

**Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee**

**(PRCAC)**

**Regular Meeting of the Board Members**

**April 10, 2018**

**MINUTES**

In Attendance:

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

David Gellatly, (representing Point Roberts Chamber of Commerce)

Keith Glading (at large)

Linda Hughes (at large)

Absent:

Joel Lantz, Chairperson (representing Point Roberts Voters Association)

Guests:

Steve Woolf

Kimberly Butts

Ken Calder

Mark Robbins

Allison Calder

Sheriff T. McCarthy

**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 not being audio/visual recorded for posting on YouTube as has been the recent tradition of PRCAC due to the absence of the necessary equipment.

Chairman Christopher announced that the next regular meeting of PRCAC will be held on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at 6:00 pm.

Chairman Christopher noted that there is a sign-up sheet at the front door, which is not mandatory unless you wish to address the board.

**MOTION:** Linda Hughes moved that the Agenda be approved. David Gellatly seconded.  
**MOTION PASSED 4-0**

**MOTION:** David Gellatly moved that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 13th, 2018 be approved as presented. Linda Hughes seconded. **MOTION PASSED 3-0** Keith Glading abstained as he was absent for the March meeting.

Chairman Christopher advised that he and David Gellatly had attended at a Whatcom County Council meeting in the afternoon, where the Health Department was scheduled to provide an update on the Point Roberts Solid Waste Management System. He reported that a couple of Point Roberts residents had also been in attendance for the Council meeting presentation by the Health Department.

Chairman Christopher reported that so far he has received about 20 or 30 emails on this topic, with questions and comments, noting that all input had been constructive. Any questions he felt he could not answer, he forwarded to Jeff Hegedus at the Health Department for response.

Chairman Christopher said that the Solid Waste initiative has been a topic of major importance and attention by PRCAC for some time. He continued by saying that in the 16 months he has served on this Committee, the Solid Waste Initiative had been an agenda item 13 times, and he believes that this initiative has been thoughtfully considered by this Committee throughout this evolving process. He also noted that to date, all votes on this topic have consistently been unanimous with the one exception of abstention by David Gellatly, but reminding everyone that Dee Gough, the President of the Point Roberts Chamber of Commerce, has attended PRCAC meetings to put on record the full support of the Chamber of this initiative. He also reiterated that the Solid Waste Initiative has also been considered and consistently supported by representatives of the Point Roberts Taxpayers Association, and the Point Roberts Voters Association.

Ken Calder spoke to say that the Point Roberts Voters Association is still considering this issue, and Chairman Christopher noted that the Voters Association has consistently voted in favor of this initiative to date and that the only outstanding issue involved the issuance of a written endorsement to County council

Discussion ensued about the general content of the queries that had been received to date, and whether any Committee member should ever respond to informal inquiries that are essentially PRCAC business, and Keith Glading suggested that an amendment to the Bylaws include language that guides Committee members to respond to such inquiries with a standard response, "I think this is a PRCAC issue and, with your permission, will forward your question to the board for consideration and discussion at the next PRCAC meeting."

Chairman Christopher reminded everyone that the Town Hall meeting on this Solid Waste Initiative is scheduled for Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am, noting that Jeff Hegedus and John Wolpers will again be in attendance to provide information and answer questions.

## Old Business

Chairman Christopher presented a TBD funds accrual proposal that he wanted the Committee to consider. Acknowledging differing opinions among PRCAC Committee members about the perception of inefficient spending of TBD funds, Mr. Christopher outlined the following:

Current balance of TBD funds as of fiscal year end 2017: \$984,457

Velocity of accrual (currently): \$18,580 per quarter. (With increasing gas prices secondary to the ongoing pipeline dispute in Canada, Point Roberts is the beneficiary of greater sales, and he believes that current figures could easily increase to \$20,000 - \$21,500 per quarter)

Chairman Christopher spoke with Joe Rutan at Public Works earlier in the day about the various projects that have been previously presented for use of TBD funds, including the widening of Benson Road, the removal of the sea wall at Maple Beach as was recently undertaken in Birch Bay, and a complete pedestrian walk-around at Lighthouse Marine Park. Chairman Christopher asked Mr. Rutan for quotes on the costs of these three large-scale projects.

Chairman Christopher reported that the Maple Beach seawall project might be problematic for a number of reasons. As he explained that when Mr. Rutan made his presentation at the September 2017 PRCAC meeting, he had said it has the potential to be a very costly project and had taken years of planning by the Birch Bay stakeholders. Experience has now revealed that maintenance of the Birch Bay shoreline project is estimated to be another \$50,000 per year to replenish washed away sand. If Point Roberts wants to consider this project, the shoreline study alone will cost \$15,000, which cost would be borne by our TBD fund account. Additionally, the proposed replacement of the seawall will not prevent flooding as some have thought. Chairman Christopher proposes that if this project is to be elevated beyond this point, our Committee would need to take a vote to approve such expenditures.

