

**MINUTES — Regular Meeting**  
**CHUCKANUT COMMUNITY FOREST PARK DISTRICT**  
**Wednesday, September 22nd, 2021, at 6 PM**  
 Online Meeting Through Zoom  
 Mailing Address: PO Box 4283, Bellingham, WA 98227

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

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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.

**Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and the Governor's "Stay At Home" Order, this meeting of the Chuckanut Community Forest Park District will be conducted online on Zoom.**

A visual and audio recording of this meeting will be posted on the CCFPD website. If your camera is on during the meeting, your voice, likeness, and surroundings, will be publicly available and viewable on the CCFPD website. If you choose to speak with your camera off, or by calling on a telephone, only your voice will be recorded.

**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.

**Roll Call:** Frank James, John Hymas, John McLaughlin, and Hue Beattie are present. John Brown is excused.

**Motion:** Moved to approve agenda by John McLaughlin. Seconded by John Hymas. Approved 4/0.

**Introductions:** Bob Carmichael, legal counsel, and Robyn Albro, secretary. Other attendees: Vince Biciunas, Ann Eissinger, Laine Potter, and John Blethen.

**Motion:** To approve minutes by Hue Beattie for August 28, 2021, with a small correction, under progress on Amendment of Conservation Easement, second paragraph, third sentence, change "for not" to "for naught." Moved by J. Brown. Seconded by John Hymas. Approved 3/0.

**Public Comments:** No Public Comments.

**Park Advisory Board Meeting Report:** No meeting this month.

**Old Business:**

- **Update on Analiese Burns Presentation.**

John McLaughlin reviewed results by Diamond Head Consulting. He noted that the Chuckanut Community Forest was rated as Young Forest Tall. He also noted that Sehome and Arroyo are listed as Young Forest Tall. His assessment is that those forest areas are predominantly mature and older than 80 years.

John McLaughlin's other concern was about the Wildlife Corridor Analysis. There were only three barriers listed to wildlife in the south and only one in the north up by the airport. John McLaughlin felt the best work he has seen on wildlife corridor barriers was in Ann Eissinger's 2003 report (it was given to the City Council back then), where there were many more barriers listed. Also, there was no recognition of the Connelly Creek Nature Preserve and its importance as a wildlife corridor.

There is more information on the composition of the forest in the baseline report. Ann Eissinger stated that she used Lidar data from the city in the baseline report. There was a discussion of the age of the trees in the CCF. Last logging was in 1890. Tree diameters were measured at chest height, but no cores were taken so exact age is uncertain. It was noted that due to the trees being in a wetland they don't grow as tall.

Hue Beattie: The consulting company Diamond Head have devised a system of maps of the forest canopy. They get to a place where they say >greater than 45% but they don't detail anything else on it. They should have percentages greater than 45%.

**Motion:** It was moved by Hue Beattie and seconded by John Hymas that John McLaughlin write a letter on behalf of the CCFPD Board that would discuss the issues he brought up tonight: the age and maturity of the Forest and the more detailed information about barriers to wildlife corridors. It was suggested that he send it to the Parks Director and copy to the Board, Mayor and Council.

- **Update on Master Plan and Steering Committee Meetings.**

Vince Biciunas discussed the idea she had to do a survey of people using the forest at each access point to the Forest (not counting people just using the Interurban). It would include number of people, those with dogs (leashed and unleashed), and those bicycling.

**Motion:** by John Hymas and seconded by Hue Beattie to adopt a survey with volunteers to count people at entrances to the forest, appoint Vince Biciunas as the lead and Robyn Albro to assist. The survey to be on two days: Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup> and Monday October 11<sup>th</sup>. The purpose being to measure uses and number of people and pets in the Forest. It was suggested to keep a weather log of the day before and day of. Suggested that there be separate tally sheets for each entrance. Frank James mentioned that Kirk Gulden volunteered to help, and Frank James is willing to help as well. The Board also approved the cost of making copies of the survey sheets. Approved 4/0.

