

**Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee
(PRCAC)
Meeting of the Board Members
March 13, 2018
MINUTES**

In Attendance:

Jeff Christopher, Chairperson (representing the Point Roberts Taxpayers Association)

Linda Hughes (at large)

David Gellatly, (representing Point Roberts Chamber of Commerce)

Absent:

Joel Lantz, Chairperson (representing Point Roberts Voters Association)

Keith Glading (at large)

Guests:

Steve Woolf

Scott Hackleman

Dwayne Hunt

Ken Calder

Donna Gillespie

Steve O'Neill

Andrew Grubb

Jeff Hegedus

Mark Robbins

John Wolpers

Bennett Blaustein

Dee Gough

Arthur Reber

Rhiannon Allen

Jane Donaldson

Dave Lee

Janet Atkinson-Grosjean

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Jeff Christopher, who welcomed everyone and said that this meeting is being audio/visual recorded for posting on YouTube as a way to reach more community members who may not be able to attend these meetings, with hopes to help them stay informed and engaged on issues considered by PRCAC.

Chairman Christopher announced that the next regular meeting of PRCAC will be held on April 10th, 2018, at 6:00 pm

Secretary Hughes pointed out that the Agenda for tonight's meeting erroneously itemized Approval of the Minutes of the March 13th Minutes, and the Agenda was revised to change that reference to the February 13th Minutes.

MOTION: David Gellatly moved that the Agenda be approved as revised. Linda Hughes seconded.

MOTION PASSED 3-0

MOTION: David Gellatly moved that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 13th, 2018 be approved as presented. Linda Hughes seconded. **MOTION PASSED 3-0**

Chairman Christopher opened his first meeting as Chairman by thanking fellow PRCAC board members as tireless volunteers, noting specifically his great respect for former Chairman Joel Lantz for all the work he did, and the inordinate amount of criticism he received while volunteering in this position.

Chairman Christopher then shared his perspective of the role of PRCAC and said that he will be offering a list of proposed PRCAC projects, reminding everyone that this committee is designed as a tool for participatory democracy and encourages contribution by all residents of Point Roberts.

Chairman Christopher reviewed the Solid Waste initiative and said that he, along with his group, the Point Roberts Taxpayers Association, are supporters of this initiative, saying that if we do not eliminate the opt-out clause from the regulations, that the service will simply cease to exist; it's just not sustainable. He also feels that the current Vendor, Cando, needs our support in negotiating a better lease rate for the Transfer Station as it is currently intolerably high, due to Whatcom County's mitigation of exposure from a financial burden left from the previous Vendor. Mr. Christopher added that Point Roberts needs additional services such as heavy pick-up, composting and a recycling program and called upon everyone to participate in doing what is right for Point Roberts.

Chairman Christopher then discussed his views on the lack of cell phone service in Point Roberts and reviewed a brief history of carriers and the difficulties faced due to our geographic location, so close to the Canadian border.

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved that PRCAC designate the Chair to take the lead in working with Whatcom EMS and Verizon in disentangling our grossly inadequate and potentially dangerous lack of reliable cell phone service, as a matter of public safety for Point Roberts. Further, that this topic be included on the June agenda, once a sufficient amount of research is completed. David Gellatly seconded. **MOTION PASSED 3-0**

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved PRCAC designate the Chair to take the lead in working with Washington Small Business Development Center and Western Washington University in re-introducing small business development seminars leading to one-on-one assistance with small businesses in Point Roberts. Further, that the new liaison for the SBDC be invited to present their programs to PRCAC for review and feedback. David Gellatly seconded. **MOTION PASSED 3-0**

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved that PRCAC designate the Chair to take the lead in working with appropriate state and federal agencies in ascertaining the eligibility for Point Roberts to obtain Empowerment Zone status under federal law. Further, either the Chair, or ideally an appropriate representative of this program, be scheduled to make a more formal presentation at our June PRCAC meeting.

