

MINUTES—Regular Meeting  
CHUCKANUT COMMUNITY FOREST PARK DISTRICT  
Wednesday, January 23, 2019  
Fairhaven Branch, Bellingham Public Library  
1117 12<sup>th</sup> St, Bellingham, WA  
Fireplace Room 6:00 to 8:00 PM  
Mailing Address: PO Box 4283, Bellingham, WA 98227

Our Mission: The mission of the Chuckanut Community Forest Park District is to ensure the entirety of the property is protected in perpetuity in public ownership, with respect for its ecological, recreational, and educational functions and to serve as a fiscal mechanism through which the district, via a tax levy, will repay the City of Bellingham for the Greenways Endowment Fund loan.

**Call to order:** At 6:02 PM President V. Biciunas called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call:** John McLaughlin, Frank James, Hue Beattie, John Hymas (Clerk), Vince Biciunas (President).

**Introductions:** Those acknowledged included Bob Carmichael, legal counsel, board secretary, Diane Birsner, and WWU students Jon Flanagan, Liam Hanson and Rachel Fuller.

**Election of 2019 Slate of Officers:**

**Motion:** H. Beattie moved to elect J. Hymas as Board Clerk. F. James seconded. Vote was 5-0 to approve.

**Motion:** J. McLaughlin moved to elect F. James as Board President. J. Hymas seconded. Vote was 5-0 to approve. (James presided over the remainder of the meeting.)

**Motion:** V. Biciunas moved to approve today's meeting agenda. J. Hymas seconded. Vote was 5-0 to approve as amended.

**Motion:** V. Biciunas moved to approve the December 12, 2018 meeting minutes. J. Hymas seconded. Vote was 4-0 to approve as corrected, H. Beattie abstaining.

**Report:** J. Hymas reported that the January 2019 Parks Advisory Board meeting contained no information pertaining directly to CCFPD. J. Hymas will remind the Parks Board at their next meeting that CCFPD is scheduled to disband in 2023; he will also remind the Parks board of the CCF Park's name (not to be confused with Fairhaven Park).

**Motion:** H. Beattie moved to direct F. James to send a letter to L. Bryson of COB Parks, T. Elsworth of Recreation NW, copying Mayor K. Linville and the Parks Board, clarifying the name of Chuckanut Community Forest Park and requesting that these entities be consistent. V. Biciunas seconded. B. Carmichael suggested that James mention in his letter that the original initiative and ballot title named the

park as the CCF, which the citizens voted on. Also throughout the court proceedings pertaining CCFPD's past lawsuit, it was referred to as the Chuckanut Community Forest Park, so it has legal standing. Vote was 5-0 to approve.

**Update:** V. Biciunas reported that according to Parks Department, CCF parks violations have been restored. However, neither she nor J. McLaughlin have inspected the work. McLaughlin offered to look for these restoration efforts and for any additional violations, and obtain their GPS coordinates.

**Update:** J. McLaughlin submitted to the board an introductory document explaining his students' trail design project. D. Birsner will direct the Webmaster to add it plus the five students' designs to CCFPD's website, and she will send a PSA directing the Friends of the Chuckanut Community Forest Park to the website. The board engaged in a conversation about how to initiate a community-wide discussion around these trail designs, which could inform the development of the City's Master Plan for CCF Park. Biciunas suggested that to begin the discussion, the board could study each design and decide which plan or key elements would be most beneficial. The board agreed to begin this discussion at the Feb. 27 meeting.

**Monthly expenses and cash flow sheets:** Submitted by D. Birsner, Secretary and J. Hymas, Clerk.

**Treasurer's Report:** Birsner reported that the Whatcom Co. Treasurer's report for December 2018 was unavailable for this meeting.

**Petty Cash:** As of Nov 30, 2018, WECU's combined checking and savings accounts balance was \$2,554.01. As of Dec. 31, 2018, our combined checking and savings accounts balance was \$2,941.58.

**Motion:** V. Biciunas moved to approve CCFPD contributing to the employee's portion of the Paid Family and Medical Leave Contribution. J. Hymas seconded. Vote was 5-0 to approve.

**Reminder:** D. Birsner. F-1 PDC forms are due on April 15, 2019. Birsner provided F-1 and F-1A forms to those commissioners requesting them.

**Office Supplies Request:** D. Birsner requested 20 recycled file folders for 2019. F. James will deliver some to Birsner.

**Next meeting:** Wed. Feb. 27, 2019, Fairhaven Library, Fireplace Rm., 6:00 PM.

**Motion:** V. Biciunas moved to approve the District Payroll Input Form, wages for Diane Birsner, 16.25 hours for period ending December 31, 2018, for \$406.25. J. McLaughlin seconded. Vote was 5-0 to approve.

**Consent Agenda:** Motion to approve the following payments. Discussion. Vote.

Payment on the December 15, 2018 Invoice # 86048 to Carmichael Clark PS for \$1165.50 for general legal services.

