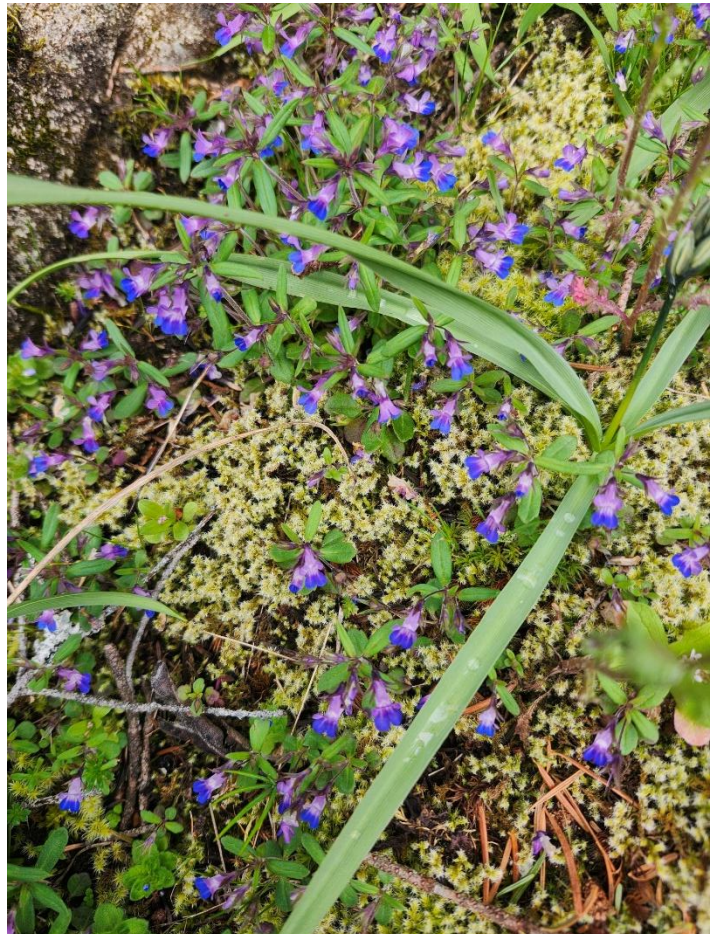
ACFL "PATROL": I have been helping out Jamie and the summer team when our staff numbers are slim.

THANK YOU:

- Director Lunsford for joining the May Forest Advisory Board meeting and providing a briefing on the 2026 City Budget process.
- Parks Maintenance Tech Braydn Krueger, for managing an LDS Youth Group ACFL work party on trail 210.
- Denise Crowe, the Samish Nation's Education Program Manager, for another great Samish/COA hike. Wildflower recon on south 215 was beautiful.

TREE CONCERNS:

- Working on a plan for a very mature alder leaning from an ACFL wetland over a neighbor's patio on 26th Street.



James Burroughs
ACFL Maintenance technician
May 28th, 2025

ACFL Maintenance Report: May 2025

ACFL Seasonal staff

We welcomed our two ACFL seasonals this month. It's already been a tremendous help to me, as we approach the busy season. We are also lucky as one of them has a year of ACFL seasonal experience under their belt, which has sped up the training process for me. Within a couple weeks they have already dealt with a few challenges that we will face over the course of the summer, such as filthy bathrooms, off-leash dogs, homeless camp cleanups, unruly park visitors and the seemingly never-ending trail trimming.

Trail Trimming

Trail trimming is underway! We have gotten off to a good start and the seasonal staff are improving trail by trail. I started the trimmer training at Little cranberry hill, which tends to be a good place to start them off before moving onto actual trails. Our first trail trimming began at Trail 28 as it is important to get there early so you can still drive through it. We moved onto the 300's, as these trails also began to get taken over rather quickly in a few areas. We still have many trails to go but the seasonal staff have showed great effort and enthusiasm.

Hazardous/Downed Tree Removals

I have removed a handful of hazardous or downed trees this month. A downed tree on Trail 125 was causing hikers to go around off trail, I cut it off the trail and moved the log to the side of the trail preventing any further trail widening. Two hazard trees removed from Trail 28, many alders fall over this trail. A hazard tree off Trail 212 was leaning over the trail preventing equestrians from safely passing. Removed downed tree off Trail 103, creating difficulties getting around it.

Holiday weekend Patrol

The seasonal staff and I checked for any illegal camping over the weekend in a few of the more common spots. No camping was found. I took them through the typical patrol rounds that we will be doing a lot this summer. The weekend was somewhat busy, but the crowds behaved themselves. I also showed the seasonals where all the fire buckets are as we approach the dry season, getting them familiar with the locations of these is important.

Signage

I installed new motorcycle signs in the 300's, directing motorbikes in the proper directions to help prevent trail poaching. A new trail sign at Trail 125 has been installed.

Violations in the ACFL

We cleaned up our first homeless camp of the season. It was off Heart Lake Road; it was active however no one was located. The seasonals cleaned up graffiti off numerous trail signs in the south Heart section of trails and up to sugarloaf. Bob received a report of some markings on trees up in the 300's after checking it out it appeared to be chalk and not spray paint thankfully, unsure the reasoning behind the markings. After another Plexi-glass theft out of our kiosks, I have removed all Plexi-glass from the kiosks to prevent further theft.



Garter Snake eating a slug