

MINUTES—Regular Meeting
CHUCKANUT COMMUNITY FOREST PARK DISTRICT
Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Fairhaven Branch, Bellingham Public Library
1117 12th St, Bellingham, WA, Fireplace Room 6:00 to 8:00 PM
Mailing Address: PO Box 4283, Bellingham, WA 98227

Official email addresses for Commissioners, where the public may send comments (which are subject to public disclosure):

John Hymas jhymas1331@gmail.com

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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: Frank James. Welcome Commissioners and Citizens. Per Chapter 42.30 RCW (Open Public Meetings Act), CCFPD board meetings are open to the public. This meeting is being voice recorded.

Roll Call: Frank James (President), Vince Biciunas, John Hymas (Clerk). John McLaughlin and Hue Beattie arrived a little later.

Motion: It was moved by V. Biciunas and seconded by J. Hymas to approve today's agenda. Discussion. Motion approved 3/0, by those currently in attendance.

Minutes: Moved by V. Biciunas to approve the August 28, 2019 meeting minutes with the corrections emailed by John McLaughlin and the corrections made by R. Albro, Seconded by J. Hymas. Approved 4/0 by those in attendance.

Introductions: Those who wish to be acknowledged: legal counsel Bob Carmichael, Robyn Albro, Secretary. Scott Powell, who retired a year ago, lives adjacent to woods at end of 22nd St. John Blethen is the Park Board representative to CCFPD. Doug Klunder lives across the street from 100-acre woods. Ted Wolf lives on South Hill. Dan Broker, Frank James is his landlord and Dan is very interested to learn more. Mary Rivkin lives at 13th & Mill, involved in early childhood education. Chuckanut Forest paths are a great treasure for little ones.

Park Advisory Board Report: J. Hymas reported: Greenways Committee made high priority of acquiring property for a park in Happy Valley, looking at Mormon property at Connelly Creek Nature Area and Greenways trail. Leslie Bryson of Parks is going to retire in early January. Hi priority for a master plan for CCFPD in the 2021/2022 biennial. V. Biciunas: On their schedules, completing Fairhaven Park and Chuckanut Community Forest master plan is a high priority. They insist on calling it Fairhaven Park. Leslie Bryson stated it is surrounded by other open space areas and protected by the

conservation easement and is not just our 88 acres. F. James said she said they are not going to name it till planning process is done. In new map for Parks & Trails and Natural Areas, we are included in Fairhaven Park. Nicole Oliver calls it Fairhaven Park and Chuckanut Community Forest.

John Blethen: Greenways has been enlightened about the last levy having money for restoration for the forest. Would like to move from maintaining buildings to doing restoration in the forest. Julia Guy is pushing for community gardens. Horrified about loss of our forest -- losing hemlocks maples, spruces and cedar trees.

John Hymas brought up there was talk about invasive plants.

Vince Biciunas suggestion to Commission – talked to Nicole Oliver and she said she would be willing to come to our October 23rd meeting, if we wanted to talk to her about budgets, master plans and process. The only way to move up the 2021/2022 master plan process is to lobby city council to include when they approve the next biennial budget in November.

Motion: Vince Biciunas moved to have Nicole Oliver come to the October meeting to talk about master plan and premature naming of CCFPD. Seconded by John Hymas. All approved, 5/0. If she can't come, could ask Mike Lilliquist from the Council. Frank James will email her.

J. McLaughlin: If want to move up master planning, need to do a list of costs and benefits. Need a compelling argument and need to list what are the consequences and costs of a delay.

Motion: V. Biciunas moved that John McLaughlin spend 15 min on cost benefit analysis for us, seconded by J. Hymas. Approved by all 5/0. Need to do before next meeting.

