



## MEETING MINUTES

### Land Bank Commission Meeting

July 21, 2017

Craft Room @ Mullis Senior Center, San Juan Island, Washington

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Marlis Sandwith, District 2, position 2

Amanda Wedow, District 3, position 3

Brian Wiese, at large, position 4

Doug Strandberg, at large, position 5

Amanda Azous, at large, position 6

Christa Campbell, at large, position 7

**Commission Members Absent:** Jim Skoog, District 1, position 1

**Land Bank Staff in Attendance:** Lincoln Bormann, Judy Cumming, Tim Clark, Doug McCutchen, Tanja Williamson

**Land Bank Staff Absent:** Eliza Habegger, Casey Hons, Ruthie Dougherty, Charlie Behnke

**County Council Liaison:** Rick Hughes, District 2, Council Chair

**Public in Attendance:** 6

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements	Actions and Next Steps
<u>Call to Order</u> 8:38 am	The meeting was called to order by Chair, Brian Wiese.	
<u>Adoption of Minutes</u>	The June 16, 2017 minutes were reviewed. There were corrections.	Amanda Azous moved to accept the June 16, 2017 minutes. The motion was seconded by Christa Campbell. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
<u>Chair's Report</u> 8:48 am	Chair, Brian Wiese made note of a couple upcoming events he found in the Parks and Rec Summer Guide Calendar: July 22 – Family Nature Club Monthly Event: Tide pooling at Deadman Bay	

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<p><b><u>Chair's Report continued</u></b></p>	<p>Preserve and August 21 – Solar Eclipse Party at the National Historical Park's South Beach location. Wiese also mentioned that commissioners Strandberg, Skoog and Azous had a good meeting with town and county officials regarding the sale of the Argyle lots.</p>	
<p><b><u>Council Liaison</u></b> 8:51 am</p>	<p>Rick Hughes reported on the following:</p> <p>The San Juan County Council has money in the county budget allotted for the purchase of the Argyle lots. Council is working on a purchase and sale agreement and waiting for a confirmation from the Opportunity Council regarding partnering on the project.</p> <p>Two Orcas Island properties have been brought to Rick's attention regarding conservation: Mount Baker Farm, near Eastsound, and the Manly property by Deer Harbor (aka the old Girl Scout Camp). Mount Baker Farm recently sold and the new owner is running it as a campground. A request has been put forth to investigate a conservation easement for the property protecting the open field area. The Manly property is for sale and neighbors would like to see the property purchased and preserved.</p> <p>The County Comprehensive Plan Update is moving along and Rick asked if there is anything specific the Land Bank commissioners would like to see included in the plan that would help assist in upholding the Land Bank's mandate.</p> <p>Congressman Rick Larsen is coming to Orcas Island August 2<sup>nd</sup> to observe conservation efforts in the San Juan islands, including salmon restoration efforts.</p>	

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<p><b><u>Council Liaison continued</u></b></p>	<p>The Council is working on resolving the current ferry issues and the overall maintenance situation.</p> <p>Lopez Hill and Odlin South update: Rick has continued to talk with Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff about transfer of the remainder interests (both are under 50-year leases). DNR is working through policy issues regarding the transfer.</p>	
<p><b><u>Public Comment</u></b> 9:08 am</p>	<p>Four people encouraged the Land Bank Commission to consider purchasing the Manly property near Deer Harbor. Some reasons cited were the beach and existing trails on the property and how they fit into trail efforts in the Deer Harbor area.</p> <p>Eileen Drath noted to keep stewardship staff in mind while considering acquisition of new properties.</p>	
<p><b><u>Director's Report</u></b> 9:18 am Orcas Island</p>	<p><b>Manly Property</b> – Background: This 118-acre property was formerly a Girl Scout Camp and has been listed on the market for \$17 million for roughly a year. The property connects to SJ Preservation Trust property on Richardson Marsh and to a Land Bank Conservation Easement property. In addition to the northern part of the marsh, the property has diverse wooded areas, and nearly 2,000 feet of rocky shoreline on President Channel. There is also a roughly 150 foot cobble beach, 200 foot pier and dock, and several structures including a 9,500 ft<sup>2</sup> main house close to the shoreline. There is one well on the property with potentially adequate yield for a class A water system. The property is zoned R-5 with a potential for up to 23 residences.</p> <p>Ideas that have been thrown out to help raise funds towards the purchase price are: Selling off the structures; selling off</p>	<p>Rick Hughes is interested in the boat dock and making it accessible to the public; he feels it's important to hold onto the pier and would be willing to work with the County Council and other partners in order to purchase the property.</p> <p>Brian Wiese requested a copy of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan to review their plans for future trails.</p> <p>Lincoln will consult with the San Juan Preservation Trust and other potential partners about possible ways to move forward.</p>

