

VASHON PARK DISTRICT (VPD) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

Teleconference, 7:00 pm
DATE: Tuesday, February 23, 2021

Commissioners attending: Hans Van Dusen, Bob McMahon, Doug Ostrom, Abby Antonelis, Karen Gardner
 Staff attending: Elaine Ott-Rocheford

ISSUE	DISCUSSION AND OUTCOME	FOLLOW UP
Call To Order – Review Agenda	Hans called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.	
Public Comment	None	
Board Candidate Interviews	<p>Hans: We will not follow the agenda format. We will do this as a panel. It substantively does not change the format, so no vote is needed. First of all, thank you for your interest! The process will be that we will go through each question, then at the end, you will have the opportunity to ask questions or add anything additional. I will let you know the order to answer each question. We hope to make a decision in the next two weeks. Karen will leave end of this month. One of you will be sworn in and serve probably our second meeting in March through the end of the year. We will have three seats up for election in November. There are lots of opportunities to join us in the future. Elaine will reach out to you after we make a decision.</p> <p>Doug: If you choose to run for the election in November, the deadline for applying is April.</p> <p>Abby: I think it's mid May.</p> <p>Hans: Each commissioner will read one of the questions. I picked a random order for who answers when. The first question: Please introduce yourself and share why you want to be on the Board.</p> <p>Josh: One of my favorite things about living on this island is our parks. We have something for everyone. I am a parks and public lands nerd. I think every human needs fresh air, recreation, and to reconnect with nature. Parks provide a critical service to us all. One of the things that has kept me sane during this pandemic is to get out and walk in the parks. That is a universal thing for a lot of folks, to get out from the chaos of the world. I want to serve my community – my resume reflects that community service that has been part of my life. I'm not somebody who saw the BC ad and thought, hey, I think I'll get involved with something! I saw the ad, and it felt like kismet. My husband and I had just been discussing finding a way to get involved. We are in parks all the time, so it seemed like a natural fit.</p> <p>Sarah: I was born and raised on the island. I left to go to college, then came back. The parks are precious to islanders. A lot of people know them from before they were parks. They are important areas and great places. We are fortunate to have as many places, activities, and programs that we do. Particularly given what happened in voting in the hospital district, it struck me that, while I have enjoyed the parks for a long time, it's time for me to help move</p>	

parks forward for future generations.

Jake: I saw the announcement and thought the community needs me. I was a commissioner before for eight years in the 90s I believe. I can hit the ground running to help. Besides the service attitude, I was here when we put together a lot of things. I worked with Gary Locke to get all the KC properties into VPD. We created stewardship programs and wetlands and joined alliances with the Land Trust. I would like to see that through – see how it is doing. I have a lot of professional skills working for the County. I have been on other boards on the island and always made a mark in increasing public participation. I have been here 45 years. I am always willing to go the distance for my neighbors.

Jonathan: You will have a difficult decision! My interest is simple – I want to support the mission of the Park District and do what I can to help navigate these times on behalf of all the residents of Vashon. Parks and Rec has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. It continues to enrich my life and family members nearly every day. I grew up in North Seattle. I came to Vashon by choice. Through swimming, little league baseball, community center basketball, cross country, and numerous other sports and activities, I benefited from P&R facilities on a daily basis. I want to make sure they are available to all members of the community. I am new to the island. I just moved here with my wife and 2 children – 1 year old and 5 year old. After having spent 17 years in central LA, I am aware of how blessed the people of this island are to have such an abundance of well managed spaces for leisure and recreation, the opportunities for community building. It played a role in our family’s decision to move here. I want to make sure my kids have fields to play in, pools to swim in, and beaches to explore for years to come.

Karen: **What do you bring that would contribute to the board and its functions?**

