

Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee

(PRCAC)

Regular Meeting of the Board Members

August 14th, 2018

MINUTES

In Attendance:

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

Joel Lantz, Chairperson (representing Point Roberts Voters Association)

David Gellatly, (representing Point Roberts Chamber of Commerce)

Keith Glading (at large)

Linda Hughes (at large)

Guests:

Louise Cassidy

Mark Robbins

Heidi Baxter

Alison Calder

Bill Meursing

Samantha Scholefield

Ramona Blaustein

Annette Loewen

Bennett Blaustein

Ken Calder

Steve O'Neill

Steven Faulk

Barbara Bradstock

Pat Grubb

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Chairman Jeff Christopher, who welcomed everyone and said that this meeting is being audio/visual recorded for posting on YouTube as has become the recent tradition of PRCAC, as a method of engaging more of the community who may not be able to attend in person. This is not obligatory but is done as a courtesy.

Chairman Christopher usually advises that this meeting is held under the auspices of regulation 42.30 of the Washington State Public Meetings act. Further, it is common he that mentions we do our best to follow Roberts Rules of Order, as we are compelled to do so under the Act. Additionally, this is consistent with our by-laws, and usually points out that the videos and meeting minutes can be found at the PRCAC page of the Whatcom County website at <http://www.whatcomcounty.us/563/Point-Roberts-Community-Advisory-Committee> This introduction was missed at this meeting, but reiterated in these Minutes for informational purposes.

The next regular meeting of PRCAC will be held on September 11th, 2018, at 6:00 pm.

Chairman Christopher announced that health issues may prevent him from attending a few meetings in the coming months, just so everyone is aware of the real reason for his planned absences.

MOTION: Keith Glading moved that the Agenda be approved. Linda Hughes seconded.
MOTION PASSED 4-0 David Gellatly not yet in attendance, delayed by traffic at border.

Linda Hughes announced an error in forwarding the incorrect Minutes by email and advised that the corrected July 11 Minutes would be forwarded to all members for email approval, as has become the practice of PRCAC in recent months.

As had been suggested in a previous PRCAC meeting, Open Session will be moved to the beginning of this meeting, to see if it suits the needs of the participants any better.

Open Session

Ken Calder took the podium to continue discussion of his opposition to the current mandated curbside collection, saying that this board “didn’t look into a lot of options” and continued presenting his opinion that it is not good for Point Roberts.

Samantha Scholefield took the podium to present the current results of the new Garbage survey that has been created by local individuals and advertised locally with sign boards and the usual email notification services. So far, 509 respondents have completed the survey. Each item and the ongoing results to date was reviewed, and a copy of those survey results will be attached to these Minutes for accessibility and accuracy.

A number of members of the audience then proposed their questions directly to Samantha, from what perceived benefits from changing the current mandate were envisioned, to other garbage collection options, and recycling, including comments and questions from Mark Robbins, Heidi Baxter, Louise Cassidy (who brought two garbage cans to display), Barb Bradstock and Ramona Blaustein. In particular, Samantha confirmed that recycling is now mandated, as Point Roberts once had an exemption, but the newly revised ordinance removed that exemption and now Point Roberts is also required to participate in curbside collected recycling, similar to the rest of Whatcom County.

In Samantha’s closing statement she stated that if PRCAC would support a change to the ordinance to reduce the number of cans identified in basic service to 12 per year, that she would volunteer to do as many seminars on recycling as might be needed.

Alison Calder also noted that the Department of Ecology offers training seminars on recycling.

Chairman Christopher thanked Samantha for her presentation, saying that this community is better with her than without her.

Ken Calder commented that he wanted County Council to open their eyes to the level of over service this new ordinance is, and he wants support from local organizations in bringing that message to them.

Chairman Christopher responded that he has already met with County Executive Louws and reported that there is no appetite to change the ordinance at this stage. He is aware of the

outpouring of opposition and feels there is a need to analyze the adequacy of service after it has commenced.