Old Business

- Bicycle maps: Fairhaven Bikes owner who made the map was out of town. F. James will go back and talk to him again and see if he would change it.
- Holes dug in Chuckanut Forest by First Federal Bank contractor: F. James did not have time to follow up with that yet. Will do by next meeting.
- Carbon storage calculations: J. McLaughlin was directed to another person who handles this as a class action, David Wallin, chair of Environmental Sciences at WWU, who teaches forest ecology. David Wallin has been doing it for the arboretum and is apparently looking for another site. John is waiting to hear back from him.
- Signage in CCF: J. Hymas did not talk about that specifically, but signage did come up at the last Park meeting. Is it a resource issue? Need to go to Nicole and ask her at next meeting if it is a resource, research, or priority issue?
- Trash, dog waste cans & blowing leaves off the trail: Ask Nicole Oliver when she comes to next meeting.
- Moss and Lichen Survey: V. Biciunas talked to Fred Rhoades. There is a Licheners group and he spoke with Melissa Duffy and thought they could start an immediate informal collection/survey of the lichens. Asked if he needed any money and he said, just if we wanted voucher specimens, but then where do they store them and would have to talk to Western. If just want a list of what is there so we could get a baseline, then they could get started this fall. Ask him to take photos. Mosses are trickier would be studied more by native plant society and he hasn't spoken with anyone there yet. Did agree it would be educational and valuable to have this baseline and track changes. He is excited to get started.

V. Biciunas didn't talk to him about mushrooms but could ask the local mushroom club about a survey. Mushroom club has done forays there in the past and could make those lists available to CCFPD.

V. Biciunas: Have our baseline study, edited out per city where more work needs to be done. We could compile a list as a baseline, of mosses, lichens, mushrooms, for 2019/2020. Keep accumulating knowledge. List the additional surveys as separate to the baseline survey, but next to it. Can publish them on the website. V. Biciunas will ask before next meeting about when we might get the surveys. Vince Biciunas will bring in the lists the mushroom club has.

Next time put an item on the agenda about how to process the survey information.

Could go to iNaturalist, which is an app on your phone that you can take a picture of a bird, bee, butterfly, plant and it gets ID'd and the location noted. Can have an iNaturalist area called Chuckanut forest, hasn't named it yet, but could. Free app. Goes by longitude and latitude.

- Wildlife habitat surveys: J. McLaughlin: Submitted the list of things to survey. Some things will have more or less application and value. There is monitoring impacts of climate change, recreational uses, and where trails are. Some are easier to collect than others and some will change over time more rapidly than others. Can do formal or opportunistic surveys or both. Need to include grasses on the list as well. F. James: Can engage public in the process. These are all factors to consider.

Question: What are Forbs? They are herbaceous plants such as lily or trillium.

V. Biciunas: I will talk to Fred Rhoades and set up the Chuckanut Community Forest in the iNaturalist app. Then people could go in and add to it.

J. McLaughlin: We could also look at other things such as how much bare soil is there in the trail footprint, how much water flows where and when, and areas impaired historically. Can figure out what is there and track changes, which is moving toward a monitoring program.

J. McLaughlin: Could do track surveys or camera traps. Camera traps could document what animals are there. Works during the day and night and is triggered by motion. F. James: How could we do this in partnership with the university? J. McLaughlin: Could do course projects such as carbon storage or a restoration course. The wetlands course makes people make plant collections. There is a means for internships and student projects of various sorts. It is a matter of getting busy faculty involved/interested. J. McLaughlin: F. James: Who would we talk to, to get the University more interested and seek some donated money. J. McLaughlin: Can talk to his colleagues. F. James: How can we develop some standards to invite people to participate with an eye towards preservation? We could be the repository of the collection of that information. J. McLaughlin: Many of the projects at university are brief, working on it one week and then moving onto something else the next week. Could offer internships and projects. Key is letting people know and talking to the internship coordinator. If we have money, it would be great. Most internships in Whatcom county are not paid, outside Whatcom, paid. Need to specify what we want. F. James: Need to fill out the baseline. Most things on the list we don't have information on. J. McLaughlin: Best to talk to the Dean of Huxley College or some of the environmental education people. V. Biciunas: John McLaughlin has a preliminary bird species list in the baseline report. John McLaughlin: Expanded bird survey needs to be done right. James Lucias has a wetlands trees survey. F. James: This is a