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<p><b><u>Director's Report continued</u></b> Orcas Island</p>	<p>part of the property to neighbors for boundary changes and the SeaDoc Society turning the structure into an office/research facility/marine center.</p>	
<p>San Juan Island</p>	<p><b>Lester Property</b> – Background: This 160-acre property is adjacent to Cady Mountain Preserve and contains high quality wetland and upland ecological communities. If acquired it would connect Cady to a county road for good public access. Lincoln believes this property is attractive to developers as it is zoned for 5-acre residential lots and he would like to move ahead in acquiring it.</p> <p>The owners are interested in working with the Land Bank, but have listed the property for the summer.</p> <p><b>Mount Grant Preserve</b> – Lincoln has been working towards purchasing additional land from the Richard Lawson LLC that abuts Mount Grant Preserve but there hasn't been much conversation with the Lawson family in the past month.</p> <p><b>Alderman Resale</b> - Background: This 10-acre property was purchased in 1998 for \$95,000 with the goal being to preserve farmland in San Juan Valley. At the time of purchase the Land Bank Commission decided that the property should be resold encumbered with a conservation easement to protect its agricultural and open space values. A neighbor is now interested in purchasing the property. Lincoln said an appraisal has been completed and an offer of sale made. We are waiting for a response.</p> <p><b>WWRP Grants Update</b> – Once the Capital Budget is approved the pending grant funds for Mount Grant Preserve and Zylstra Lake should be available. Unfortunately, the Capital Budget is</p>	<p>Lincoln will stay in contact with the owners.</p> <p>Lincoln will continue to try and work with the seller</p> <p>Lincoln will continue to try and work with the buyer.</p>

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<p><b><u>Director's Report continued</u></b> San Juan Island</p>	<p>being held up because of a land use decision regarding water rights in Whatcom County and its implications for development across the state.</p> <p><b>Argyle Lots</b> – Background: These four lots were purchased by the Land Bank in 2002 with the intention of resale encumbered by an historic preservation easement (HPE) to ensure that development would be compatible with the existing historic structures in the neighborhood. In 2016, the County Council proposed purchasing the lots from the Land Bank to provide affordable rental housing. An appraisal in September, 2016 valued the property at \$610,000. In October of 2016, the Land Bank Commission voted to proceed with the sale at appraised value encumbered by the HPE. A private buyer has also made an offer of \$715,000 for a commercial project.</p> <p>Earlier this month three commissioners met with County Manager Mike Thomas and Council Member Jamie Stephens to discuss the pre-sale HPE requirement and how the Council envisions proceeding.</p> <p>The next step in the resale process would be for the Council to consider a public (auction) or direct sale. If the direct option is selected, the Council could choose to sell to the private buyer for \$715k or purchase the lots itself for the appraised value of \$610k.</p> <p>Rick Hughes stated that he is hopeful for a public/private partnership and that the Council is committed to making the purchase. He also noted that the Mayor of Friday Harbor voiced concern over diminishing open space in town.</p>	<p>Commissioner Azous said she was happy to hear Council's willingness to take responsibility of the project.</p> <p>Mike Thomas will work with Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Jon Cain to schedule a public hearing on the nature of the sale. The Commission will also work with Mike and Jon on a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Council's commitment to the project.</p>
<p>Lopez Island</p>	<p><b>RR Bar Ranch Conservation Easement (CE)</b> – Background: 130-acre farmland property in Center Valley</p>	<p>Eliza is preparing a Present Conditions Report. Once this is complete with building areas identified, and the pay-out</p>

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<p><b><u>Director's Report continued</u></b> Lopez Island</p>	<p>along Fisherman Bay Road. The CE will limit development to 2 units (with 9 units eliminated). The purchase price will be paid over a three year period.</p> <p>The family has approved the final CE and is now moving on to finalizing the pay-out schedule. Lincoln noted this is a great acquisition for farmland conservation.</p>	<p>schedule is confirmed, Lincoln will proceed with closing.</p>
<p><b><u>Finance Report</u></b> 9:54 am</p>	<p>Amanda Wedow gave the finance report for the month of June 2017. We are now half way through the year and the REET is at 60% of the amount budgeted for 2017. Last year at this time REET collections were 40% of the total received in 2016. Clure donations received are just under \$50k.</p> <p>Operating expenditures for the Conservation Area Fund are on track with the budget at this point in the year.</p> <p>An interest payment was made in June on the Treasury Bonds held in the Stewardship &amp; Management Fund. Operating expenditures for this fund are at 45.97% of the budgeted amount.</p> <p>The County auditor has issued the budget call for 2018.</p>	<p>It was moved by Marlis Sandwith to approve the June financial statements. Motion seconded by Amanda Azous. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Judy and Lincoln will begin working on the 2018 budget.</p>
<p><b><u>Break</u></b> 10:06 am – 10:08 am</p>		
<p><b><u>Stewardship Report</u></b> 10:08am Lopez Island</p>	<p>Lincoln introduced the Commission to the Land Bank's new consultant, Phil Shephard. Phil is helping with agricultural land management issues and will be conducting an evaluation of the Stewardship Program.</p> <p>Tim Clark reported that the Lopez Island Conservation Corps and Boy Scouts will be working on shoreline enhancement at the Fisherman Bay Spit.</p> <p>He and volunteer Jim Falconer continue fighting Italian arum. Their next step</p>	

