



## MEETING MINUTES

### Land Bank Commission Meeting June 19, 2020 Virtual Skype Meeting

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

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

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:** Charlie Behnke, Lincoln Bormann, Judy Cumming, Peter Guillozet, Erin Halcomb, Eric Nelson, Kayla Seaforth, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

**Land Bank Staff Absent:** Sarah Benson, Eliza Habegger, Doug McCutchen

**County Council Liaison:** Bill Watson, Council Member, District 1

**County Manager:** Mike Thomas

**Public in Attendance:** 11 individuals over the course of the meeting.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
<b>Call to Order</b> 10:03 am	Chair, Christa Campbell, called the meeting to order.
<b>Public Comment</b> 10:03 am	Christa asked for public comments. Tom Cowan said he had seen a misleading petition with misleading information asking to rescind the Land Bank Real Estate Excise Tax and it seemed like something the Land Bank should respond to with factual information. Lincoln asked where Tom had seen the petition – Lopez Rocks and Facebook were two forums. Sandi and Brian had responded on Facebook.

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements
<b>Adoption of Minutes</b> 10:09 am	The May 17, 2020 minutes were reviewed. There were no corrections.
	<p><b><u>ACTION:</u></b> Jim Skoog moved to accept the May 21, 2020 LBC meeting minutes. David Meiland seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed.</p>
<b>Chair and Commissioner's Report</b> 10:10 am	<p>Doug responded to Rami Amaro's public comment read aloud during the May 17 skype meeting regarding purchasing property versus a conservation easement (CE). He noted that the Land Bank has gotten away from CE's as the trend is that people prefer to sell their property outright, and that CE's have become more expensive. Doug used the Hauschka property as an example – the Hauschka's were not interested in a CE and only wanted to sell their property. Lincoln noted that two CE's were completed this year - the Ritchie property on Lopez Island and the Ihiya Biological Reserve on San Juan Island. He also said the Hauschka's had a buyer, and the buyer was going to donate a CE to the Land Bank, but the buyer backed out. Doug remarked that the Ritchie transaction was a good example of how complex CE's can be. Former Land Bank commissioner, Nancy Greene, was on the call and commented that the transaction was 25 years in the making! David agreed; he felt Doug's response to the Amaro's comment was appropriate. He also would like the commission to continue being responsive to public comments. Brian agreed. There was discussion. Miles posed the question of where responses might be posted. Christa suggested tabling the question and adding it to the July agenda for discussion.</p>
<b>Council Update</b> 10:23 am	<p>Bill Watson stated the Council is deep into the budget deficit and the repercussions from the novel coronavirus. He noted the county has had 16 positive cases to date and that public health has been doing a good job with contact tracing and managing containment. Lodging is now allowed up to 50% occupancy. The Board of Health, along with the County Council and Dr. James will be discussing when to move to Phase 3. He said that some county employees took early retirement and now the Council has the difficult task of determining whom to replace since council now approves all new hires. Chip sealing was scheduled for San Juan Island for the month of June, but the wet weather has put the project behind schedule. Jim asked when the connector road was opening. Bill said that project was also delayed due to the poor June weather and he didn't have a specific date, but hopefully soon.</p>
<b>Finance</b> 10:27 am	<p>Doug Strandberg reported from the monthly cash flow reports that Judy Cumming provides to he and Lincoln. Revenue will be received in the next two months from the State of Washington Recreation Conservation Office for the Mt Grant acquisition grant in the amount of \$900,000 and from the San Juan Preservation Trust for the Beaverton Marsh CE in the amount of \$825,000, as budgeted. This will bring the balance closer to \$3M remaining in the conservation area fund, which is his preference. The May REET was 14% ahead of budget and June was at \$125K, so far. Doug thought June would be light in response to the pandemic, but he anticipated making budget. Jim asked Sandi her thoughts on the market. Sandi said Orcas sales have only been limited by inventory; buyers are out there, waiting, in all price</p>



