



MEETING MINUTES

Conservation Land Bank Commission Meeting March 20, 2026 Hybrid Meeting Mullis Community Senior Center

Commission Members in Attendance:

Marilyn O'Connor, District 1, position 1	Chris Guidotti, position 5
Anne Marie Shanks, District 2, position 2	Tim Clark, at large, position 7
Peggy Bill, District 3, position 3	
Mary Gropp, at large, position 4	

Commission Members Absent: Amy Trainer, at large, position 6

Land Bank Staff in Attendance: Charlie Behnke, Lincoln Bormann, Rachel Dietzman, Tyler Goodman, Peter Guillozet, Eliza Habegger, Erin Halcomb, Doug McCutchen, Aaron Rock, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

Land Bank Staff Absent: Shauna Barrows, Margo Thorp, Jacob Wagner

County Council Liaison: Justin Paulsen

Public in Attendance: 4 individuals over the course of the meeting.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
Call to Order 8:57 am Time Stamp (0:07)	Chair, Peggy Bill, called the meeting to order.
Public Comment 8:57 am (0:17)	None
Adoption of Minutes 8:58 am (0:31)	The draft February 20, 2026, minutes were reviewed. There were no corrections. Minutes were approved.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
<p>Chair and Commissioners Report 8:46 am (1:10)</p>	<p>Tim attended a class on biochar hosted by the SJI Conservation District and the March 3rd Beaverton Marsh Trail Walk with County Council; he found the site visit very informative. Tim read an article about REET (Real Estate Excise Tax), written by Lincoln, in the State Conservation Commission newsletter.</p> <p>Peggy also attended the Beaverton Tour and found it very helpful.</p> <p>Marilyn also attended the Beaverton Tour and attended the Beaverton Marsh Preserve Stewardship and Management Plan public meeting.</p> <p>Chris thanked staff and shared his appreciation for the time staff takes to do property tours with commissioners and answer questions. He's very impressed with the work the Land Bank is doing, highlighting recent visits to Mount Ben Preserve on San Juan Island and Crescent Beach and Judd Cove Preserves on Orcas Island.</p>
<p>Council Liaison 9:03 am (5:39)</p>	<p>Justin reported participating in the Conservation District event on San Juan Island: WA State Conservation District Director's Meeting. He noted the first stop of the event was the Overmarsh Farm Commons at Beaverton Marsh Preserve; it was his first time visiting the project and he was very impressed.</p> <p>He stated that the general fund levy lid lift is on the ballot for the April 28th special election, and noted the funds are necessary to maintain existing services to the community. He encouraged people to participate and vote.</p> <p>Justin thanked staff for their time in updating him on pertinent Land Bank issues, including the upcoming meeting regarding Proposed Hunting on Orcas Island Preserves.</p>
<p>Partner Update – San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) 9:07 am (9:43)</p>	<p>Mark Johnsen, SJPT Trustee and chair for Conservation and Acquisition Committee, filled in for Vickie Edwards. He reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJPT will close on the Mount Ben West property March 31, 2026. • Co-stewardship Director, Kathleen Foley-Lewis, spent an afternoon on Turtleback Mountain Preserve with Orcas field assistant, Tyler Goodman, and SJPT volunteer installing boxes for Western bluebirds in the Garry oak habitat.
<p>Director's Report 9:10 am (12:14)</p> <p>Orcas Island Taylor Property Along Cascade Creek Crescent Beach Preserve/Buck Park Boundary Line Modification</p>	<p>Background: SJPT secured a salmon recovery grant to acquire a total of roughly six acres from Sandy Taylor along Cascade Creek, adjacent to the Land Bank's Coho Preserve. As it makes the most sense for the property to be added to the Land Bank's existing Coho Preserve, SJPT handed off the acquisition process and grant funds to Land Bank staff. Current: Lincoln noted the survey is not yet completed and a cultural resources assessment for the property is underway. The purchase price is \$450K for 6.3 acres. The grant is for \$521K. Lincoln anticipates closing in October.</p> <p>Background: In 2017, the Land Bank agreed to provide a corner of the Crescent Beach Preserve adjacent to Buck Park as a dog off leash area, Orcas Island Parks and Recreation District (OIPRD) offered to manage the area, and the non-profit OOLA raised funds. Last July, OIPRD suggested exchanging their property south of Buck Park for the off-leash area leased on Crescent Beach Preserve. Lincoln discussed steps</p>

