



## MEETING MINUTES

### Land Bank Commission Meeting April 16, 2021 Virtual ZOOM Meeting

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Jim Skoog, District 1, position 1  
 Sandi Friel, District 2, position 2  
 Brian Wiese, at large, position 4  
 Miles Becker, District 3, position 3

Doug Strandberg, at large, position 5  
 David Meiland, at large, position 6  
 Christa Campbell, at large, position 7

**Commission Members Absent:** None

**Land Bank Staff in Attendance:** Shauna Barrows, Charlie Behnke, Lincoln Bormann, Judy Cumming, Peter Guillozet, Doug McCutchen, Aaron Rock, Kayla Seaforth, Jacob Wagner, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

**Land Bank Staff Absent:** Eliza Habegger, Erin Halcomb

**County Council Liaison:** Christine Minney

**County Manager:** Absent

**Public in Attendance:** 9 individuals over the course of the meeting.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
<b>Call to Order</b> 8:30 am	Sandi Friel, chair, called the meeting to order.
<b>Public Comment</b> 8:30 am	Tom Cowan thanked the commission for hosting the Community Conversation Zoom meeting and said it was a great format. He noted that he could not see who else from the public was attending and he would've liked to know.
<b>Adoption of Minutes</b> 8:34 am	The draft March 19, 2021 minutes were reviewed. There were corrections. Minutes were approved with corrections.

<p><b>Chair and Commissioner's Report</b> 8:36 am</p>	<p>Sandi noted attending the 2021 Ag Summit traditional Foodways study group and commented that she found it very enlightening. She thanked Tanja for her part in researching, organizing, and moderating the Community Conversations Series. Sandi asked the commissioners how frequent they thought these meetings should be held.</p> <p>David said he listened to all three meetings, noting that Orcas and Lopez has much higher attendance than San Juan Island. He posed the question of hosting one zoom for the whole county, and perhaps hosting more frequent district meetings. Sandi said this was a good topic for the Communications Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Brian remarked that the original idea was to have one evening meeting for each district to focus on local topics. He would like to see annual meetings by district. Doug Strandberg agreed on district meetings and suggested having them twice yearly as well as one all county annual meeting.</p> <p>Christa, Jim, and Miles agreed.</p> <p>Brian suggested that the questions that come out of the Community Conversations be brought back to future commission meetings and/or retreats. He noted that Orcas had a high interest in trails and mountain biking use.</p>
<p><b>Council Liaison</b> 8:50 am</p>	<p>Christine Minney said she also attended the Ag Summit and found it very informative. She said the county has started working with the Town of Friday Harbor regarding affordable housing units on the vacant lots at the corner of Argyle and Malcolm streets. She was very clear that no decisions have been made as this is very early in the process, but the possibility of up to 24 rental units is “on the table.”</p> <p>Christine reported on another exciting project in early stages, a multi-modal trail from town to Zylstra Lake Preserve. The county as applied for federal funding for this approximately 3-mile trail.</p>
<p><b>Finance</b> 8:53 am</p>	<p>Aaron Rock reported on the first quarter (Q1). He said the Conservation Area Fund (CAF) increased by \$463,375 in the quarter, bringing the its total to \$5.3M.</p> <p>The Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) interest rate dropped again from 0.139%. to 0.1193%; last year's rate at this time was 1.28%. Aaron is researching other investment options for government entities.</p> <p>Aaron noted that Q1 Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) is up almost 55% from 2020. First quarter revenue also includes private donations (Barker family parcel donation for the Beaverton connector trail), and the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) Conservation Easement (CE) purchase. The Lopez Hill addition purchase comprised the vast majority of acquisition expenditures.</p> <p>Other highlights included administration costs at 2.63% of budget, and a Stewardship Management Fund increase of \$132k, with all site enhancements tracking with YTD budget.</p> <p>Jim queried Sandi about how the state of the real estate market. Sandi replied that sale prices have gone through the roof, but inventory is extremely low. She noted that on average there are approximately 100 properties for sale on Orcas Island at this time of year, but currently there only 15, most of which with an asking price of \$1M or more.</p>

