

**MINUTES — Regular Meeting
CHUCKANUT COMMUNITY FOREST PARK DISTRICT
Wednesday, January 22, 2020**

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 public may send comments (subject to public disclosure):

John Hymas jhymas1331@gmail.com

Frank James fjames.ccfpd@gmail.com

John McLaughlin johnm.ccfpd@gmail.com

Hue Beattie hue.ccfpd@gmail.com

John G. Brown jbrown.ccfpd@gmail.com

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), John Hymas (Clerk), Hue Beattie, John McLaughlin, and John G. Brown.

Motion: To approve Agenda for today's meeting. Discussion. Moved by John G. Brown and Seconded by Hue Beattie. Correction to Item #3 in Consent Agenda, \$20 is owed to Whatcom Co., not \$30. Approved as amended.

Introductions: Those who wish to be acknowledged, including legal counsel and secretary. Bob Carmichael, legal counsel, Robyn Albro, Secretary, Vince Biciunas, former leader and commissioner, Doug Klunder.

Oath of Office: John McLaughlin and John Brown have taken the oath of office. Deborra A. Garrett, Superior Court Judge, administered the oath of office to Hue Beattie and John G. Brown before the meeting started.

Election of Slate of Officers: Officers: President and Clerk. Moved by John Brown, Seconded by John McLaughlin to elect officers. John McLaughlin moved to re-elect Frank James as President. John Brown Seconded. Approved 4/0. John Brown nominated to re-elect John Hymas as Clerk, and Hue Beattie seconded. Discussed and Approved 4/0. John Hymas arrived and accepted position of Clerk.

Public Comment: Please limit remarks to 3 minutes.

Vince Biciunas said Monday, Feb. 10th is Bellingham City Council Public Hearing on the 2020 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, ProPlan, and suggest that a Commissioner make a comment or look at the ProPlan and see that our masterplan is listed there. The meeting will be at the start of the regular Council Meeting.

There may be a Parks committee meeting around 1 pm, that it would be good for us to attend. Vince Biciunas envisions us saying something about including CCFPD masterplan in the budget for 2021 instead of 2022. The rough figure for the masterplan is \$10,000 per John Hymas.

John Brown has volunteered to evaluate the issues, attend one or both meetings. He will find out when it will be and will contact board members if he needs to get any information for the meeting. John Brown will call Nicole Oliver to get up to speed. Frank James will send out the draft of the ProPlan to everyone. Bob Carmichael suggested having John Brown send a letter to the Council about the ProPlan.

Motion: December 11, 2019 meeting minutes to be approved. Moved by John Brown. Seconded by John Hymas. Approved 5/0.

Park Advisory Board Meeting Report: John Hymas, liaison to Park Advisory Board. Not much to do with us at the meeting. There was a goodbye to Leslie Bryson, great send-off. Some talk about dog waste and having cops on bikes go through some of the parks once a month to give warning tickets to people to pick up their dog waste.

Hue Beattie would like to see dogs prohibited in the CCFPD. Because they are always off-leash per John Hymas. John Hymas noted if negotiating a point, go to the extreme, knowing we would have to come back around.

Old Business:

- Mushroom Surveys. No updates.
- Wildlife and Habitat Surveys. John McLaughlin came up with a wish list and priorities at a prior meeting.

Criteria for Determining Priorities

- (1) *Sensitivity to anthropogenic impacts (human disturbance);*
- (2) *Indicative of anthropogenic impacts (human disturbance);*
- (3) *Pre-existing CCF baseline data or comparable information from other sites;*
- (4) *Measurement is non-destructive and easy, simple, or relatively quick.*

Agreement among the commissioners that these seem like good criteria.

Priorities for Survey and Monitoring (mixture of plants, animals & habitat structures).

Introduced invasive species, Aquatic invertebrates, Amphibians, Birds, Snags, Wetland soils/wetland extent, Wetland ponded water, depths and extent, Wetland vegetation composition, structure, and extent, and Compacted soil extent (trail footprint).

Frank James: Is there a budgetary component of this? Do we envision it done entirely voluntarily?

John McLaughlin: If we want it done and done well and regularly, we probably should budget for it. Though it could be done on a volunteer basis.

Robyn Albro will send out the wish list and priorities again. It has been sent out before and is on the website as well.

Frank James: The idea would be to do this before the masterplan, could have more surveys prior to the masterplan and this would save the city some money.

John Hymas: The trails plans can potentially save the city some money on the masterplan.

John McLaughlin: Have done the trail plans twice and could now move into restoration plan or conservation plan or other components.

John Hymas: Could study invasives.

Frank James: It establishes a broad baseline and it could save the city some money. They are unlikely to do it this way.

Bob Carmichael: They are unlikely to spend any money on these studies. If we don't do a series of plans, they are going to do like they do with most parks, and this park is not like most parks. This is a unique park and if we want to have some influence on what is in this plan, we need to develop some of these things with that in mind. We need to say to Parks that certain things need to be a part of this plan. We may decide we need some professional help with

certain things. The truth is we don't get to decide what is in the master plan, we are participants that have a lot of weight, but we need to have some persuasiveness behind what we want to do. John McLaughlin: We have already met with the city attorney about trails. Could bring in Ann Eissinger's baseline report. It merits strong conservation efforts. Robyn Albro: Will check to see if it is in the library. All the Commissioners will review what John McLaughlin has suggested for priorities and wish list and we will discuss it at the next meeting.

- Beaver Reintroduction. John McLaughlin: Had students do a design project and I picked the best ones. The place is not suitable right now because there is not enough standing water. Would need a pre-introduction pond and possibly a dam, maybe a lodge, and that would help them build their own. Scores high on suitability assessment once those things are done. Work with city to show them the benefits of reintroducing beavers. Recent law now says can reintroduce beavers again on the west side. Frank James talked with the man that traps the beavers at Lake Samish. There could be beavers made available from that.