<p>Orcas Island continued</p>	<p>as a critical conservation priority, especially since the adjacent Turtleback Mountain was purchased in 2006. In April of this year, the Land Bank was notified that all five parcels were going to be offered for sale with an asking price of \$7.5 million. At that time, neither the Land Bank nor SJPT had the financial capacity to attempt a purchase. However, an anonymous donor has now offered to provide the funds to make the purchase possible. As a condition of the donation, a forever-wild conservation easement will be placed on the property at the time of purchase. The easement will be held by the SJPT. <b>Current:</b> Lincoln reported that things had shifted a bit. SJPT will close on the shoreline piece, work out a CE with the Lummi Nation, and then transfer the property to it. Lincoln said there was much to sort out regarding public access management and interpretation, but that the Lummi Nation was open to discussion. The upper parcels can be absorbed into Turtleback Mountain Preserve and a trail could run from Turtleback toward West Sound – a new route! Brian noted it’s still a fantastic opportunity in fulfilling the preservation of cultural resource mandate and believes it’s a great, high profile project. Lincoln estimated it would take about a year to work through the details. Doug asked about the Land Bank also retaining a CE. Lincoln noted that the Lummi Nation is a sovereign nation and working out a CE with it is uncharted territory and that The Nature Conservancy is the back-up assignee for all SJPT CEs. Doug asked if there is a solid commitment from the donor if the process takes too long. Lincoln said the acquisition is on track to close at the end of July. Christa noted that the project is that much better with the Lummi Nation involved and felt its participation very appropriate. Miles agreed.</p>
	<p><b><u>ACTION:</u></b> Lincoln will re-send the video presentation for the Olga Store Historic Preservation Easement request.</p>
<p><b>Stewardship Report</b> 10:50 am</p> <p>Coffelt Farm</p> <p>Extension of Lum Lease</p>	<p>Peter reported receiving about a dozen, mostly positive, comments on the Draft Stewardship and Management Plan.</p> <p>The Lums have a short-term lease (ending at the end of the year) and would like a one-year extension. Lincoln advocated for the extension, noting that by all accounts, they’ve been doing a great job, and the year extension would also give the Conservation Agricultural Resource Team (CART) extra time to work on long-term management options for the farm. Brian agreed to the year extension. He asked if the Land Bank needed to advertise before offering it. Lincoln didn’t believe so since the timeframe is only a one-year extension and thought that opening it up to other applicants defeats the purpose of doing an extension. Sandi asked if CART recommended an extension. Brook answered saying the group hadn’t discussed that option. He noted that the extension would give CART more breathing room.</p>
	<p><b><u>ACTION:</u></b> Brian Weise moved to recommend a one-year lease extension for the Lums as long as there are no legal constraints. Sandi Friel seconded the motion. There was discussion. Motion passed.</p>
<p><b>Report from CART</b></p>	<p>Brook reported that CART was put together to review aspects of Coffelt Farm and then to make recommendations to the commission. Brook noted he has been very</p>

<p>(Conservation Agricultural Resource Team –Coffelt Farm) Chair Brook Brouwer presenting 11:02 am</p>	<p>inspired to work with the team. They have been meeting at least once a month since November 2019. Brook reported on three main themes on which CART focused:</p> <p><b>Reviewing Coffelt’s past operations.</b> CART researched the history of Coffelt Farm, discussed what went well and not well, and sent the summary to the commission.</p> <p><b>Assessing ag potential.</b> The team looked at current usage levels as well as what it would take to amend soils, and also water availability. Currently the farm is used for pasture, but historically there have been multiple farming practices.</p> <p><b>Survey.</b> CART would like to put a survey out to the general public. The goal is to finalize draft survey questions early to mid-July. They would then send the draft to the commissioners and staff to review and provide feedback. CART hopes for a week turnaround for review and feedback in order to keep the project moving. Brook thanked the commission and shared that the team, as a whole, recognized ag lands as beneficial. He then asked if there were any questions.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding a survey question about housing. Brook noted that the goal is not to have the expectation that items in the survey will happen, but to gather information and provide it to the Land Bank in order for the commission to make decisions based on community feedback. Doug appreciated the explanation and the work CART is doing. Miles asked how the survey will be administered. Brook said it will be online. WSU has an online tool he would like to use. They would distribute the survey as a link and share it as broadly as possible. There was discussion regarding online versus paper.</p>
<p><b>Outreach Report</b> 11:38 am</p>	<p>Tanja didn’t have anything to add to the submitted report.</p>
<p><b>Future Agenda Items</b></p>	<p>How to respond to public comment</p>
<p><b>Meeting Adjourned</b> 11:45 am</p>	<p>Chair, Christa Campbell, adjourned the meeting.</p>
<p><b>NEXT MEETING</b></p>	<p>The next LBC meeting is scheduled to take place July 17, 2020. Location TBD.</p>