



## MEETING MINUTES

### Land Bank Commission Meeting February 16, 2018 Craft Room @ Mullis Community Senior Center San Juan Island, WA

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Jim Skoog, District 1, position 1                      Amanda Azous, at large, position 6  
 Brian Wiese, at large, position 4                      Christa Campbell, at large, position 7  
 Doug Strandberg, at large, position 5

**Commission Members Absent:** Marlis Sandwith, District 2, position 2; Amanda Wedow, District 3, position 3

**Land Bank Staff in Attendance:** Lincoln Bormann, Charlie Behnke, Tim Clark, Eliza Habegger, Doug McCutchen, Tanja Williamson

**Land Bank Staff Absent:** Ruthie Dougherty and Judy Cumming

**County Council Liaison:** Absent

**Public in Attendance:** 12 members of the public were present.

| Topic                           | Key Discussion Points & Agreements                                  | Actions and Next Steps   |
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| <u>Call to Order</u><br>8:32 am | The meeting was called to order by Chair, Brian Wiese.              |  |
| <u>Adoption of Minutes</u>      | The January 16, 2018 minutes were reviewed. There were corrections. | Amanda Azous moved to accept the January 16, 2017, minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Jim Skoog. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously. |

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| <p><b><u>Chair and Commissioner's Report</u></b><br/>8:35 am</p>                                    | <p>Chair, Brian Wiese, noted there are upcoming presentations on the San Juan Islands Visitors Study planned for Orcas, San Juan, and Lopez Island. He encouraged the public to attend as Wiese feels the study is important and will influence planning of the county comprehensive plan update.</p> <p>Both Wiese and Marlis Sandwith attended the Orcas Island School District meeting where they learned about upcoming school improvements, including a new track. There was discussion about connecting the track to Eastsound and Land Bank preserves. Wiese shared a map and draft plan from the school district.</p> <p>Wiese announced an upcoming meeting being led by Dean Washington, on the Lummi Vision for Madrona Point.</p> <p>There was discussion among the commissioners whether the draft interim management plan for Lopez Channel Preserve had been put out for public review prior to being included in the current 2018 amended expenditure and acquisition plan. It was pointed that the interim plans are put out for public review/comment, but only as part of the expenditure and acquisitions plans during the budget process. The final management plans are subject to public review and comment prior to being included in an expenditure and acquisition plan during the budget process.</p> | <p>Amanda Azous suggested that there might be an adaptive management section added to the interim process as there is in final management plan process.</p> |
| <p><b><u>Public Hearing First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan</u></b><br/>9:00 am</p> | <p>Lincoln Bormann said \$725,000 was added to the budget for the sale of the Argyle lots. A hearing is scheduled for the end of March and the property will be sold with an historic preservation covenant on it.</p>   |   |

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| <p><b>Public Hearing</b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018</b><br/> <b>Expenditure and</b><br/> <b>Acquisition Plan</b><br/> <b>continued</b></p> | <p>As for expenditures, the Lincoln noted the amounts budgeted for 2018 don't reflect the total cost of acquisitions but only the down payment amounts. Doug Strandberg said something should be entered to indicate the totals.</p> <p><b>Acquisitions</b></p> <p><b>San Juan Island</b></p> <p><b>328 Caines Street property (location of the Land Bank office in Friday Harbor)</b> – Background: These three lots in Friday Harbor included Driggs Historic Park and the Driggs house, which dates from 1896. The Commission decided to pursue this acquisition in order to protect the Park (now currently operated under revocable license) permanently and the House, which could be resold, encumbered with a historic preservation easement. The Land Bank has worked hard to help retain the historic character of this neighborhood which includes 9 historic houses and four lots which will be sold with a protective covenant held by the town.</p> <p>Lincoln has a signed purchase and sale agreement for the appraised value of \$910,000. The 1<sup>st</sup> payment of \$210K will be included in the 2018 budget, and the Land Bank has the option to pay off the loan early without penalty.</p> <p><b>Lester Property</b> – Background: This property has high ecological value, with outstanding open balds, high quality wetland, and old growth forest. It will also provide public access to Cady Mountain Preserve via a county road. Based on the appraisal, the purchase price is \$1.8M, on which Lincoln has a verbal commitment. The 1<sup>st</sup> payment would be \$465K, with the rest to be carried by a Note held by the seller.</p> |                        |

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| <p><b>Public Hearing</b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018</b><br/> <b>Expenditure and</b><br/> <b>Acquisition Plan</b><br/> <b>continued</b></p> | <p><b>Cattlepoint Rd. (Woodbridge)</b><br/> <b>Property</b> – Background: The property is near the midpoint in the trail along Cattle Point Rd. between American Camp and Friday Harbor. Its forest and pond would create an attractive rest point for hikers.</p> <p>This a bargain sale price at roughly 45% of assessed value. Prior to purchase by the Land Bank, the seller will secure agreements from neighbors to purchase a portion of the property adjacent to each of their lots, thus decreasing the overall purchase price.</p> <p><b>Lopez Island</b></p> <p><b>Lopez Hill</b> – Background: 400-acre Lopez Hill was secured from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with a 50 year lease in 2009 with funds from the legislature. The Lopez community wishes to permanently protect this property by buying the underlying fee interest at this time. DNR has established the value at \$1,030,000 with an additional \$18,000 administrative payment required. The property would be purchased over a four year period with an initial payment in 2018 of \$230,000.</p> <p><b>Stewardship</b> – Lincoln noted there will be an additional \$600K added to the amount for Beginning Cash based on final 2017 figures.</p> <p>There was discussion about the process for approving management plans. Lincoln explained that plans are attached to annual and/or amended budgets for final approval.</p> |                        |