major issue for us. Let's continue to look at this, set up a meeting with the Dean, and figure out how do we do this without injuring what we love. J. McLaughlin: What are the priorities on this list? Some are hard to do, and some are quick and easy, and more vulnerable to impacts of climate change and recreation. What do we really want to know? Bob Carmichael: Touchstone is the mission to protect in perpetuity the ecological, recreational and educational functions of the forest. What is the cost benefit? That is what this calls for. What could be done inexpensively and easily which would add value to this data and is in support of this mission. What are some of the other things that are critical because they are time sensitive from an ecological standpoint? J. McLaughlin: An example is to do a snag survey – where and how big along with a bird survey. Many birds in the northwest require cavities and snags. Ground nesters are particularly susceptible to recreational disturbance. This can tell you a lot, easy to do. Want to protect the snags as a stewardship issue. I would want direction over what we are prioritizing. What are criteria? V. Biciunas: The mission statement is the criteria. J. McLaughlin: Is it sensitivity to recreational impacts? Is it what's most important for everything? F. James: It is the preservation and ecological continuity in the forest. Snags and wetlands are key elements and then human impact. How can you preserve it from human impact? J. McLaughlin: I will work on it.

- Beaver reintroduction: Move to next meeting.
- Checking account signers: Frank James had to leave town, will set up a time next week to get the signers on the checking account and safety deposit box changed. Frank James and John Hymas need to resign and then Vince Biciunas will be off. Need to get Steve Oliver there too, though can't make an appointment with the loan officer.
- Meeting with Mayoral Candidates: Frank left messages with Seth, and John Hymas with April. Have not heard back. Hue Beattie: Could invite the winner to our November meeting.
Motion by Hue Beattie to invite the winner to our November meeting, approved 5/0.
- Google groups update: R. Albro: Google groups are working well. All Commissioners are listed as managers of our google group.

New Business:

- Dates for 2020 Board Meetings: It was moved by J. Hymas that we adopt the following meeting schedule. V. Biciunas seconded. Approved by all.
Board Meetings for 2020 are scheduled to be at the Fairhaven Library in the Fireplace Room at 6:00 p.m. The following are the dates.
 - January 22, 2020
 - February 26, 2020
 - March 25, 2020
 - April 22, 2020
 - May 27, 2020
 - June 24, 2020
 - July 22, 2020
 - August 26, 2020
 - September 23, 2020
 - October 28, 2020
 - November 11, 2020
 - December 9, 2020

- Washington State Auditor Roadshow Outreach Event: V. Biciunas moved that Robyn Albro can go to the three-hour BARS update event, J. Hymas seconded it. Discussion and Approved 5/0. Frank James is going to the afternoon event.
- Box Audit: R. Albro will get the information to SAO by October 14th and the audit will start on October 21st. Robyn will meet with Diane Birsner to go over any tips she has and will use some of the training money that is left for Diane, along with some other expenses that Diane has.
- Tax Levy Public Meeting: Need to schedule a public hearing for November to approve CCFPD levy. Catherine Moore will take care of that, as Simi has moved. Bob Carmichael will invite Catherine to the next meeting with him. She will be at the November and December meetings as Bob has a conflict with another client. It will be a public hearing as an add on to the November meeting. Send out an invite at least a week ahead of time. Don't have to put the notice in the papers anymore.

Monthly expenses and cash flow sheets. Submitted for August by Robyn Albro.

Petty Cash: WECU Bank account balance as of 8/31/2019 was \$2,771.30. R. Albro will gather the information to submit to the county to get petty cash reimbursed before the end of the year.

Treasurer's Report: As of August 31, 2019, Whatcom Co. Treasurer's Monthly Report, beginning unencumbered cash balance (8/1) \$186,949.65 ending unencumbered cash balance (8/31) \$186,727.15.

Loan Amount: Total owed on loan as of 8/31/2019 is \$1,477,350.27.

Motion: To approve District Payroll Input Form, wages for Robyn Albro, 18.25 hours in August 2019, total gross of \$456.25. Motion by V. Biciunas, seconded by J. McLaughlin, Approved 5/0.

Consent Agenda: Motion to approve following payments.

Motion by V. Biciunas, seconded by J. McLaughlin, Approved 5/0.

- Payment on the August 15, 2019, Invoice #88748 from Carmichael Clark PS for \$695.50, for regular professional services.
- Payment on the August 31, 2019 Invoice from Robyn R. Albro for \$14.85 for mileage reimbursement for July and August.

Next meeting: Wed. October 23, 2019, Fairhaven Library, **Fireplace Rm.**, 6:00 PM.

John McLaughlin will not be able to be at the next meeting and is excused.

Adjourn. Time: 7:17 pm