Jonathan: I want to make clear I understand the existential threat to the Park District due to pro-rationing. I also support the health district. Sea Mar is a great resource for the community. I would first devote my energy toward helping you all resolve this issue. I’m a producer/director of films and TV. In doing that, I wear a lot of hats. I have to be creative and pragmatic in my work. While I get to call the shots about how the camera gets set up and making changes to the script, I also have to consider how that will impact the budget and schedule and what I agreed to with the client and various stakeholders. I bring critical thinking skills to this role. I read the board minutes from January, 2020 to present, reviewed the budget, and the strategic plan. I am interested and picking up where Karen leaves off and help move through this. As a story teller, I get the effectiveness of messaging and communication. My expertise in that area can compliment your strengths. One example is before the pandemic, I was hired by the Epilepsy Foundation to accompany their teen program to Washington DC and create a PSA about the value of advocacy and engagement. I followed a team through the US Capital and visited congressional offices as they told their stories and advocated for additional funding for epilepsy research. I got to see firsthand how it works and how effective a well crafted message can be. They got the funding they requested, and the video is being used to inspire their teens to do the same. When I read about Elaine’s efforts and all of your efforts with the support of Rep Fitzgibbon, it is inspiring, but it is important to not let up on the gas until HB 1034 is a done deal. I would like to work on ways to better engage the community, raise the Park District’s profile, and help prepare the things to open back up.

Jake: I manage a \$9 million budget for the transit facilities division of Metro Transit. In my 35 years, I have been in many positions: road construction, road maintenance, traffic engineering, environmental. All those things bring skills and knowledge toward making wise decisions. I have human resource experience and zoning laws, RCWs, and I was

an equity and social justice manager for a 500 people department. I bring that experience. I was an environmental supervisor when the Chinook salmon became a threatened species; we had to change the way we did maintenance. I have gotten a lot of grants: \$35k for Village Green from Ron Sims; \$13k for another part of it. I wrote a grant for Agren Field, the boathouse, and the Pt Robinson Lighthouse. I have the political connectivity to lean on to make things happen. Things aren't black and white management skills – and getting along with people. I have crews that do landscaping. All my experience is in the things that the Park District does. Negotiate contracts, like with the school district for the Burton Elementary field and the contract for when we got VES. I have broad based experience. I am on the board for the Coalition of Minority Transportation Officials. I have been on the School Board and the Community Council president. I have the experience in governance works. That is what I bring to the table for the Parks Board.

Sarah: I would like to think I have great enthusiasm and energy for the things I invest in, and this is something I am passionate about. I'm a detail oriented person as a designer, and designer thinking means a good problem solver, jumping to solutions. I am happy to see all the candidates have amazing skills in many aspects of life. It is important to me that we move forward in a way that the parks benefit the best. Things I can bring: problem solving capabilities; the connectivity to the community is important; having a keen understanding of Vashon as it has been, as it is, and how it will be; knowing a lot of different people and Vashon's culture to help make sure that what the Park District is creating in surfaces and spaces is something our community can benefit from and thrive in. My ability to connect with others and find ways to find out what they would like to have happen would make me an advantage to the team. I'm also a good listener; I like to learn. To figure out how to best serve what you guys need comes from understanding better what you're looking for.

Josh: Before I start, I have a snoring English bulldog behind me, so it's not me that is making that rattling noise. If selected, I bring over 10 years of conflict resolution experience, day in and day out, helping folks navigate making difficult decisions. I bring significant classroom experience and training, pedagogy, and adult learning theory. I can help people understand and see alternative positions and underlying interests. My skill set as both a mediator and instructor would serve the Board and its mission well. I have experience serving on the boards of nonprofit organizations; have put together budgets; have interviewed and hired an executive director; negotiated commercial lease agreements; and taken a plethora of meeting minutes over the years, so if you ever want me to do that, I will turn into a stenographer. All this is to say that while serving on the Parks Board would be a wonderful opportunity, I also recognize that there is a lot of business to this type of work, and it's something I have experience with, would lean into and not avoid. I try to be a decent human being. I bring energy and new perspective and a sense of humor. I think you should never leave home without it.

Doug: **Have you been following the issue of "pro-rationing" relative to the Vashon Park District budget? If so, what are your thoughts on the way forward for the Vashon Park District?**

Sarah: I am aware of it. For moving forward, there is a big question of what can one do. There are already ways the Board is headed down, certainly on the legislative state level, and also I'm not sure what can be done working with the Fire District and other groups who are ahead of the Park District in their funding. Because we are an island community that has a lot of ownership of our parks, we can ask our community for help in solving the problem and understanding the consequences. Ask them to help us problem solve. There is a responsibility the Park District has to

inform the community, so they can ask themselves what is worth it to them and how they can help find a solution. In the past, the Park District has managed some difficult situations. I have to think there are creative ways we can move forward. It is a complex issue, but it is solvable. It just may not be entirely pleasant for a bit.