Chairman Christopher then brought up the topic of potential uses for Transportation Benefit Dollars (TBD), and introduced Scott Hackleman of the Point Roberts Garden Club to make a presentation.

Mr. Hackleman presented an overview of the Garden Club mandate, commitment to, and the history of the landscaping along Tye Road. TBD dollars were used to purchase and plant the trees along the Tye corridor, as a beautification project many years ago. Subsequently the garden mounds were put in, also with the financial resources of the TBD funds. Then the Garden Club became involved in maintaining the beautified corridor, entirely with Garden Club funds raised from their bi-annual Garden Tour, and

volunteer labor. The Garden Club has no intention of abdicating their involvement with maintaining those gardens, but is asking for PRCAC support in requesting funds to be drawn from the TBD funds to hire a professional landscaper for some of the landscaping needs of the corridor.

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved that PRCAC support beautification of the Tyee corridor with the use of TBD funds. David Gellatly seconded.

Discussion: Linda Hughes reiterated her oft-repeated personal point of view that TBD funds should be reserved and continue to grow for the purpose of big transportation projects, such as the widening of Benson Road for safety reasons, or the complete overhaul of the Maple Beach seawall for road protection and beautification of that area. Ms. Hughes stated that many small beautification projects have been identified and suggested in the past, and feels that it is not wise to fritter away the funds in small amounts, potentially disabling the fund from growing to an amount that could be used for the greater good.

Mr. Hackleman responded with his agreement with those statements; that TBD funds should be used for projects such as those suggested by Ms. Hughes, but also pointed out that the amount of financial support that would be required to maintain the corridor will be very small and the overall amount the funds grow by every year will hardly be impacted by this small investment into the community, keeping in mind the great importance to economic viability and overall aesthetics to have the main corridor into Point Roberts well maintained and welcoming.

Arthur Reber indicated that he feels that Whatcom County should be entirely paying for roadway projects in Point Roberts, and the TBD funds should be used in a variety of beautification projects, such as little parklets, landscaped roundabouts in a number of intersections, landscaping for the new library, and a variety of other beautification projects.

After further discussion the Motion on the table was voted on and **PASSED 3-0**.

Old Business

Chairman Christopher then re-introduced Jeff Hegedus and John Wolpers to share the progress made on the Solid Waste Initiative. Messrs. Hegedus and Wolpers handed out a draft Letter to stakeholders and a 3-page FAQ page, envisioned to be mailed to all 2,300 property owners with an operational OSS, as identified by the County.

Discussion ensued regarding the next steps to be taken and consideration of timing. Mr. Hegedus fielded questions about the fee-based system, how other small communities handle their solid waste

issues, comparisons made to systems in Tacoma, Toronto and Whistler, and repeatedly described the economy of scale aspect of all of those comparisons.

It was agreed that the proposed Letter and FAQ was nearly perfect and ready to be sent in mailers to the 2,300 property owner stakeholders, an expense that will be borne by Whatcom County. Jeff Hegedus will email it to Chairman Christopher to share with the PRCAC board, so that we can provide any further beyond what was offered in this meeting. It was proposed that April 14th be scheduled for a Town Hall Meeting to try and reach as many stakeholders as possible, considering that even after a year and a half of newspaper coverage, PRCAC meetings, and public notices of the discussion topic of Solid Waste initiative, there are still some misinformed or uninformed stakeholders that should be given every opportunity possible to hear the facts directly, share their input and have any questions answered.

New Business

Chairman Christopher re-introduced Steve O'Neill, of Blackfish Resort, to provide a progress update on the development of Blackfish Resort.

Mr. O'Neill provided a brief history of the project, and the current status of permitting. He gave an overview of the project, the amenities that will be included, the nature of employment the Resort will provide, and some of the building and landscaping features of the project.

After some discussion of the project and its adherence to the design parameters codified in 20.72, Chairman Christopher announced that he would send PRCAC's comments in support of the permit application to County PDS.

Open Session

No one had any further comment.

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved the meeting be adjourned. Motion was seconded by Linda Hughes.

MOTION PASSED: 3-0