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| <p><b><u>Public Hearing</u></b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan continued</b></p> | <p>There was discussion among the commissioners about the impact of the new acquisition projects on the cash flow for the Conservation Area Fund. He stated the purchases need to be set up this way since we do not have our grant funds have not been received yet. Once the grant funding comes through, the Land Bank will be able to purchase Lopez Hill outright. Doug Strandberg commented that he would like to pay off Lopez Hill; Lincoln agreed. Jim Skoog noted that the Land Bank is in a position with lots of good projects to consider and that Lincoln has done a fantastic job gathering grant funds to complement Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funds. Jim feels the Land Bank’s overall financial picture looks good and the Land Bank should embrace the projects when possible. Doug agreed, while noting that change in REET receipts may limit future projects.</p> |                        |
| <p><b><u>Open Public Comment</u></b><br/> 9:32 am</p> <p><b><u>Close Public Comment</u></b><br/> 9:43 am</p>  | <p>Many positive comments from neighbors to the Lester Property on Cady Mountain. All came to show their support in purchasing the property.</p> <p>Brian thanked the public for their support and for attending the meeting; he encouraged participants to come back! Jim commented that the acquisition process takes time, and the Lester acquisition is a perfect example.</p>  |                        |
| <p><b><u>Discussion and Vote</u></b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan</b></p>      | <p>Doug asked if the Commission should direct Lincoln in prioritizing projects. Jim stated the deals are structured to be paid off early if possible, so prioritizing is not necessary. Doug suggested paying off Lopez Hill first. There was discussion among the commissioners regarding setting priorities. The decision was made to leave Lincoln with the flexibility in choosing which projects to pay off.</p>   |                        |

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| <p><b><u>Re-Open Public Hearing</u></b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan</b><br/>           9:52 am</p> <p><b><u>Close Public Hearing</u></b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan</b><br/>           9:56 am</p> | <p>Doug made a motion to add \$790K to the budget to buy Lopez Hill outright and save \$90K in interest. Support from the public is strong and the Land Bank should listen to the public's wishes.</p>  |   |
| <p><b><u>Re-Open Discussion and Vote</u></b><br/> <b>First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan</b></p>  | <p>There was discussion whether to attach the Lopez Channel DRAFT Interim Management Plan to the amended budget now or wait until next meeting to allow for public review and comments.</p> <p>Lincoln recommended pulling the Lopez Channel DRAFT Interim Management Plan from the amended budget, leaving more time for public viewing and comments, and bring it back to the next meeting.</p> | <p>Doug Strandberg moved to accept the First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan with no changes. The motion was seconded by Christa Campbell. There was further discussion and the motion was held.</p> <p>Doug Strandberg moved to remove the Lopez Channel draft plan from the First Amended 2018 Expenditure and Acquisition Plan in order for it to be considered the next time the Land Bank reviews an amended budget. The motion was seconded by Amanda Azous. There was no further discussion. Motion passed with one opposed.</p> |
| <p><b><u>Break</u></b><br/>           10:20 am – 10:40 am</p>   |   |   |
| <p><b><u>Director's Report</u></b><br/>           10:40 am</p> <p>Acquisitions<br/>           Lopez Island</p>  | <p><b>RR Bar Ranch CE</b> – Background: 130-acre farmland property in Center Valley along Fisherman Bay Road. The CE will limit development to 2 units (with 9 units eliminated).</p>   | <p>Negotiations are continuing.</p>   |
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| <p><b><u>Stewardship Report</u></b><br/>10:41 am<br/>Lopez Island</p> | <p>Lopez Preserve Steward, Tim Clark, said neighbors of the Lopez Channel property noticed cars and people walking on closed property. Tim said law enforcement doesn't want to enforce no trespassing out there. Fun tidbit, Tim discovered an old amphitheater on the Lopez Channel property and notified the historical society about it. And, the counters are in place on the property.</p>  | <p>Tim moved the "area closed" sign to the front of the gate and put a notice online with Lopez Rocks stating the area is not open to the public. Brian commented since Tim can't always be on the property the Land Bank may need to address the situation. Tim feels word of mouth will be enough to deter unwanted visitors.</p> |
| <p>San Juan Island</p>  | <p>San Juan Island Preserve Steward, Doug McCutchen, reported he is mid-stream in planning for the Mt. Grant Preserve with the consulting landscape architect and planning company, J.A. Brennan. Doug noted that one of the main points that came up during their last meeting was in regards to parking adequacy, which stemmed from a comment from a San Juan Island Trails Committee member. The comment that there should either be no driving access, or provide more parking spaces. This comment led to a longer discussion which explored parking alternatives. One alternative would be to remove the water cistern at the summit. The cistern project was never completed and it leaks, the fire marshal doesn't think it's needed, and the consultants commented that it's ugly and a blight on the natural setting. The proposed concept includes removing the cistern structure and expanding parking into the space where it was located in order to give more turn around room at the summit area. Other suggestions from the consultants adhere to the common goal of keeping the site appropriate and its sense of place. The plan includes naturalizing the building sites versus building up the areas. Doug expects the first design considerations within the next couple of weeks. Doug also noted</p> |   |