Joshua: I have a basic understanding of the issue. I'm sure there is a lot I don't understand, and I know I would need to hit the books and get up to speed with the rest of you to have a meaningful impact on what I see to be a pretty big budget shortfall in the future. Our parks are critical, and it takes people to operate and maintain them. Outside of a pretty big change to state law at a time when legislators are tackling their own budget shortfalls, we're going to need to find a balanced way to reduce costs while maintaining facilities and staffing. If there are creative ways to raise capital, they are worth exploring, but I imagine there will be cuts made to programming and capital projects until the income pulls through.

Jonathan: I have caught up on the situation. I applaud your efforts to find a legislative solution. I read HB 1034. The analysis was helpful in understanding the levy system and its limits, which is extremely complicated. I watched the committee meetings. I was impressed with how cordial everyone was. The best way forward is on this path. I'm glad you are considering the alternatives, like engaging with the other districts. I am curious to know more about the challenges you see around an excess levy, and why that seems to be the last resort. Also a buy down with the county. The steps you are taking right now is in the right direction. It seems like Senator Nguyen is important to engage, to make sure he is supportive once it moves to the senate.

Jake: Pro-rationing is where the junior taxing district has a cap on what they can levy per thousand. We faced this or we feared this years ago. There is a legislative fix to lobby for. They can write things in that doesn't affect the rest of the state, like throwing in island communities. I also know when we received the KC properties, they also promised not to caste us loose – that they would provide support. An excess levy might work out, too. Last, while it would be a tough fight, since no one wants to give up their levy dollars, talking with the other taxing agencies on the island, of whom I am familiar with a lot of people on their boards, we might get them to come down a little bit on their levy rate. I am a certified mediator. A lot of times when you start talking to people, especially when they are your neighbors, show them the reason, they might be compassionate back. It's a problem now, and it may be ongoing, so we need to combine all the junior taxing districts together and have a forum on that – community invited, and lay out the issues to work it out.

Abby: **What is the best way for the board to ensure that the interests of all islanders are being properly served by the Vashon Park District?**

Jake: At work, we have COVID now, so we're not gathering together. There is a loss of community there, yet I still need to manage these 65 people there. And there are others I don't directly manage. How we address employees is similar to this community. We have a town hall on Zoom where we communicate and have that sense of family, acting on their concerns. If we can't, we explain to them why. That can be the same with the Park District. I know you have meetings that are not very well attended. But maybe on a Saturday afternoon, we have a Zoom meeting where the community is invited, where the community speaks their piece and the commissioners listen to what they're hearing.

Jonathan: I appreciate the revisions that were made to the mission to include issues of diversity and inclusion in response to the Black Lives Matters issues. It is good to think critically about these issues and to be constantly proactive in addressing them. I don't know if a committee was formed, but it seems to have taken a back burner. It needs to be constantly considered, because our work is far from being done. I'm looking at a lot of white faces right now. If there was somebody from an unrepresented community applying for this seat, I was ready to not pursue it any further. I think the Board can only represent the interests of all islanders when all islanders are represented on the board. It is my hope that this District makes a concerted effort in the next election cycle to engage other members of the communities and encourage them to run for these seats. I have a kindergartner at Chautauqua, and I have been impressed by the bi-lingual performance of the school district. All communications are in English and Spanish; the website can be translated into 105 languages through a translate button on the page. I think moving in that direction is a good place to start. What are meaningful, tangible steps we can take right now? Those kinds of things seem simple and not too expensive during this fiscally challenging time. The work this Board is doing – and Elaine – in terms of pursuing the RFA program and trying to fund that in a way that is legal and not problematic with the auditors is great. I'm wondering if that issue is resolved yet. Also, in terms of engaging members of the community who might oppose what we trying to do, moving into the 50 cent gap and the ramifications there on raising taxes and impacting lower income households, it is our responsibility to engage those folks and tackle those issues head on. As difficult as it might be. It's the right thing to do.

Joshua: Outreach is really important – staying connected with your neighbors, encouraging participation, listening to people and their ideas and what parks can and should be is a great way to first assess what you're doing, and seeing how it is met with the general public. Also, being mindful of how diverse our community is – that we're all unique and have our own challenges and gifts. Being mindful of that diversity when it's time to make decisions that will affect the District's parks is an important aspect of the decision making process. Outreach is important to ensure our goals are aligned with the community's goals. Engaging them in whatever way is possible. Many people have seen the show "Parks and Rec" – park meetings are not highly attended. But if you can hook them with something that is important to them, you can get them to engage. Finding that thing is important. Using social media to penetrate these people's attention. I know these are not new ground-breaking ideas, but they are things the Board can do.

