



## MEETING MINUTES

### Land Bank Commission Meeting June 21, 2019 Eastsound Fire Station Orcas Island, WA

**Commission Members in Attendance:**

Christa Campbell, at large, position 7  
 Sandi Friel, District 2, position 2  
 Doug Strandberg, at large, position 5

Miles Becker, District 3, position 3  
 Brian Wiese, at large, position 4

**Commission Members Absent:** Jim Skoog, District 1, position 1, David Meiland, at large, position 6

**Land Bank Staff in Attendance:** Lincoln Bormann, Charlie Behnke, Eric Nelson, Kayla Seaforth, Peter Guillozet, Erin Halcomb

**Land Bank Staff Absent:** Carlton Burns, Judy Cumming, Eliza Habegger, Doug McCutchen, Amanda Wedow, Tanja Williamson

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

**Public in Attendance:** 22 members of the public were present

Topic	Key Discussion Points & Agreements	Actions and Next Steps
<u>Call to Order</u> 8:15 am	Chair, Christa Campbell, called the meeting to order.	
<u>Adoption of Minutes</u>	The May 17, 2019 minutes were reviewed. There was a correction.	Brian Wiese moved to accept the May 17, 2019 minutes as corrected. Doug Strandberg seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

<p><b>Chair and Commissioner's Reports</b> 8:23 am</p>	<p>Brian Wiese shared that there are exciting possibilities ahead for the Orcas Island trail system. He recently walked from Fowler's to the Exchange and recognized the potential along Coffelt Farm Preserve's southwestern boundary to also connect to Turtleback.</p> <p>Christa shared that after today's Commission meeting council members were headed to Lopez for the Lopez Hill Celebration with Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz and State Senator Liz Lovelett. Christa also commended steward Amanda Wedow for all her efforts in organizing a full week of diverse events.</p>	
<p><b>Public Comment</b> 8:26 am</p>	<p>Barbara Rosenkotter shared that the Environmental Action Team, a subcommittee of the Orcas Women's Coalition (OWC) was supportive of the County's salmon recovery projects, and that their organization would like to support the efforts to increase flows to Cascade Creek. She asked the Commission what they were working on in regards to this and what could OWC do to help.</p> <p>Margaret Payne, with the Eastsound Planning and Review Commission (EPRC) encouraged the Commission to acquire Victory Hill. She will return next month with a proposal.</p> <p>Tom Eversole stated that he is interested in returning more flow to Fish Trap Creek. He believed that the Land Bank owned property in Cayou Estuary in Deer Harbor. Charlie Behnke clarified that the Land Bank doesn't own the property, but instead holds a conservation easement.</p> <p>Kim Secunda also encouraged the Commission to consider the Victory Hill acquisition.</p> <p>Ed Andrews pointed out that although the Land Bank owns 1,600 acres of farmland there were no current Commissioners with farming experience. He also advised against having a nonprofit as the next lessee for Coffelt Farm.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities to engage the OWC?</p> <p>Tour Victory Hill and review proposal.</p>
<p><b>County Liaison</b> 8:36 am</p>	<p>Bill Watson reported that the SJC Council had met on Orcas and toured Coffelt Farm. They were up-to-date on the transitions. Other Council updates included radio improvements for emergency services, and an upcoming retreat to deliberate the biennial budget and its parameters for department heads. He suggested double-checking the classification of parcels (for the Land Capacity Analysis/Comp Plan Update) and noted some inaccuracies were expected because the data used was from March 2017. Finally, he mentioned that fire season was in effect and that there were numerous fires going west of the Cascades, and there had already been one in Moran State Park.</p>	
<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>	<p>Kathy Morris added that on the USDA website the annual rainfall for this area was classified as well below average.</p>	