<p>Director's Report continued</p> <p>Lopez Island</p> <p>Demetrick Conservation and Trail Easement Donation (CE)</p> <p>San Juan Island</p> <p>Resale of the Two Lots at Frazer Homestead Preserve to the National Park Service</p>	<p>with the Prosecuting Attorney's (PA's) office and discovered the Land Bank would need to go through the same process as selling a property and would need an appraisal for market value.</p> <p>Current: Lincoln noted an appraisal is completed for both parties and it's a wash. Next up is constructing a mutual transaction between OOLA and the Land Bank. Lincoln will work with Jon Cain on that. There was discussion.</p> <p>Background: The Demetrick's own a 13-acre waterfront parcel north of Channel Preserve on Lopez Island and are interested in a CE with the Land Bank. Current: The CE would set up a building envelope and prohibit any subdivision or guest house. They will also donate a trail easement. Currently working through some revisions and Lincoln hopes to wrap the project up in a couple months.</p> <p>Background: The National Historical Service (NPS) wants to purchase the southern two parcels at Frazer Homestead because of their historical significance as the Cutler homestead. These parcels are excluded from the Ag lease. Funding was approved/budgeted for the purchase and NPS has been waiting for the funds to be released. Current: It's Lincoln's understanding that the park service is working their way through larger acquisitions and making their way down to smaller ones. Lincoln noted the purchase price is \$1.28M. There was discussion.</p>
<p>Outreach Report</p> <p>9:28 am (30:32)</p>	<p>Tanja reported on upcoming events including the March 21 Up and Over hike of Turtleback Mountain Preserve, the March 23 public meeting regarding Proposed Hunting on Two Orcas Island Preserves and Art on the Preserves and Senior hikes series start in April on SJI . She queried who would like to join and/or leave the Communications Sub-Committee.</p>
<p>Commissioner Sub-committees Discussion</p> <p>9:32 am (35:45)</p>	<p>Peggy asked for discussion of current sub-committees, both formal and informal. Lincoln reminded everyone that a max of three commissioners may sit on a sub-committee.</p> <p><u>Currently operating sub-committees are:</u> Communications: Amy and Anne Marie Finance: Marilyn (finance office) and Anne Marie; add Chris SJPT Partnership: Peggy and Mary; add Marilyn Ag: Tim and Peggy</p> <p><u>Sub-committees LBC is interested in forming:</u> Tribal Relations Tim noted there is no climate committee however he is the County Climate and Sustainability Committee liaison. They haven't met for a few months; next meeting is the next week. Tim will give an update at the April meeting. There was discussion.</p>
	<p>ACTION ITEMS: Add sub-committee reports to monthly meetings; Tanja to send LBC Frankie's presentation regarding the County's Tribal Engagement Framework; Lincoln schedule Commissioner Orientation</p>

<p>Break 9:49 am – 10:04 am (51:38)</p>	
<p>Stewardship Report 10:04 am (51:56)</p> <p>San Juan Island Overmarsh Farm Commons (Overmarsh) Update</p> <p>Beaverton Marsh Trail Update</p> <p>Beaverton Marsh Preserve Stewardship and Management Plan</p>	<p>Bruce Robinson made himself available to answer questions about the project and/or the 2025 Overmarsh Farm Commons Annual Report produced by Farm Manager, Amanda Zee. Topics included deer fencing, infrastructure and cost delineation between Land Bank and Overmarsh; and grazing. Bruce noted plans for an Open House are in the works and some challenges with water runoff.</p> <p>Trail Project Manager, Rachel Dietzman, summarized the March 4 Open House event. She said mostly sticking to the project timeline, noting that the permit process is underway and have had pre-application meetings and pre-application submittals, and some actual submittals. Today Rachel is submitting the SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) application to the County and in early May she expects to receive the 60% plan, which will allow more permitting work because they will know the exact scope of the project. There was discussion.</p> <p>Doug reported he hasn't received very many comments to date; public comment period closes March 25.</p>
<p>Future Agenda Items 10:39 am (1:27:23)</p>	<p>Acquisition Criteria Presentation Land Bank Commissioner Re-Orientation Stewardship Leadership Team Progress Policy Manual Update</p>
<p>Public Comment 10:44 am (1:32:25)</p>	<p>Judy Cumming commented when she originally read about Beaverton Trail plans she imagined it would be similar to the Crescent Beach boardwalk or the boardwalk at Weeks Wetland. She will do more research and believe the Land Bank does what it needs to.</p> <p>Kathy Morris noted her excitement that Mary Gropp joined the Land Bank Commission and made a suggestion to read the County Code to help be a successful commissioner, including the Land Bank's mandate. She also highlighted a recent meeting regarding current use and learned that as of September 2025 back tax obligation is only four years now, making it easier to remove property from the working conservation program that the State established in the 1970's. Kathy worries that will open the door to developers to buy up ag land and encouraged more conservation easements. She also noted really enjoying the 2026 Ag Summit and the value in enhancing our own soils.</p>
<p>Executive Session 10:50 am (1:38:17)</p>	<p>The Land Bank Commission met in executive session in accordance with RCW 42.30.110 (1)(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.</p>
<p>Meeting Adjourned 11:11 am</p>	<p>Chair, Peggy Bill, noted no decisions were made during executive session. Peggy adjourned the meeting.</p>

(2:16:22)	
NEXT MEETING	The next LBC meeting is scheduled to take place April 17, 2026, at the Orcas Island Fire Hall, 45 Lavender Lane, Eastsound, WA