



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board

August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
6pm

In person and virtual meeting options.

In Person: **Anacortes Library Community Meeting Room**

Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88308344363>

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve May '25 Minutes
3. Public Comments *for any item not on the agenda*
4. Forest Plan 2026 Update: draft plan presented to FAB for review
5. Friends of the Forest Update
6. Staff Reports
7. Parks Commission Update
8. Other Business

Adjourn

## **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 13<sup>th</sup>, 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 4<sup>th</sup> of July evening patrol at Little Cranberry. He encouraged other FAB members to pick a favorite spot and do the same.

Adjourn: 7:02PM

**JULY 2025**  
**Assistant Director's Highlights**  
**Submitted: July 30, 2025**  
*Bob Vaux*

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**FOREPERSON HIRING PROCESS**

- We have been going through an in-house hiring process as Parks Tottenham decided to make a career change and has moved on from parks & recreation. It was my great pleasure to work many years with Brian and wish him well on all his future endeavors.

**ACFL**

- Work continues on the Forest Plan update. It should be available for the Forest Advisory Board at the August 7 meeting.
- Provided patrol support on Sunday 6/29. Whistle was very family friendly, and numerous leashed dogs.
- Did the same on Monday 6/30. Had a motorbike travelling at excessive speeds, dog off leash and alcohol consumption contacts all in a row at Whistle. None of the subjects spoken to cared much about their disregard for ACFL policy/safety.
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July: we got through another one in one piece. I took the early shift, handling firewatch and patrol until mid-afternoon. Thank you, Officer Kellington, for working the late afternoon at Whistle and making it so much safer for guests and parks staff alike. Also, thanks to ACFL Jamie and the summer team for some late shifts and making sure we closed the gates on the Mt. Erie summit road as well as Heart Lake. And thank you FAB member Brian Wetcher for his annual volunteer firewatch at Little Cranberry.
- Morning rounds on July 5<sup>th</sup> were happily quiet.
- Provided staff support at Whistle Lake on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>. Busy days. Most guests very happy to enjoy the ACFL as well as its policies.
- More patrol on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>...super sunshine days with manageable numbers in the woods. Jamie and team handling Whistle while I monitored other lakes and trailheads.
- 115 bridge: site recon on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Working with Jamie and Stormwater Aaron on replacement plan and permitting.
- HL Survey: we have a signed contract with AcquaTechnex to survey for invasives. Hoping this happens soon.
- Seasonal Switch-Over: our current seasonal team will be departing over the first couple of weeks of August. Lucy and Ginny have done a great job protecting the woods and trimming all 50 miles of trails. Thank you!! The good news is we have found two young people (one a returnee) to take over their work through Labor Day.
- Ended up in the middle of a little dust up between two families at Little Cranberry on 7/21, one with off leash dogs and the other without. After talking through the situation, a fender bender between the two occurred and I ended up involving APD. The officer took it from there.
- New APD Officers: Parks Mgr Johnston and I enjoyed a 7/23 orientation tour we are now providing all new APD staff. Loved the enthusiasm and curiosity of APD's two newest additions.
- Filled in for Ginny on patrol rounds with Lucy on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Pretty solid family friendly day. A few dogs off leash.
- Quick patrol rounds on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Quiet numbers.

**PROJECT UPDATES**

- Ben Root Skate Park PH II: Cultural Resources Survey has been completed by Samish Nation staff. Report should be delivered soon.

- West 6<sup>th</sup> Park Plan: will be meeting with our design engineer in early August. Hoping to have a preliminary design early fall.
- Heart Lake Parking Lot: we have qualified for grant \$'s from the Recreation and Conservation Office. We will now begin the initial planning steps.

### **OPEN STREETS**

- Josh Gates doing a great job in his first full year as the Open Streets Czar. The ABPAC team continues to support as well, as we close in on Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>.

**James Burroughs**  
**ACFL Maintenance technician**  
**July 29th, 2025**

### **ACFL Maintenance Report: July 2025**

#### **Trail Trimming**

We have completed the first round of trimming every trail. The summer staff worked hard getting to all the trails and I plan on needing to get a second round done on some of the trails we got to early on.

#### **Trees**

We had a handful of trees come down this month. I cleared downed trees on Trails 28, 128, 201 and 304.

#### **Fourth of July**

The summer team and I worked till 11:00pm on the Fourth. We were able to get both Heart Lake and Mt. Erie summit rd. closed up by 10pm. Thankfully a quiet night without any issues.

#### **ACFL boat patrol**

I got the seasonal out on the park boat for the first time this month, usually a highlight for the summer staff. They managed to clean up the island at Whistle and made some contact with drinkers floating the lake.

#### **Little Cranberry Spillway repair**

Repaired a section of the Little Cranberry Lake spillway structure to fulfill Department of Ecology requests. I still have some work to do on this front as we need to backfill the sides of the spillway, another request by D.O.E

#### **ACFL Patrol/rounds**

Daily checks of garbage and restrooms, litter pick up and patrol of lakes.

#### **Trail 101” Bicycle barricade”**

The summer team and I replaced the Bicycle barricade at the entrance to Trail 101. The old one was rotting and in need of some attention.



### **ACFL violations**

With nice weather the lakes and trailheads have seen many visitors. This of course means more violations of ACFL policy, we had many off-leash dog contacts this month along with alcohol consumption at Whistle Lake. Another thing we encountered was a rope swing nearby from Madrona Beach (Trail 205/Trail 29). We took down the rope swing in days to follow, however when we revisited the site, I noticed that the bush/shrub just above the rope swing area had been hacked down, very similarly to our “illegal made beach” last summer, just south of the area. Unfortunate that things keep happening in our woods, I forwarded this to ACFL Vaux, who reported it to PD.