8:41 am		
<b>Review of the Agenda</b> 8:42 am	Chair, Christa Campbell, elected to move next into the Director’s Report as this would enable the discussion about Coffelt Farm to begin at the time it was publicized.	
<p data-bbox="154 401 293 506"><b>Director’s Report</b> 8:43 am</p> <p data-bbox="154 951 354 982">San Juan Island</p>	<p data-bbox="402 401 1369 785"><b>Grants Report</b> – Lincoln reported on four pending grants – two for the Channel Preserve on Lopez, one each for Mount Grant and Zylstra Lake. He said the issue with the Recreation and Conservation Office’s (RCO) funding had been resolved for Mount Grant. Zylstra, however, was proving to be more complicated. Two options exist: One would be to reduce the property value to reflect the conservation easement (CE). This would reduce the \$1 million award to roughly \$250K. The second option was to ask the San Juan Preservation Trust (SJPT) to rescind the CE and replace it with a protective covenant. The latter is preferred. The Channel Preserve was awarded both grants. Lincoln will attend the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board meeting next week.</p> <p data-bbox="402 804 1369 905"><b>Conservation Projects</b> – Concerns about cash flow and carrying debt remain. However, a third opportunity has arisen to purchase property on Cady Mountain.</p> <p data-bbox="402 924 1369 1375"><b>Forbush Property:</b> This is a 40-acre property on the edge of the existing Cady conservation area. It is listed for \$390K and zoned R-20 (2 units). Access to the parcel is along a private road. There was discussion that resulted in consensus among the Commissioners to not further pursue this acquisition because (1) the amount of acreage for the cost wasn’t a bargain and (2) the level of allowable development was not overly worrisome. Sandi Friel further suggested that before considering any other acquisitions it would be good to review the Land Bank’s overall portfolio and priorities. Doug S. offered that the priorities for acquisition have been outlined and that connectivity to other conservation areas is a principle guideline. Miles Becker noted that it would be helpful to have an estimate of how much the organization can spend annually in order to better weigh the opportunity with the cost. Christa asked that this discussion item be on the July agenda.</p> <p data-bbox="402 1394 1369 1602"><b>Cattlepoint Rd. (Woodbridge) Property – <u>Background:</u></b> The 30-acre property zoned R-5, is a bargain sale for \$200K. Its forest and pond would create an attractive rest point for hikers on the trail along Cattle Point Road. SJPT intends to hold a CE on the property. This project is in the budget and has been approved, but it has been set aside because the landowners are interested in researching other possibilities with Homes for Islanders.</p> <p data-bbox="402 1621 1369 1829"><b>Ihiya Biological Reserve</b> – This 30-acre parcel is adjacent to the Town of Friday Harbor’s Trout Lake property and other Land Bank conservation areas. It features wetlands, fields and forest. Lincoln noted the proposed “forever wild” CE comes in under market value at \$200K. It would allow public access and eliminate all development rights. This CE is included in the amended budget.</p>	

<p><b>Director’s Report cont.</b></p> <p>Lopez acquisitions</p>	<p><b>Spencer Spit Addition – Background:</b> This 20-acre high bank shoreline property is north of the State Park and has exceptional views across Lopez Sound. It is also highly visible to travelers on the ferry. This is a “bargain sale” with the owner donating proceeds to the Lopez Community Land Trust. Washington State Parks considers this a top priority for protection and will receive \$300K in funding from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). As the seller is eager to proceed, the Land Bank will purchase one of the lots for \$200K. Its market value is roughly \$600K. State Parks will purchase the second parcel in the fall. The Land Bank would then convey its parcel to State Parks to be combined with their purchase of the other lot. The Land Bank would retain a conservation easement (CE) or protective covenant on the property. The first transaction is set to close next week.</p> <p><b>Ritchie (RR Bar Ranch) CE</b> – This 130-acre property is in the Center Valley of Lopez, which is a core area of focus. It has significant wetlands and upland fields and hosts much winter waterfowl. The CE reduces the number of potential residences from 10 to 2. Lincoln reported that after eight years of on and off negotiation, the CE will close this year.</p>	
<p><b><u>ACTION:</u> On the July agenda: a primer and discussion on the priority process for acquisitions.</b></p>		
<p><b>Coffelt Farm Discussion</b> 9:06 am</p>	<p>The Coffelt Farm Stewards (CFS) has dissolved, and the future of Coffelt Farm will be approached in stages. The Land Bank is working on developing a management plan and a long-term lease, and establishing a committee for the selection of a long-term lessee. Lincoln explained that the preserve management plan will outline objectives for the protection and enhancement of the property’s resources, its soils, forests and wetlands. The long-term lessee will be aware of these objectives and will need to work within these protections. The farm’s infrastructure is also being reviewed and the Land Bank is seeking cost share opportunities with the Conservation District. As housing has clearly been an issue, the decision was made to purchase a tiny house for the property. It still needs a permit but will be made available for worker housing. There was an inquiry as to who was leading the development of the management plan. Lincoln responded that Peter Guillozet was the lead and that other staff were available to support. Lincoln also assured attendees that the Land Bank would seek public input and that the first public meeting would likely be held in the fall.</p> <p>In the past month, the Land Bank established an interim selection committee, advertised a RFP and hosted two farm tours for those interested. A dozen people attended. Two proposals were received. The first was by Lily Hein and Julie Duke. Their proposal entailed relocating an existing farm animal sanctuary from San Juan Island. Their focus was on education and not food production. The second proposal was by Amy and Eric Lum. The Lum’s proposal paralleled what has already been in existence at Coffelt. They are interested in a goat dairy, sheep grazing and, if the water rights can be secured a market garden. The selection</p>	