<p><b>Director's Report</b> 9:02 am</p> <p>San Juan Island</p> <p>Lopez Island</p> <p>Orcas Island</p>	<p><b>Cady Mountain Development LLC Property (aka Buck). Background:</b> The Land Bank has \$1.7 million purchase and sale agreement for this 142-acre property. Lincoln presented maps showing the property's relationship to other conserved and undeveloped properties. The property lies within a High Climate Resiliency Area as identified by the Nature Conservancy, provides a critical ecological connection between the English Camp/Mitchell Hill and Cady Mountain conservation areas, and is also a key parcel for providing a trail connection between these two areas. The property includes wetlands, wildflower meadows, views, and mature forests.</p> <p><b>Current:</b> The acquisition is moving forward; Lincoln will present the amended budget to the county council on Tuesday. He said SJPT confirmed they want to partner in the acquisition, although the details have yet to be worked through. The Land Bank will reserve the option of selling a conservation easement to SJPT for at least 25% of the purchase price. The closing date is May 7, 2021. Sandi and Doug asked if a trail from the property to English Camp was possible. Lincoln said Roche Harbor has an array of public trails, one of which already makes the connection. However, public use of Roche Harbor land is permissive only, and so public access is not guaranteed permanently.</p> <p>Some new potential acquisition properties came up during the Lopez Community Conversation meeting. One of these is adjacent to the Weeks Wetland Preserve and would preserve the view of Fisherman Bay from Lopez Village. Another is a view property just to the south. Lincoln will be exploring these further in the coming months. He noted it was great to hear from the community.</p> <p>Lincoln noted the larger, "landscape" scale properties are running out and may be a sign of things to come. Sandi asked about the Mount Baker Farm property, noting it was under contract. Lincoln commented that he hoped the buyer might be open to a CE in the future to maintain field next to the road.</p> <p>Brian stated the idea of smaller acquisitions came up at the Orcas Community Conversation meeting. He remarked that Lincoln did a good job answering the variety of questions during the meeting. Brian also shared that the Land Bank is very cautious about purchasing properties within urban growth areas (UGAs) because that's the area where development is supposed to happen.</p> <p>Sandi suggested keeping a list of comments from the community meetings for future discussion items when extra time is available and/or for future agenda items. She thought both Lincoln and the preserve stewards provided great information and presentations. She then asked the stewards for their feedback.</p> <p>Peter said he prefers in person presentations, but appreciated the venue and idea. There was discussion regarding Zoom's different meeting formats and other potential tools (e.g., themed videos). Sandi stated her preference for continuing with a hybrid model going forward.</p>
<p><b>Break</b> 9:32 am – 9:41 am</p>	
<p><b>Stewardship Report</b> 9:41 pm</p>	<p><b>Ag Lease Update</b> - Charlie highlighted the new lessees for Zylstra Lake and Fowler's Pond Preserves. The Lum Farm was awarded the contract to graze sheep at Fowler's Pond, and Adam Greene and Bruce Gregory were awarded the contract to</p>

<p><b>Stewardship Report</b> continued</p>	<p>hay Zylstra Lake Preserve. Adam and Bruce will try a new approach, haylage, a process by which hay is baled at a higher moisture content than dry hay and then stored in a sealed plastic wrap. Charlie noted they'll be using smaller equipment, so will be out more often. He also shared that the preserve has been very active, in particular with lots of fishing. He also commented that neighbors have been great and communicative regarding visitors and dogs on leash. Charlie thought maybe more signage could be beneficial as well.</p> <p><b>Orcas Island</b> - Peter said the Coffelt Farm cost share paperwork is finished; flow monitoring equipment has been installed at Cascade Creek; and Scott Rozenbaum planted Wapato bulbs at Stonebridge-Terrill Preserve. He also shared that Eric Beamer was seining at Cascade Creek. Eric is taking DNA samples from Chinook fry in the creek to confirm whether originated at the hatchery. Lincoln asked stewards about the level of preserve usage; Peter replied that he snapped a pic of the most cars he's ever witnessed at Turtleback Preserve's south trailhead.</p> <p><b>Lopez Island</b> - Amanda said it's been busy on the preserves, so was surprised to find Channel Preserve empty when she's been there. She also borrowed a tractor to work at the Spit.</p> <p><b>San Juan Island</b> – Doug also noted the preserves have been steady with visitors. He said his contacts in the hospitality business say they're booked through the summer.</p>
<p><b>Outreach/Volunteer Report</b> 9:50 am</p>	<p>Tanja announced all three Community Conversation events have taken place, and they have been a large part of what she's been working on. She also noted her committee work with the San Juan Island Trails Committee and Stewardship Network and their contributions towards getting people registered for the April 24<sup>th</sup> Great Islands Clean Up. She encouraged anyone interested in volunteering on SJI, Lopez, or Orcas, to register through the <a href="https://plasticfreesalishsea.org/events/">https://plasticfreesalishsea.org/events/</a> website. Lastly, Tanja has been collaborating with Erin on a couple articles for media publication – one for Sound Publishing's annual visitor's guide, with a Leave No Trace focus; the other for Coldwell Banker's summer showcase, which focuses on story of the Land Bank.</p>
<p><b>Executive Session</b> 9:55 am – 10:30 am</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><b>Future Agenda Items</b> 10:30 am</p>	<p>Foodways Questions that arose from the Community Conversations Series Revisiting climate change as applied to stewardship and acquisitions</p>
<p><b>Break</b> 10:35 am – 10:50 am</p>	
<p><b>CART-Coffelt Report and Discussion</b> 10:50 am</p>	<p>No minutes were taken for this portion of the meeting, but it was recorded. Interested parties can listen via: <a href="https://youtu.be/5dbMRRc5Qlk">https://youtu.be/5dbMRRc5Qlk</a></p>
<p><b>ADJOURN</b></p>	<p>Sandi Friel adjourned the meeting at 12:53</p>

**NEXT MEETING**

The next LBC meeting is scheduled to take place May 21, 2021.