Mr. Christopher is proposing to the Committee that we consider approving an accrual and utilization program of 80/20, where 80% of the funds accrued are saved for big projects that planning can begin on anytime, and 20% be made available for small and necessary projects. Under this type of plan \$785,565 would continue to earn interest and gain further accrual funds and \$196,891 would become available now for approved small projects. If this program were approved, the per annum expectations would be approximately \$70,000 added to the accrual account and \$18,000 generated to the small projects side of the ledger.

Discussion ensued with input from Committee members and the public in attendance about what types of projects might be considered as worthy of TBD funds.

**MOTION:** Jeff Christopher moved that PRCAC establish an 80/20 accrual fund policy whereby 80% of existing and forecasted TBD income be accrued and tracked for leveraging a large scale project or projects in Point Roberts, and further, that these projects be identified and tracked

whilst the balance of existing and forecasted funds be utilized on smaller-scale projects, each of which to come under the continued scrutiny and recommendation of PRCAC.

Discussion ensued about bringing such a motion to each of the respective boards represented on this Committee.

#### **MOTION TABLED.**

Further discussion ensued about the importance of Committee members vetting ideas and proposals through their respective organizations. Chairman Christopher acknowledges that this topic has already been discussed at great length at the Point Roberts Taxpayers Association meetings, and wants the record to reflect that this tabled Motion was in response to a suggestion proposed by Jennifer Urquhart at a recent Taxpayers meeting.

David Gellatly reported that this topic has also been discussed at Chamber of Commerce meetings, and is in line with the goals and objectives of the Chamber, including the support of using TBD funds on small projects that address safety concerns such as stop signs, lights and rumble strips.

#### **New Business**

David Gellatly reported that he has a meeting scheduled with County Executive Jack Louws and representatives of the Port of Bellingham to discuss economic development in Point Roberts, including the outdated 2001 Subarea Plan and the 1999 Economic Development Plan.

Steve Wolff indicated that he is currently in talks with Whidbey Telecom on behalf of the Point Roberts Taxpayers Association regarding fiber optics and the economic repercussions of having upgraded internet service available in Point Roberts. He offered to be a partner in talks centered on economic development.

Chairman Christopher provided an update on his efforts to obtain Empowerment Zone status for Point Roberts, and the various agencies he has been in touch with to advance discussions. He will be meeting with Chris Green in Olympia on May 31<sup>st</sup> and will provide a further update at the June meeting.

Chairman Christopher provided an update on his efforts to advance upgraded cellular reception and service in Point Roberts. In particular he learned that other border-neighbor communities such as Sumas and Lynden have found resolution to the border-bleed of cell service and will be further investigating if similar resolutions could be implemented in Point Roberts.

Chairman Christopher provided an update on the Small Business Development initiative that PRCAC has agreed should be pursued and resurrected in Point Roberts. In particular he spoke with Ms. Ashe Rider, the new Director of Rural Outreach for Small Business Development at Western Washington University. She has agreed to come to Point Roberts and develop an outreach program with groups and individual businesses.

Chairman Christopher announced that discussion of the “merge and purge” of the former Character Plan was scheduled on tonight’s agenda, but in the absence of Committee member Joel Lantz, that this topic would be deferred to the May meeting.

Chairman Christopher read aloud a letter in support of the use of TBD funds to protect the investment made in the beautification of the Tye corridor that, on behalf of PRCAC, had been forwarded to Whatcom County Councilors and County Executive Jack Louws, as discussed and approved at the PRCAC March meeting. A copy of that letter is attached to these Minutes.

Discussion ensued among Committee members and the public in attendance regarding improvements that have been made at the new Best Time RV location, now at the Tye property of Point Roberts Realty, including tree removal, impervious surfaces, and the possible grandfathering of that property exempting it from certain tree retention and paving restrictions. Another mounting concern is that lighting will be added to the property to protect the RVs parked there, and it is generally agreed that lighting would not at all be in line with the restrictions outlined in title 20.72, in particular certain elements of the former Character Plan. Chairman Christopher will speak with PDS about all of these issues to learn more information, and will advise PDS that PRCAC, and Point Roberts residents, have long felt that this type of permit application should have triggered a notification to PRCAC for consideration.

Further discussion ensued about the lack of enforcement on some CVR issues and the aggressive enforcement of others, seemingly targeted and unfair.

### **Open Session**

Ken Calder provided a handout which he had earlier given to County Council members with regard to the Solid Waste Initiative. He said that some recipients of the letter from PRCAC were confused and surprised by the Town Hall Meeting, when some felt the language of the letter seemed to imply that mandated curbside collection was a done deal.

Mr. Calder opposes the mandatory curbside collection and feels that the proposed level of service is higher than required, by his family and others.

Further discussion ensued about the laws already in place and the need to remove the exemption from participation in mandatory curbside collection in Point Roberts. There are approximately 300 customers signed up for curbside collection service, 590 households on the books as having been granted exemption, and 2,300 households that have an operating septic system and a house on the property tax parcel. This discrepancy between the number of homes to participants in curbside collection is at the very heart of the lack of economy of scale that the Health Department wants corrected.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**MOTION:** Jeff Christopher moved the meeting be adjourned. Motion was seconded by Linda Hughes. **MOTION PASSED: 3-0**