John McLaughlin: We need to do a Communication Plan. Need to have a public meeting to share with people/neighbors so that they know exactly what we are thinking of doing. Share with them what we will do if beavers travel away from this area and how do we protect neighbors' property. Can take the best of the students reports and synthesize them, come up with the best of the best. Can show Parks this has tremendous restoration value for this place. Bringing them back will have these restoration benefits. There is a track record for what has worked.

Frank James: Giving the change in the law, would it be beneficial to work with the tribes?

John Hymas: Wouldn't hurt to get their support.

In terms of trapping beavers, there is a rehab place where take them, they mate them, keep them for a year, and then reintroduce them to a new lodge. It is more successful than just dropping off beavers. It is a non-profit in Winthrop. John Hymas will look for more information.

Hue Beattie: If we determined a good place for a lodge, could dig it down during the summer months, so it would be deep enough for them.

John McLaughlin: Have to look at the Conservation Easement and talk to the Land Trust about it.

John Brown: I wonder if this is going off mission, going off course, not likely that we can stop dogs. The problem of having dogs run through there and they could have an impact on the beavers. Will this really work, and do we really want to do this?

Frank James: Dogs running loose are an issue for wildlife in general.

John McLaughlin: There were beavers there 20 years ago. Getting it right that first season is crucial, securing the ponding of the water. Once they have secure habitat, they can protect themselves. We would be converting a wetland. Would not be withdrawing an area from recreation.

John Brown: You are really going to be able to make the case strongly if you can come up with a set of bullet points that support tremendous restoration value.

John McLaughlin: We are dealing with a network of wetlands that are fed by ground water, relatively cold, clean, clear water, and that is a source for what we desperately need for Chuckanut Creek and for all the salmon runs. It would be even better if we can restore the cutthroat, and even better, replace that culvert and get the salmon back. I have looked at the culvert, it is a barrier.

We are different than most parks, here we are trying to restore some of what used to be, to make things better. There is nothing in the comprehensive plan at this point about mitigating climate change. We have an opportunity to inspire them.
- Trail Redesign Project. John McLaughlin: Made some of the consensus comments into requirements. Sent the best designs out to the board, except for one, that will be sent to the board in March. We can review and decide if want to send them all out to the public or consolidate.

Frank James: Possible public meeting in March or June. June is best time for John McLaughlin. Board will talk about the trail designs at the February meeting.

John McLaughlin: I will make a short summary document about the project.

New Business:

- Bike ramp in Chuckanut Forest per email from Morgan Kay. Robyn Albro forwarded the email about the bike ramp discovered by Morgan Kay. Frank James did walk through there and see it. A biking area could be put in Fairhaven Park.
- Potential changes and clean-up of Web site. Robyn Albro would like to meet with John of Highwaters Media to do some clean-up of the website. Make better formatting on the home page for notices, move news things onto the news pages, and make sure than anything on the main page is on the news page. There are some documents and budgets that had not been added. Might be nice to list Commissioners, list President and Clerk, and terms of office. Could list bios for people.

Research archive policy, it might be in the policy book.

Robyn Albro could develop a list of categories, things that are germane to public access, by date or topic, to share with the board at the next meeting.

Commissioners were agreeable that Robyn Albro meet with John King of Highwaters Media.

Will also have a list of items to archive at the next board meeting.

Noticed that we have a Facebook page. It might be nice to add photos, post news items, and post a notice about not okay to make bike ramps.

Monthly expenses and cash flow sheets. December reports have not yet been received.

Petty Cash: WECU Bank account balance as of 12/31/2019 was \$2,699.43.

Treasurer's Report: December reports not yet received. They usually come in towards the end of January. As of November 31, 2019, Whatcom Co. Treasurer's Monthly Report, beginning unencumbered cash balance (11/01) \$394,731.97, ending unencumbered cash balance (11/31) \$241,580.96.

Directors and Officers Insurance: As the bill for this was received after the last board meeting and it was due at the beginning of January, Robyn Albro put through a special Claim Form which was signed by Frank James, John Hymas and Hue Beattie, earlier this month so that the insurance wouldn't be cancelled. Measures have been taken to make sure that next year the bill is received earlier, so that it can be dealt with at a regular board meeting. Amount of insurance was \$1,673, the same as last year.

Motion to ratify payment for D&O insurance. Moved by John Brown, seconded by John Hymas. Approved 5/0.

Motion: To approve District Payroll Input Form, wages for Robyn Albro, 18.25 hours in December 2019, total gross of \$456.25. Moved by John Brown and seconded by John Hymas. Approved 5/0.

Consent Agenda: Motion to approve following payments by John Brown and seconded by John Hymas. Approved 5/0.

- Payment on the December 15, 2019, Invoice #89918 from Carmichael Clark PS for \$521.00, for regular professional services.
- Payment on the December 11, 2019, Invoice L134296 from Washington State Auditor's Office for Accountability Audit for \$730.73. (Total cost for audit was \$3,563.56).
- Payment on January 13, 2020 Invoice from Whatcom Co. Administrative Services for payroll services for the 4th Quarter of 2019, \$20.00.
- Payment for November 5, 2019 General Election from Whatcom County Auditor's Office for election costs for CCFPD of \$4,585.23. (9,025 registered voters in CCFPD district in the last election).
- Payment on the Bond of \$1,000,000 on the clerk and president of CCFPD for 2020 to 2021 to Oltman Insurance for RLI Surety. Due March 5, 2020 for \$875.00.

Next meeting: Wednesday February 26, 2020, Fairhaven Library, **Fireplace Rm** 6 PM.

Adjourn. Time: 7:31 pm.