



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
(360) 293-1918

Anacortes Community Forest Lands
Advisory Board
Notice of meeting cancellation

The July 3, 2025 meeting is cancelled.
The next regular meeting of the Board will be
Thursday, August 7th.

Staff Contact: Bob Vaux
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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

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

JUNE 2025

Assistant Director's Highlights

Submitted: June 26, 2025

Bob Vaux

ACFL SUMMER TEAM: Lucy and Ginny are off to a great start. With Jamie coming into his second summer with us he and the team are rolling on the trail trimming and some late May / early June sunshine bringing some guests. These three are also helping in other parks. Their flexibility is much appreciated.

TREES:

- working with an Orchards homeowner on an ACFL windfall in their adjacent NGPE.
- Washington Park neighbor on Parkside Drive has a complicated tree challenge. We are working on a plan.

FOREST PLAN: the 2026 update continues.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PH. II: was able to respond to Council questions regarding the CXT restroom unit versus the Portland Loo at their June 2nd meeting. The design contract was returned to Consent and unanimously approved at the June 9th meeting.

Had a great on-site meeting with local skateboard hero Rachel and Grindline James, exploring some long-term maintenance options and the upcoming warranty visit from the pros. We are working on some cost-saving partnering that will benefit the long-term health and enjoyment of the park.

We officially kicked off the planning phase of the project with MacKay Sposito. Looking forward to working with them again. And also very happy to announce that Kristen H. from Engineering has been assigned to this project. She joined the COA team during the PH I construction and brings great expertise to the process and jobsite.

WASHINGTON PARK: provided some staff support to a very busy park during a shrimp opening and a 30' camping trailer attempting to travel the Loop Road 😊

NEW APD OFFICER: Parks Manager Nicole and I shared in the orientation of another new Officer, showing him some of the basic routes to and locations where we need most of our PD support.

FIDALGO DEMOCRATS WILDFIRE INFORMATION NIGHT: was invited to join this very informative meeting with national, regional and local experts discussing wildfire and how to best manage private property for defensible space. The presenters were complimentary of our community and the work we are all currently doing.

FRIENDS OF THE ACFL: attended the Forest Discovery Center ribbon cutting on the 13th. Congratulations to the Friends for this giant step forward in local forest education. Please take some time to visit the new facility.

W. 6TH PARK PLAN: met with our Civil Engineer. She is coming up with some phased options. Also, doing some early recon on the third floor with Planning and GIS.

ACFL RECON:

- Jamie and I spent some time in the North Little Cranberry zone, putting the plan together for the National Trails Day volunteer work party with the Friends of the ACFL.
- June 5 Forest Advisory Board meeting was the annual hike with the Friends of the ACFL Board. A beautiful evening walking around Heart Lake. Thanks to all the volunteers who attended and for all the great work that you each do.

- Sunday 6/8: spent the afternoon on Whistle Lake guest parking detail. Did have to turn some away as we maxed out our available parking.
- Enjoyed a native plant hike on Sugarloaf with Steve P., Denise C. and a citizen interested in coordinating some new preservation work. We are giving some thought to future possibilities.
- With another bridge needing attention (104 x 106) Jamie and I are working on both a quick temporary fix and meeting the requirements for the long-term repair.
- Tues 6/24: did the trailhead rounds as Jamie was off today. Quiet numbers. We do have some cyanobacteria at Little Cranberry. We have posted information on site and via social media. Skagit County Health Dept. is in the loop. No closure warranted at this time.



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James Burroughs
ACFL Maintenance technician
June 21st, 2025

ACFL Maintenance Report: June 2025

Trail Trimming/Tree removals

The Seasonal staff and I continue our efforts to get all the trails trimmed. We have officially trimmed all the Heart Lake trails. We have also trimmed most of the southwest Cranberry trails and a lot of the north Whistle trails. I cut out some hazardous trees, on Trail 204, Trail 10, Trail 205, Trail 126, Tommy Thompson Trail and Washington Park Campground road.

ACFL rounds and patrols

We have had some busy days at Whistle Lake already and with many still to come the seasonal staff and I will continue monitoring the lakes and trails for unapproved activities in the forest lands. So far, we haven't had any major complications with park visitors following rules, Off-leash dogs and whistle lake drinking are always the most frequent violations.

Mowing

Early on this month, I mowed inside the Old Dump a requirement per Department of Ecology. In years past our street department has traditionally done it, however last year we took it over. I am hoping to get one more mow up there before the end of the summer. I also mowed the 208 trail head located at the Orchards neighborhood.

Repairs/Maintenance

I repaired the rail on 106 Bridge, the end of the decking it was attached to was rotted out. We will be adding the bridge to our list of bridges to replace as it is about aged out. Replaced a rotted out 4x4 beam at the Whistle Lake Romtec. Heart and Whistle outhouse vaults were pumped out and are ready for summer use.

Signage

We have had quite a bit of vandalism/graffiti to our trail signs as of late. The seasonal and I have been hard at work removing graffiti and replacing unsavable ones. We have placed new signs for 204, 203 and 246. We found the remanence of another illegal campfire at the lower lot of Heart Lake, this spot

and the summit of Mt. Erie seem to be the places where these activities happen. No Fire signs have been installed in both spots. In preparation for the Fourth of July we have put up no fireworks signs at the parking lots.

West Second trail

The Parks office received some feedback that the W. 2nd connector trail's ramps on the boardwalks were too steep for some bikers. I, with the help of my seasonals, raised up the ramps using pavers to lessen the angle and brought in gravel to level out the approach to the ramps. We also trimmed the trail while working there.

Illegal dump at Mt. Erie

Tires and garbage were dumped off the side of Mt. Erie Summit Rd. The seasonals and I cleaned up the mess and it was reported to APD.



NTD work party

With the help of Friends of the Forest, we put on a volunteer work party on National trails day! The goal was to remove the old timber structure located on "Little rock" at Little Cranberry Lake. We only had 3 volunteers, however they all worked hard, and we accomplished our goal! The logs were rotten and came out somewhat easily, however the surprise waiting for us was the concrete that the rebar was in. We still managed to get the concrete out and landscape the area back to a more natural state. We also got some extra credit work done by closing a hiker-made social trail near little rock.

Before



After