Chairman Christopher also noted that Ken's and Samantha's requests for support from the local organizations needs to be brought forward to them, and encourages everyone to continue to voice their opinions to our local organizations and directly to County Council, noting that PRCAC is an advisory board, but that does not preclude participation by individuals at Council meetings.

Joel Lantz must leave the meeting early for a work conference call but wanted to reiterate his email offer that his business, Point Septic LLC, will donate as a service to this community, the funds necessary to hire a transcriber for PRCAC meetings. Joel and Linda will work together to develop a job description, post advertisements for this position, and hopefully have a hired transcriber in place by the September meeting.

Old Business

David Gellatly discussed the current Health Care situation in Point Roberts, with the withdrawal of Unity Care as the service provider from our local Clinic. This news impacts everyone, but especially the elderly and others who are dependent upon the Clinic. David praised Ed Aydon and all the work done to promote, build and support this clinic. He encourages everyone to attend local Hospital District meetings to make their views known.

Stephen Falk, a member of the Hospital District board, said that all support will be good, and Barbara Bradstock echoed that sentiment, adding that people should be using the Clinic now to show support and keep the number of visits at a sustainable level.

Chairman Christopher revisited the idea proposed at the July meeting that PRCAC change its standard meeting night to avoid conflict with the scheduled Whatcom County Council meetings, also held on Tuesday nights, in Bellingham.

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved that PRCAC meetings be moved to the second Thursday of every month, to commence at 6:00 pm. Keith Glading seconded. **MOTION PASSED 4-0**

Chairman Christopher announced that Brian Walker could not be here tonight as planned, and reiterated his Motion from the July meeting for PRCAC to support the 80/20 accrual/spending concept for the TBD funds. Unanimous support from this Committee was also reiterated.

David Gellatly reported that Public Works is currently doing some tree trimming and preparation for roadway chip-sealing in Point Roberts.

As Jeff Christopher attempted to update us on his conversation with Jeff Hegedus at Public Health, the conversation somehow devolved back into public input on the garbage topic. The point Mr. Christopher was trying to convey was that Jeff Hegedus mentioned that a voucher

program for garbage could potentially be made available to elders, those with disabilities, or others with a demonstrated financial need.

Chairman Christopher then moved the topic along to the idea discussed at a previous meeting of somehow holding local public elections for the PRCAC At Large position. He reported having spoken to County Executive Jack Louws about this, and was told that PRCAC could go ahead and try to make it happen, however regulations of the Committee state that the County Executive will retain the final "appointment" and therefore "veto" power of any newly elected At Large members and alternatives.

Discussion ensued around the room about how that veto power negates the will of the electorate, but ultimately it was agreed that veto power will likely not be used when the vote clearly demonstrates the preferred candidate by residents/citizens of Point Roberts.

Further discussion ensued about how to adopt the election concept.

MOTION: Jeff Christopher moved to adopt the Election concept, and to develop the At Large member and Alternate candidate election process. Keith Glading seconded the Motion.

Discussion continued about how we could manage to have this in place by this November, as Keith's At Large position expires in January of 2019.

David Gellatly wanted to know who would be eligible to vote? Jeff Christopher replied that Executive Louws did not discuss the answer to that question, but was very clear that the elected At Large position (and their alternates) could only be filled by US citizens.

After more discussion on this topic, Jeff Christopher said that he will get more information on this for the Committee to consider at the September meeting.

MOTION PASSED 4-0

Chairman Christopher reported that he looked into topic initiated by David Gellatly at the July PRCAC meeting, and learned that the sliver of sales tax generated by parcel pickups is tracked by zip code and reimbursed by the State to the zip code of tax origin. Currently all of that tax revenue being generated by Point Roberts parcel pickup businesses is being reimbursed by the State on behalf of all unincorporated areas of Whatcom County, to the Whatcom County General Fund. Jeff Christopher will take PRCAC's request to have Point Roberts share of those funds separated from the County's general fund to Olympia. Additionally, he noted, it will become necessary to identify a new destination for those funds.

