



MEETING MINUTES

Conservation Land Bank Commission Meeting

January 19, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

San Juan Island Grange

Commission Members in Attendance:

Marilyn O'Connor, District 1, position 1

Open, District 2, position 2

Peggy Bill, District 3, position 3

Brian Wiese, at large, position 4

Mike Pickett, at large, position 5

Amy Trainer, at large, position 6

Open, at large, position 7

Commission Members Absent: None

Land Bank Staff in Attendance: Charlie Behnke, Lincoln Bormann, Peter Guillozet, Erin Halcomb, Doug McCutchen, Aaron Rock, Jacob Wagner, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

Land Bank Staff Absent: Shauna Barrows, Tyler Goodman, Eliza Habegger

County Council Liaison: Christine Minney

Public in Attendance: 17 individuals over the course of the meeting.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
Call to Order 8:31 am (0:10)	Chair, Brian Wiese, called the meeting to order.
Public Comment 8:33am (1:55)	Tracey Cottingham commented about a unique wheelchair device that was taken for a trial run at Channel Preserve.
Adoption of Minutes 8:32 am (5:27)	The draft December 15, 2023, minutes were reviewed. There were no corrections. Minutes were approved.
Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) 8:37 am (6:04)	Conservation Director, Vickie Edwards, gave an update to the Cady Mountain Preserve Conservation Easement project. San Juan Preservation (SJPT) and Land Bank staff met with County attorneys and are working through the details to close the project by the end of February. The sale is on the County Council's agenda for February 6, 2024. Vickie looks forward to working with Lincoln and his team, the

Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) continued	<p>Commission, and the Council County to finalize yet another successful, partnership conservation outcome – possibly the 26th! – for the islands and our communities.</p>
Chair and Commissioner’s Report 8:42 am (10:38)	<p>Peggy asked for follow up regarding the letter the Land Bank drafted in November intended to go to the Tribes following the decision to retain ownership of the Watmough Preserve Addition (Higgins property). She is hopeful there will be a meeting with land managers as a follow up to a hunting accident that occurred on Lopez Island last November. Peggy had fun planting acorns with Tim Clark and Amanda Wedow and is interested in putting together a focus group centered around agriculture and the Land Bank. The San Juan Islands Agricultural Summit is March 8th and 9th, and will be held at Camp Orkila on Orcas Island. Lincoln noted the Land Bank is a sponsor of the Ag Summit and will have a table at the event. He also noted that Monday, January 22, the County liaison assignments will be made, after which Land Bank Commissioner interviews can take place.</p> <p>Marilyn shared she is newly appointed to the Strategic Plan Committee.</p> <p>Brian encouraged everyone to view the County’s recently released 2023 Year In Review. Brian shared initial results from the Engage Survey, which had 600 responses. Results showed the top three priorities for respondents were environmental protection (overwhelmingly), with agriculture preservation and access to recreation equally weighted. Another highlight was the importance of face to face staff interactions within preserves.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding how the Land Bank can respond to misinformation in the media and scheduling training with the Prosecuting Attorney’s office around Open Public Meetings Act.</p>
Council Liaison 9:09 am (38:15)	<p>Christine Minney gave the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has not yet received the draft letter to the tribes, however council has been on hiatus. Christine will bring it up during the next regular council meeting. • At the first meeting of 2024, Council elected Jane Fuller as the chair and Christine Minney as the vice chair. • Almost \$2M awarded from Lodging Tax Advisory Committee funding • A special meeting and public hearing have been set for February 6, 2024, for the sale of Conservation Easement to the San Juan Preservation Trust for Cady Mountain Preserve. • County Council will hold their annual retreat January 22 – 23, after which interviews for open Land Bank Commissioner seats will take place.
Finance Report 9:14 am (42:36)	<p>Aaron presented and reviewed the fourth quarter financial report with the Commission. Aaron noted that County Auditor’s office will not officially close the month until 1/20/24, so reports may have slight changes once the County officially closes.</p>