Sarah: Well said on everyone's parts. Being able to address the interests of islanders – the issue a lot of groups face, committees, boards, often people who speak up are either people who complain or it's the same group again and again. Especially when it comes to the diversity of areas the park district is managing, a lot of places have passive use. We probably don't know entirely who is using our parks and what they are doing there. Community outreach is a push-pull dynamic to finding out what it is that people expect and desire of their parks. Should you pull the parks away from anyone, if there's somebody in a neighborhood park they walk their dog in, if they were to understand some of the impacts of the levy, if they were to lose that, there would be some very strong opinions about what people would like to see happen and what they can do to be part of a solution. It's important for the direct impact to be communicated to the community about what the struggles. Transparency is really important. Finding ways to engage the community – pull to get the information from the community. We have people who visit the island – how do you make them comfortable and enjoy our parks – make it something they are drawn to. How do we continue to grow and adjust to different people's needs and abilities, cultural desires? I like Jonathan's idea about signage in different languages. Finding ways to engage with the community – social media isn't the only way to do that – but if

there are ways people can understand there is an impact that is happening to the spaces around them – and they can see how they can inform some of that and give their opinions. Maybe through signage that explains what is going to be impacted and what they can do about it.

Bob: In what ways does the Vashon Park District need to improve? What is the district doing well right now?

Joshua: I was really hoping I wouldn't be the first on this one. This, for me, was the most difficult question. That's because all the ideas on ways to improve are big ticket items that I know we don't have the money for. There are smaller improvements that can be made, like stream lining practices, finding efficient ways to deliver services, fundraising, a park sponsorship program, allowing interested individuals to sponsor a park program or facility improvements through direct giving. It would be worthwhile to hear what some of your ideas are. I want to transition to what the Park District is doing well. At the start, I began by saying the parks are open, and they are providing a critical service that is an outlet to people. It provides islanders and visitors alike an opportunity to take a break from the world's crises right now, to recreate in a healthy way when it's literally dangerous to being around other people. It's less dangerous and more safe to put on a mask and go to a park. That's something the parks are doing well – providing to people. If there is somehow a way to capitalize on that.

Sarah: We need better communication with the community – community outreach is one of those things. Other simple ways to solve things is looking at security – get some cameras. It is devastating to see Agren Park torn apart, despite having insurance – the damages done are costly. Finding ways to protect the spaces we have. We have to look at safety in our parks – not necessarily just the infrastructure, but making sure people feel safe. As a woman alone in a park, do you feel comfortable being there? As well as understanding what you can and can't use and what you can do in different places. Parks has done a good job of coming back from the Vashon fields and what became a negative outlook in the community trying to understand what happened then. There has been vast improvement since that time. It's amazing how many programs, locations, and opportunities parks offer. There are not a ton of things for young people to do on the island. Having grown up here, I laugh when I hear that. No matter where you are a young person, there is nothing to do. Here, there is so much variety in what the Park District offers. Ways to improve, I don't know how many people on the island know they can rent spaces or to use the school district spaces. There will be changing needs as people go back to work. People will need spaces they can exercise, they feel safe exercising. Being able to continue to address the needs of our community – security is important.

Jake: I echo what Sarah said about the marketing – people don't know what is available to them. People don't know they can use the Vashon Commons space for meetings and activities. Just like on the highways, people can put a sign up thanking the public for their \$5 million project through the Dept of Transportation. It lets people know where it came from, but also to lend a voice in the future when they see another project happening. That gets more people involved, so we can hear them better. Another thing is to search for entrepreneurial opportunities where we can generate some revenue. Something compatible with our mission. The Park District used to just be the parks. We wrote the comprehensive plan 30 years ago, and we included the parks and environment, which gave us a lot more leeway to be involved with the Land Trust and their environmental endeavors. People used to ask me if we had a mayor, and I said no, but we have the Park District. If it's a physical thing, it's a park. If it's an activity, it's recreation. We had jurisdiction over everything – you just have to look at it in that vein. I got some grants in that vein. If you read the rules of the grant, they would say you're a park district, and I would say no, we have programming. One