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| <p><b><u>Stewardship Report</u></b><br/>continued<br/>San Juan Island</p> | <p>the site plans and the management plan tend to be parallel processes with new properties. Doug is also waiting on the Town of Friday Harbor easement language and is reviewing the easement language for the Uzpurvis property. He noted there is a lot of information to go through with all the layering of properties.</p> <p>Amanda Azous asked about the illegal mountain bike trail that was found on the preserve. Doug noted that it was impressive in construction and in a very bad location. Doug contacted the owner of Meat Machine Cycles on San Juan Island, and asked him to help get the word out to the mountain biking community that it's illegal to build trails on the preserve. Doug noted that the owner, Seth, was very receptive to help "self-police" as well as others in the mountain biking community that Doug had spoken with personally.</p> <p>Amanda Azous asked about the need for project manager for the Zylstra Lake property. Land Steward, Eliza Habegger, fielded the question and answered that at this point yes, the stewardship staff will need the help of a consultant or temporary staff. Lincoln commented that he sees the position as a team leader for the Zylstra project; perhaps a 16 month position for a contractor.</p> |   |
| <p><b><u>Outreach Report</u></b><br/>10:56 am</p>                         | <p>Tanja Williamson reported working with Raena Parsons from the National Park Service on a children's poetry walk in April. She is also working on the 2018 outreach events calendar, the 2017 annual report, and plans for the 2018 County Fair booth.</p>  |   |
| <p><b><u>Future Agenda</u></b><br/><b><u>Topics</u></b><br/>11:02 am</p>  |   | <p>Debrief of staff retreat.<br/>For Orcas extended meeting: Public input regarding future acquisitions</p> |



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| <p><b><u>Public Comment</u></b><br/>11:02 am</p>      | <p>A member of the public that arrived late to the meeting asked about the likelihood of the Lester property being approved. He was happy to hear that it was approved and the property would be conserved forever.</p>  |   |
| <p><b><u>Extended Discussion</u></b><br/>11:03 am</p> | <p><b>Stewardship manager/coordinator position-</b> Eliza gave a summary. It was agreed among the staff that a management level position would not help very much and would be too administrative heavy. Staff supported a position that takes on substantive tasks and one that would bridge the need for coordination across the islands. The job description was revised to reflect a coordinator vs supervisory role, made the rounds through the staff, and has been sent to human resources. There was discussion among the Commission regarding position and the goal of bringing consistency and continuity to the stewardship program.</p> <p><b>Forest/Landscape Management –</b> There was discussion regarding the end goal for Land Bank properties and the large parcels with varying climate change and management issues.</p> <p>Turtleback Mountain Preserve was cited as an example. There the goal is to bring back old growth stands. Doug M noted these plans are important but daunting because of their scale. There was further discussion regarding consequences of inaction and regarding the Land Bank’s capacity.</p> <p>There was a consensus the best management practices need to be built in, but a recognition that it will cost money and time. It was noted that people look to the Land Bank as a good example. Amanda Azous suggested</p> | <p>Eliza will send the revised job description to the Commission. Brian asked the Commission to review it and send comments to Lincoln by the end of next week in order for Lincoln to pass them on to human resources.</p> |

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| <b><u>Extended Discussion</u></b><br>continued         | setting money aside for restoration purposes. Doug Strandberg agreed, suggesting putting \$100K annually into a fund. Eliza noted that having seed money for grants is huge, and that is something that could fall under the proposed stewardship coordinator role. She also noted that the deer population can be destructive of healthy forests and suggested working with the state on hunting/deer reduction as an ecological management tool. Christa Campbell supported that idea as well. |  |
| <b><u>Executive Session</u></b><br>12:15 pm – 12:36 pm | The Land Bank Commission met in executive session in accordance with RCW 42.30.110 (b) To consider the selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate by lease or purchase when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price.  | Members of the public left the meeting<br><br>No action was taken following the executive session. |
| <b><u>Meeting Adjourned</u></b><br>12:40 pm            | Chair Brian Wiese adjourned the meeting.   |  |
| <b>NEXT MEETING</b>                                    | The next LBC meeting will take place on March 16, 2018, in the Craft Room at the Mullis Community Senior Center on San Juan Island.  |  |