Director's Report 9:29 am (57:40)	Lincoln reported strategic planning continues. The strategic planning committee met yesterday to review the draft with consultants, Triangle Associates. Overarching goals include communications, community engagement, land acquisition, organizational, operational and stewardship. Hilary Wilkinson, from Triangle, gave a summary of the completion process from draft to final strategic plan document. Brian noted importance of the relationship between the Affordable Housing Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) and the Land Bank's REET. There was discussion.
Break 10:00 am – 10:10 am	
Director's Report continued 10:10am (1:31:48)	Lincoln highlighted acquisition projects. A conservation easement (CE) donation has surfaced at the south end of San Juan Island which is adjacent to an existing CE project. Lincoln noted more information will come back to the commission soon. Grant application season is coming up. Staff will meet with other terrestrial managers to talk about salmon recovery grant possibilities as well as Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account acquisition projects.
Stewardship Report 10:12 am (1:33:00)	<p>Charlie highlighted the two Request for Proposals (RFP's) out for Beaverton Marsh and Frazer Preserves. Deadline for proposals is February 29th. Farmer and Rancher Listening Sessions are taking place this weekend and the Land Bank is a sponsor of, and will have a table at, the Agricultural Summit on March 8th and 9th. Charlie noted the Lums are giving a tour at Coffelt Farm Preserve March 8th.</p> <p>Erin emphasized the grants meeting Lincoln mentioned between terrestrial managers and highlighted it's one of the partnership activities the Land Bank organizes. It's a way to make sure no money gets left behind. Erin will meet with the preserve stewards next week to discuss a calendar for stewardship and management plan release.</p> <p>San Juan Island</p> <p>Doug noted he's heard from friends and neighbors about fallen trees due to the storm. He asked for feedback from preserve visitors to help focus clean-up projects.</p> <p>Orcas Island</p> <p>Peter noted the North Shore Property practice burn mentioned in the Stewardship Report has been set for February 24th. High possibility that other County Fire Departments will participate. Peter has been in communication with neighbors. Goals for the burn are to provide a local opportunity for practice; burning reduces the cost and complexity of demolition; timing is linked to the barn swallow colony that has been nesting in the building. The hope is for the swallows to move into an alternate nesting location that staff is creating.</p> <p>Lopez Island</p> <p>Amanda remarked she's rescheduled her work party at the Spit for a third time. The work party will consist of putting up wire protection around plantings. Rabbits have been busy! Richardson Marsh stewardship and management plan is in draft form and will come to the commissioners soon for comment. She recently met with the Washington State Historic Society to learn about their Heritage Capital Projects Program in relation to the Chadwick House at Watmough Preserve Addition. Lastly,</p>

Stewardship Report continued	a scoping meeting for the Watmough Preserve Addition stewardship and management plan is on the calendar for February 27 th .
Outreach/Volunteer Report 10:22 am (1:43:45)	Tanja noted she is working with staff, coordinating calendars – stewardship and management plans and outreach events. Brian requested a communications plan for the Commission to review. Discussion regarding when to schedule the next Communications Sub-Committee meeting.
Public Comment 10:26 am (1:47:41)	<p>Patrick O’Herren (San Juan Island) shared his appreciation for the Land Bank staff and commission. He supports a “friends” group for the Land Bank and to continue positive relations with affordable housing groups.</p> <p>Steve Ulvi (San Juan Island) appreciates and supports the work of the Commission and the partnership between the Land Bank and Affordable Housing, and he noted that to have a diversified community needs affordable housing and places to recreate.</p> <p>Ann Marie Shanks (Orcas Island) echoed Steve’s comments and shared a friend’s journey trying to find public waterfront access on Orcas during Covid. The friend was very excited to learn about the Land Bank’s acquisition of the North Shore Property.</p>
Meeting Adjourned 10:36 am	Chair, Brian Wiese, adjourned the meeting.
NEXT MEETING	The next LBC meeting is scheduled to take place February 16, 2024, at the San Juan Island Grange.