	<p>committee developed a scoring system that prioritized food production. The committee recommended the Lums as interim lessees of Coffelt Farm.</p>	
	<p><u>ACTION:</u> Sandi Friel moved to accept the committee’s recommendation. The motion was seconded by Brian Wiese. Doug S. offered to the Lums that their proposal was superior and that he was also in favor. Brian asked Amy Lum to share the letter she wrote to the Land Bank in May. She did. She read aloud her family’s desire to run an ethical, sustainable and profitable farm. Rick Hughes emphatically expressed his respect for the Lums. There was discussion that some ideas had been presented through this process such as nursery sales, forest walks, and permaculture experiments. Miles and Christa voiced their confidence in, and support of, the Lums as interim lessees.</p> <p>The motion passed unanimously.</p>	
<p><b>Public Comment</b> 9:31 am</p>	<p>Kathy Morris asked if the public could apply to be on the long-term lease selection committee and expressed her own interest. Charlie responded that the committee had representatives from various agencies such as, Washington State University Extension (WSU), the County’s Agricultural Resources Committee (ARC), a Land Bank Commissioner and himself, the Ag. Program Coordinator for the Land Bank. Brian responded that the Land Bank wanted to reach out to CFS board members to learn from their experience but also avoid any conflicts of interest. Charlie shared that the Land Bank purchased \$21K worth of equipment from CFS including equipment for chicken processing, portable electric fencing, a freezer, and refrigerators.</p> <p>Further discussion ensued regarding the long-term lease selection committee. Questions included: Whether there would be an advertisement on the Land Bank website or in the newspapers; how beneficial a public notice might be, and; what the goal of the committee is. Lincoln responded that the committee should be a workable group of no more than 10 people and that although some goals for the property would be outlined in regards to resource protection, the committee would also help to decide how the farm should be managed. Sandi asked: What are the ultimate goals for the property? To be carbon neutral? To produce as much food as possible? To be financially solvent? Christa offered that the selection committee was needed in order to gather objective information and that additionally, there was the need to ask the Orcas community what they envision.</p> <p>Kathy Morris passed out handouts of the original mission of the CFS and asked that their spirit be remembered. She also asked that the Commission share it with Mr. Skoog. Rick Hughes shared that he believed a farmer from Orcas should be on the selection committee. Ed Andrews shared that he was very supportive of the decision to lease to the Lums. Dan Borman concurred with the decision to lease to the Lums and emphasized that the public be engaged in the long-term plan. He suggested sketching out multiple possibilities to put forward at a public meeting and then soliciting public input based on the alternatives. Miles suggested a simplified version of the BLM’s action alternatives. Kathy Wilkens suggested that the long-term plan not be with a single lessee but with multiple; she believes that there needs to be more people out there, and more housing.</p>	

	<b><u>ACTION:</u> Bring back a Committee selection process to the next meeting</b>
<b>Break</b> 10:02 am – 10:15 am	
<b>Stewardship Report</b> 10:17 am	Lincoln briefed the Commission on a legal matter related to Kellett Bluff. The Land Bank and property owner to the north, Claes Eklund, also jointly own a parcel used as principal access. Mr. Eklund argues that public use of this parcel interferes with his use of the property. He has posted private property signs in front of Land Bank signs. His representative will attend the next Commission meeting. Lincoln outlined three options: 1) Open the small cove to the north for public access. This would likely require infrastructure; 2) Dispute Mr. Eklund's assertion and; 3) Divide the jointly owned parcel. This third option is not realistic. It was also noted that a condition of Sarah Hart's gift of the Preserve to the Land Bank requires providing tribal access.
<b>Outreach Report</b> 10:25 am	The annual report is out. The Commission commended the layout and the content, and shared that they had received positive feedback.
<b>Future Agenda Items and Review</b> 10:30 am	At the next meeting, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Commission intends to review acquisition criteria and discuss hunting on preserves.</li> <li>• Christa shared that she would like to condense the Chair's and Commission's Report and the Director's Report in order to increase time for discussion.</li> <li>• Sandi said that she would like to hear more from the stewards. She acknowledged that the stewardship report detailed what was happening on the ground, but she was also interested in what's not getting done. What are their needs and challenges? She shared an email exchange that she had with Doug McCutchen that summarized how his program of work was overloaded such that he didn't feel like he had adequate time for active stewardship, especially monitoring. Lincoln mentioned that staff had been added and there have been ongoing questions about going the more expensive route of contracting for specific projects. Bill Watson recommended using work plans as means of assessing workloads and also suggested that the Land Bank put together six-year capital plans for enhancement projects. Barbara Rosenkotter said the Trust was having a similar conversation around the increasing demands on stewardship staff. Peter Guillozet welcomed the opportunity to both discuss acquisition criteria and stewardship challenges.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commission asked that the challenges and needs of stewardship staff be on the agenda for the October retreat and that these struggles be documented in a quarterly report.</li> </ul>	
	<b><u>ACTION:</u> October retreat item: Capture program needs of stewardship staff in quarterly reports. Consider staged 5/10/20 year implementation plans.</b>	
<b>Meeting Adjourned</b> 11:01 am	Chair Christa Campbell adjourned the meeting.	
<b>NEXT MEETING</b>	The next LBC meeting will take place on July 19, 2019, at the Mullis Senior Center on San Juan Island.	