Discussion ensued about possibilities for managing those funds, as is done with GO bonds and other revenue separation methods, managed by the County Treasurer.

Chairman Christopher updated us on his discussion with County Executive Louws on the local dock situation at Lighthouse Marine Park. Executive Louws reported that he instructed the dock be repaired and reinstalled at the same location one more time.

David Gellatly reported that the Port Of Bellingham had long ago paid for an Economic Development Plan for Point Roberts, which had resulted in the establishment of a Special District for the purposes of building a new dock at the end of Gulf Road.

Alison Calder interjected that the problem with that dock proposal was ecological, saying the length of a dock is limited by code, although can be lengthened with a variance, but even with a variance, the length of the dock would be calculated to originate from the end of Gulf Road and therefore would end up being a dock to nowhere at low tide in that location.

Further discussion ensued about dock location alternatives and the desired installation of an ocean designed dock at Lighthouse Marine Park, as the repeated failure of the lake designed dock is ample evidence that the design is not suitable for the location.

Chairman Christoher asked Keith Glading for an update on the PRCAC bylaws and whether separate ad hoc committees were identifiable and allowable.

Keith Glading reported that there are essentially two types of sub-committees allowed under the direction of PRCAC, a standing committee and an ad-hoc committee. Currently the PRCAC by-laws contain no rules about committee composition, but does require that notes and minutes of meetings of any such committee must be kept, and reported to PRCAC.

Chairman Christopher reported that Asche Rider from Western Washington Small Business Development will be in attendance at our meeting next month, and has also offered to be available for 1 on 1 meetings with small businesses in Point Roberts, which must be separately scheduled. He encouraged all small business operators in Point Roberts to attend this very informative meeting to get to know Asche Rider, and learn of the various services than can be available in support of small business.

Chairman Christopher reported that the approved use of TBD funds for the Garden Club beautification and maintenance of the Tyee Road corridor, will not be required to go out to bid, and Garden Club President Scott Hackleman is working directly with Public Works to identify and hire a local service provider. This is good news as it entails less red tape than a bid process, and can potentially reduce the time required to get a service provider in place.

New Business

Local businessman Steve O'Neill was in attendance to present the progress made on Blackfish Resort, a 26-room luxury resort destination on the oceanfront in Point Roberts, at the site of the old "Cannery" on Marine Drive. Mr. O'Neill has been working on this project for nearly 15 years, and it is very dear to his heart. He has already presented building designs and landscaping plans to PRCAC to consider for the purpose of advising the County of whether the designs are in compliance with the Guidelines of 20.72 – the former Character Plan. PRCAC has previously supported Blackfish designs as being in compliance.

Mr. O'Neill reported that the building permit process is near completion and he believes will be issued very soon. Once issued, he intends to begin the renovation and new building almost immediately. The plans include 26 rooms of luxury accommodation, two restaurants (fine dining and bistro style), a micro-brewery and micro-distillery, a spa, and other ancillary services to be made available to the public on a year-round basis.

Attendees of the meeting interjected a number of questions for Mr. O'Neill about the project; how he intended to staff it, etc., but his presentation was kept contained to the design and building permit status as he intended to give to PRCAC in hopes of the Committee's continued support of the process. He indicated that Nick Smith of PDS would like to know if PRCAC continues to support the project.

Chairman Christopher thanked Mr. O'Neill for his presentation and status update, and all sitting members of the Committee expressed continued support for the Blackfish development project.

Chairman Christopher then mentioned a document provided to him by Planning and Development Services, which is a list of Code Violation Reports received and actions taken on each.

Discussion ensued on whether there was any usefulness to this Committee, or the public, in making that document public. There are still a number of known offenders in Point Roberts and it appears some are being held to different standards, especially business vs. individuals. After continued discussion, Keith Glading, David Gellatly, and Linda Hughes agreed that it is not this Committee's place to disclose the information contained in the report given to Jeff Christopher.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.