- **Progress on Hiring of Consultant.**

Frank James has been working on this. He apologized for the delay as he has been extremely busy. He has talked to some people and consulting firms about the RFP. There are people who are interested in applying. He has gathered information and asked for Bob Carmichael's help in drafting the RFP. Bob Carmichael agreed.

- **Progress on Amendment of Conservation Easement.**

There was a discussion of the City's reluctance to amend the Conservation Easement before the Master Planning Process was complete. Laine Potter said that it was due to the Parks Department having too many projects and too few people to be able to take on the Conservation Easement at the same time as the Master Plan. This was Nicole Oliver's decision.

The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of waiting. Bob Carmichael said that while not ideal, amending the conservation easement could wait until after the Master Plan was complete. The consensus among the Commissioners was that they would prefer to have it done sooner, but there was understanding that it might have to wait.

The Parks Department and the Steering Committee agree with the CCFPD Board on the need to limit the uses to the ones in the Draft Conservation Easement and that the uses that the Board would like to take out of the Easement are inappropriate for the Forest. That doesn't seem likely to change, though it could. The time frame was discussed. Once the Master Plan is complete and the loan is paid off, the CCFPD has a year before it dissolves. There was a recognition that a year would hopefully be enough time but it could be a tight time frame to amend the Conservation Easement and complete an agreement with whoever is going to take it over, potentially Whatcom Land Trust.

Laine Potter suggested that the Board work with the Land Trust on the language of the Conservation Easement now, so that when it is time to move it through the approval process, it would potentially go much faster.

Frank James left the meeting.

#### **New Business:**

- **Data Sharing Agreement with the Washington State Auditor's Office.**

Bob Carmichael said he told another government group he works with that it might be prudent to add an indemnification clause that would absolve the CCFPD Board of responsibility if there is a data breach in the Washington State Auditor's Office.

**Motion:** By Hue Beattie and seconded by John Hymas that Counsel draft the clause so the agreement can be amended and bring it to the next board meeting for approval. Approved 3/0  
Robyn Albro will notify Washington State Auditor's Office.

#### **Monthly expenses and cash flow sheets.**

**Petty Cash:** WECU Bank account balance as of 8/31/2021 was \$2,967.

**Treasurer's Report:** As of August 31, 2021, Whatcom Co. Treasurer's Monthly Report, beginning unencumbered cash balance (8/01) \$244,561, ending unencumbered cash balance (8/31) \$241,778. We received tax revenues of \$2,556. Paid out \$2,668 in operating expenses, and \$2,672 was paid on our loan to the city of Bellingham. Current debt outstanding as of 8/31/2021: \$306,655.

**Motion:** To approve District Payroll Input Form by John Hymas, Seconded by Hue Beattie, for wages for Robyn Albro, 22.50 hours in Aug 2021, total gross of \$562.50. Approved 3/0.

**Consent Agenda: Motion to approve following payments** by Hue Beattie, Second by John McLaughlin. Approved 3/0.

- Payment on the August 15, 2021, Invoice #95558, from Carmichael Clark PS for \$1,673.50 for regular professional services.
- Payment on the August 31, 2021, Invoice for \$35.84 from Robyn Albro for Mileage for May through August.

**Reminder:** R. Albro will send an email to three board members right after the meeting, John McLaughlin, John Hymas, and Hue Beattie. Please respond confirming that you approve the paying of bills as listed in the consent agenda and payroll.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 6 pm. The budget will be on the agenda at the next meeting.

Robyn Albro informed the board that she regrettably forgot to start the recording of the meeting, though she did make notes. She will write up the minutes right away and send them out so everyone can add anything she might have missed. Bob Carmichael mentioned that it is not a legal requirement that we record the meetings, it is a courtesy.

John McLaughlin mentioned the Public Access mentioned in the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Hue Beattie said there are 52 public locations of the street right of ways that have never been cut through (not listed on the urban forestry management plan) and we should contact Public Works. John could contact Chris Vehey for a map.

**Adjourn.** Time: 7:43 pm.