

Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee

February 18 2021 Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 6:01

Members Attending:

Allison Calder — PRRVA

Annelle Norman — PRTA (acting as Secretary for this meeting)

Grant Heitman— At-Large

Kat Smith—At Large

Tamra Hansen— CoC

Agenda amended to include the following:

Meeting time change to 7pm

No anonymous comments either video or chat

Board members on camera when speaking—Tamra commented that she is not able to due to technical difficulty

Motion to approve change to agenda:Annelle. Second: Kat

Minutes will be done, amended and approved via email and posted on County website

Public comment: None

Old Business:

Update on selection of at-large board members Kat Smith and Grant Heitman given “official” approval by County Executive. (thanks to Steven and Allison for pushing through the paperwork to ensure that this happened in time for this meeting.

Election/Selection of Officers:

Nominations

- Chairperson Grant nominated Allison Second Kat. Allison accepted.
- Vice Chair—Kat volunteered for one year
- Secy—Grant volunteered

Visioning/Planning/Subarea Plan/ Grant suggested tabling until after addressing Exec. Proposal for re-organizing PRCAC. All agreed. Tamra mentioned that she has some of David’s old notes. Tabled for now.

New Business

Town Hall Meeting Insert list of topics with tallies of comments

- 13 - PRCAC should NOT be put on hiatus.
- 12 - PRCAC has little visibility and function is poorly understood — need better outreach, info. packet, surveys...
- Need a renewal of faith in PRCAC and County processes. Impression that not being heard.
- 12 - Number of PRCAC members: Six people noted that Seven (7) members is an improvement over five (5) as a larger committee gives more weight to “at large” views rather than economically-driven interest groups; *3 additional respondents felt existing number (5 members) was okay if all were VOTED in by groups/public.
- 4 - Canadians need more representation (noted “PRCAC is 80+% American views and community is 75% seasonal Canadians”). Suggest also summer and weekend meetings to draw seasonal population into PRCAC.
- 6 - Whatcom County should be “more collaborative and less top-down” and less dismissive; “respect legitimacy of community choices made by democratic election;” County has a “unanimity problem;” (requests for consensus) may not be realistic given no PRCAC budget, no polls and no County boots on the ground.
- 6 - Business & Commerce need help and quickly. Incorporate or be allowed to act as though incorporated(?)
- 4 - Community/PRCAC need to be advised of upcoming County issues and financial records relating to P.R. projects/budget items; PRCAC members should attend County Council Mtgs, get training in County processes.
- 3 - Increase PRCAC’s role s/a review authority at local level and provide public portal to view P.R. financials. Allison has accounting for amounts of taxes cumulatively paid for the last 6 years to County and State and where money goes but not information about what monies come back to PR.
- 5 - Pronounced concern for maintaining natural resource health, wildlife abundance, rural character, tree canopy cover and include these in planning, zoning and sub-area 20.72 plans and reviews.
- 3 - If PRCAC is the 1st stop for communicating with County, then provide staff, hire a planner, allow referrals and do not subvert the "chain of communication" by talking with individuals but rather refer them back to PRCAC.

- 3 - Border Issues — can the County help us? Concern for keeping services: clinic, grocery, car repair, stores...
- 2 - Maple Beach/Storm water issues — Where is money for much needed road and seawall reconstructions? FEMA money? Flood district?
- 2 - Transportation Benefits District (TBD) funds — full accounting please and explanation of justifications for use. Allison has all the accounting for the funds and its disbursements to date although County has not disclosed where monies went to.
- 2 - Temporary Ferry service — consider more capable vessel and scheduling of runs to permit more usage.
- 2 - Can County work with P.R. to better protect eagles and other wildlife as no Fed or State enforcement here?
- 1 - Post pandemic waste issues - Can County help with “bulky garbage” buildup when Canadians are allowed to return and repair homes?
- 1 - What can be done about the shortage of septic fields due to wetlands? Other options?
- 1 - All PRCAC members should attend all County Council meetings
- 1- OK if PRCAC is suspended

Allison’s synopsis. Appears that the majority of the community does not want a hiatus of the PRCAC, instead our concerns need to focus on more community engagement while still serving the needs of the community.

Discussion by members ensued with each expressing their thoughts about the role of PRCAC vis a vis the community and the County.

Need to clarify the role of PRCAC to citizenry

Clarify lines of communication between community/PRCAC and the County

Effects of Covid and border closure—Tamra stated that the Chamber of Commerce’s full focus is on bringing media attention to the severe economic impact. We should take Mr. Elenbaas up on his statement that he will pursue his

We need to do what is best for PR. We should be pro-active. We need to advocate for ourselves, identify the problems and then take the solution to the County. This is what we are doing, this is what we want and need.

We should self-organize, set up committees, have a point person identified and be the solution.

Anything we put out on the internet should be “neutral” under our own and consolidate and ensure accuracy of information. In the absence of a physical “Town Hall” establish a “one stop shop” sort of website with information, links, news, reports, etc. Grant views his position as Secretary as including this task. (Allison noted that PRIBC has offered a fully paid for website.) This gives up more visibility and credibility.

Is Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee the correct name to convey to community what it is that we do?

Restructuring and facilitate communication.

Discussion on Community Information re PRCAC. How do we let the community know who we are, why does it exist, what is the role of the committee? We need to clarify. Discussion of changing the name in order to communicate on behalf of the community with the county. Suggestion: Point Roberts County Advisory Committee: Our community’s voice with Whatcom County. Tamra offered the use of Cando’s emailing list to all property owners. We would need to request a code amendment through the County. “Citizen Advisory” is actually more accurate. Perhaps create a poll or survey to seek community input regarding what we are called. **Start by creating a one page informational pamphlet.**

Change meeting time from 6pm to 7pm. Discussion of pros and cons. Motion made and approved. 4/1 with Tamra opposed.

Announcement confirming Robert’s Rules of Order requirement that all attendees are identified with full name.

Grant offered to write a response to the Executive with email reviews amongst members for comments sent individually. No chain email as this is a violation of the OPMA.

Motion to adjourn.

John Lesow: Questions the wisdom of the foot ferry. He registers his objection. Suggests a “bonded bus”. Contact Rep Doug Erikson at 360 786 7682 **We will put this question to the community.**

The Agenda and the Zoom link are posted 7 days in advance with a reminders on social media.