Payment on the Dec. 11, 2018 Invoice #200046349 to Oltman Insurance Company for \$1,673.00 for D&O insurance.

Payment on the Jan. 21, 2019 to Oltman Insurance Company for \$875.00 for the 2019 bond premium.

Payment on the Jan. 4, 2019 Invoice #28774 to Whatcom County Administrative Services for \$30.00 for Q-4 2018 payroll services.

Payment to E. Diane Birsner for \$66.16 for Q-4 2018 mileage reimbursement.

### **Old Business.**

B. Carmichael: At Dec. 12, 2018's meeting, legal counsel S. Jain was asked to report back on any legal impediments to addressing these items: parking area/right-of-way, bike jumps/illegal trail widening, adding signage, and to disseminating trail planning designs. Carmichael reported that there is no impediment to these items. Carmichael's second item was about the conservation easement transfer, and his suggestion that the board update the Whatcom Land Trust of their decision to table the transfer for the time being. The board had decided to pursue other possible entities to transfer the conservation easement. Carmichael asked the board if they want to actively pursue the conservation easement transfer this soon, which could diminish its role as the Park's steward/caretaker as well as major stakeholder in the Master Plan process. F. James offered to contact the WLT; also that, since the land trust is conservator of the property adjacent to the CCF, the board will welcome WLT's input on the future Master Plan process.

### **New Business:**

V. Biciunas will convey the key to CCFPD's safe deposit box to F. James.

F. James asked for copies of CCFPD's Baseline Report for himself and H. Beattie. Birsner will look for the extra copies and distribute them to the new commissioners.

V. Biciunas suggested the board authorize signage in the park that addresses the issue of park abuse, and to include the "whys." Examples of issues include dogs on leash, picking up dog's feces, dogs and people staying on trails, and no destruction of the natural environment. "Whys" would address the impact these violations have on the park's ecosystem. McLaughlin offered to create verbiage and will also contact faculty who teach interpretation courses and would be able to create actual signs.

### **Public Comment (please limit to 3 minutes each):**

J. Flanagan: Concerning the conservation easement, it currently has no provision for bike trail widening and building of new trails, so what would be the process for making an amendment, would it be made here? B. Carmichael said that an amendment to the conservation easement would have to be approved by the CCFPD and by the COB. He would not encourage that as an option. The idea is to not make any trail modification until a Master Plan is in place. That's the time

for public input into deciding what the Park will look like and how it will be used. If there are trails to be widened, trails to be decommissioned, etc, the time to discuss that is during the Master Plan process. Carmichael clarified that there is no Master Plan in place as yet, and the conservation easement is like the park's constitution, in that its tenets have to be adhered to until the Master Plan is in place. Yet even the park's Master Plan will have to be consistent with the conservation easement, which is a legal document.

L. Hanson: Question pertaining to education, interpretation and research. How would any future butterfly gardens, beekeeping, bird sanctuaries, grazing/farm animals for research or education, etc, be interpreted by the conservation easement? J. McLaughlin responded: all of those mentioned would require building facilities, which is prohibited by the conservation easement. The intent for this park was to maintain it as a natural reserve, to provide access for people to enjoy it as is, but not to develop or improve it. This needs to remain a forested wetland complex, to be used by the public. The forest contributes to the headwaters for Whatcom and Padden Creeks. Biciunas added that this property is a huge connection between the bay and the mountains, as part of the wildlife corridor. Birsner said that this property could be utilized as a field trip destination for students in the school districts whose teachers have partnered with the university and local organizations to create environmental education curricula. Hanson: so the main goals of this park are to preserve it as is, and to use it for education? Biciunas: and for recreational purposes, as is. McLaughlin: this land provides unique educational lessons for how we live in this place. Hanson: so are there any other perceived uses other than conservation, education and recreation? McLaughlin: that sums it up. The students brought up Hanson's assignment to look at potential grazing opportunities in the park. The board mentioned the need for removal of invasive species. Controlled goat grazing could work, they agreed.

R. Fuller: One of my questions is about invasive and non-native species and you mentioned blackberries and scotch broom. McLaughlin: go to the quarry and look at the domination of invasives in the pit. Invasives appear where the soil's been disturbed. It's why we're also concerned about widening trails. J. Hymas and H. Beattie named several invasives within the park.

R. Fuller: I see that your conservation easement's goals are to preserve, educate and recreate. What percentage of your budget goes toward recreation? Biciunas: our budget goes toward paying back the loan, minus 10% which covers our operating expenses. Carmichael: the City is responsible for managing the park, so any of those expenses would be theirs.

L. Hanson: Is there a Facebook group that the community can follow the development of the Park? Biciunas: Not really. Hanson: A Facebook group would be an efficient way to distribute information to the community, invoke interest and solicit funds. McLaughlin: that's a great idea for the master planning process.

J. Flanagan: I didn't even know that I could have a say until I came here tonight. But now knowing that, I'll be participating more. Facebook could be a great way to inform people.

**Adjourn.** Time: 7:32 PM.