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<p><b><u>Stewardship Report Continued</u></b> Lopez Island</p>	<p>will be covering previously lain weed cloth with wood chips. Tim said that experimental spraying of two arum patches revealed that the “mother” corm dies off, but the “daughter” corms do not.</p> <p>Tim has been monitoring the Clure property regularly. He is attempting to engage the Department of Natural Resources shoreline management program in assessing the property. Tim noted that the beach is relatively clean; not much trash floating ashore from such a major thoroughfare. He has picked up trail counters and they will go in next week. There will be an interim management plan drafted before the Annual Retreat in the fall.</p>	<p>Brian Wiese commented that supporting stewardship efforts at the Clure property would be a good annual retreat topic.</p>
<p>San Juan Island</p>	<p><b>Mount Ben Management Plan</b> Doug McCutchen reported that the public comments he received in regards to the Mount Ben Preserve Management Plan were generally positive. He noted that public comment was accepted for about a month and that he mailed letters to neighbors and surrounding property owners to alert them to the timeframe to review the plan and submit comments, as well as when the public meeting would be held. Of all the comments received, Doug found two topics that people touched on the most, fear of fire and road impact. After assessing both topics, Doug felt that the Land Bank is capable of addressing them, noting that managed access is better than non-managed access, and he feels that the plan is written to support low impact use and keep the neighborhood feel. One comment regarding accessibility has been forwarded to Jon Cain and he is working on a response.</p> <p>Brian Wiese asked how the Land Bank deals with ADA accessibility in general</p>	<p>Stephanie O’Day, attorney for the neighbors to Mount Ben Preserve, stated she didn’t believe the management plan addressed her client’s concerns about parking and traffic impacts and the potential for trespassing. She said that she and her clients are willing to work with the Land Bank to find suitable parking as they are not happy with the location in the management plan. Doug McCutchen noted that a consultant was hired to determine the best location for parking on the Preserve and gave three options from which to choose.</p> <p>Marlis Sandwith moved to accept the Mount Ben Preserve Management Plan, with the minor comments and edits. The motion was seconded by Amanda Azous. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.</p>

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<p><b><u>Stewardship Report continued</u></b> San Juan Island</p>	<p>at our preserves. Doug answered that when site improvements are considered for a Preserve, staff works to incorporate better accessibility options whenever possible. Lincoln noted that Doug wrote a memo on Land Bank efforts to increase accessibility at San Juan Island Preserves and he would share it with the commission.</p>	
<p>Memorial and UAS (drone) Policies</p>	<p>Lincoln presented the policies to the Commission. There were comments.</p>	<p>It was decided to seek additional review on the UAS policy from commercial photographers who have been working with the Land Bank to provide high quality aerial photos of Preserves.</p> <p>Lincoln will incorporate the Commission's and outside comments and bring back edited versions of the policies to the August meeting.</p>
<p>Stewardship Evaluation and Manager Position</p>	<p>Background: There has been on-going discussion about stewardship capacity and structure of the program especially with the new obligations of Mount Grant and Zylstra Lake Preserves.</p> <p>While staff and the Commission have coalesced around the idea of creating a Stewardship Manager position for 2018, Lincoln feels it is important to conduct an evaluation of the program to provide objective further guidance on the program as a whole and the delineation of responsibilities for the position.</p> <p>In any case, the current Manager job description will be used as a placeholder in the 2018 budget.</p>	<p>Lincoln will send the scope of work for the evaluation to the commission for comment. He has contracted with Phil Shephard to undertake the exercise.</p> <p>The goal is to have results ready in advance of the annual retreat in the fall.</p>
<p><b><u>Meeting Adjourned</u></b> 11:04</p>	<p>Chair Brian Wiese adjourned the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>NEXT MEETING</b></p>	<p>The next LBC meeting will take place on August 18, 2017 at the Mullis Community Senior Center, San Juan Island.</p>	