thing we can do better on is diversity and inclusion. When I was on the school board, I pushed that start for addressing our ever-growing latinesque community. You could see the handwriting on the wall. I'm glad that has blossomed to include all diverse people. When I was on the Community Council, I created a diversity committee, where people could express their sexual orientation or whatever their needs were that might not have been addressed in the community. What we're doing well in, when I was in West Seattle at little league I asked how many kids they think they get. They said about 10%. On Vashon it's 60%. We provide a great resource, and we have increased the fields over the years. To give these kids direction, and it influences the school board decisions about what they do with sports – it comes from the Park District. I have utilized those programs for basketball. We have an off island team, and we practice on the island all the time. As long as they provide insurance, we provide the facility. And baseball, they use the sport fields and the Nike site, we had to get that from the Dept of Health and Welfare to grant that to the Park District. They were granted to Sunrise Ridge, and we were part of that. There are a lot of things we are doing well, and people don't know about it. Find a way to advertise and market that. The Park District is great.

Jonathan: I'm going to answer this in reverse. The District is making the best out of an extremely challenging situation. It's clear every member of the Board, and Elaine and the staff, have the best interest of the parks. And when I say parks, I really mean the community at heart. I really respect the steps you are taking to shore up the district, balancing responsibility to the taxpayers with fairness to all those employed by the district. It's very humane. I applaud the consideration that has gone into decisions along the way. One area to improve is with messaging, community engagement, and outreach. I am aware we are in the midst of a pandemic, which makes everything more challenging. But unless you read the Beachcomber cover to cover every week and have a thorough understanding of WA state property tax law and levies, you are unlikely to understand the park district is facing a budget crisis of this magnitude. I believe there are more steps that can be taken. First, you need to garner support from the community. They need to understand the value the park district provides. How to make them commit to funding a park district, they may not even beware of what exists. I would encourage the district to consider cost effective ways to improve the stability by making it known at every entrance what parks are owned by the park district. I like the low key aesthetic of the wooden signs, they don't do enough to make it clear it is Vashon Park District. When you drive by Dockton Park, and you see that big blue sign, you know that is KC, and it's a park – it says "come here and enjoy this space." When you drive by Agren, that wooden sign is behind a grove of trees in a dark corner. Unless you know where you're going, a lot of these parks lack the visibility and the differentiation between a KC park or Land Trust. For those who are aware that Tramp Harbor Dock is controlled by the park district, simply seeing a chain link fence without any other signage suggests neglect. How are you going to generate community enthusiasm for supporting the park district when it doesn't look like the park district is taking care of their properties. I know that dock is near and dear to many. Abby, you have been taking the lead on that project, and I would like to support you in that. When I was living in LA, there is a dock in Long Beach – a fishing pier. Not everyone on this island has a boat they can fish off of. If you have a car or bicycle, it gives you somewhere to go fishing. Signage is one thing – making it clear between the park district and KC. I would recommend changes in messaging style. For example, when it comes to the op eds, the language used to explain issues assumes a certain level of understanding that goes over most people's heads. Simplifying the language would help the messaging resonate with most people. There should be a more concerted effort to go beyond the BC and look to social media, working with other organizations and individuals for wider support. Lastly, do you think it would benefit our efforts with the state reps and senator to demonstrate

support from community members beyond the board, Elaine, and the lobbyist? Would a community letter writing campaign do any good?

Hans: Yes, we are standing by to see if there will be a good opportunity for that. I want to give you a final opportunity in two parts: **Do you have anything else you want to share with us? And do you have any final questions for us?**

Jonathan: I do have questions. If HB 1034 passes, would the park district compete with any other districts for the 50 cent gap? I know it isn't limited to 50 cents. Do we know how much leeway is there?

Elaine: I can't give you an exact amount right now, because I don't know where the state is right now. I do know the Hospital District could go all the way to 75 cents and everyone could go right to the top, and we would be just fine. When I did the recent analysis using last year's state numbers but 2021 local numbers, there was like \$1.35 available. The short answer is we are comfortably free and clear.

Jonathan: Is there risk of other entities entering into that gap and competing for those funds?

Elaine: There is always the risk of someone else trying to do what we're doing. The Hospital District is at risk of being pro-rated, as well, due to what will like happen with Roads and Library in the next year or two. That said, if they did move to the 50 cent gap, there would still be room. The reason is that if we move out of the \$5.90 and into a full \$10 limitation, there is so much room on the state level, and correspondingly, if they were fully in the gap, that would free up what they left in the \$5.90, which is part of the \$10. It would take a long time for us to be pro-rated if we were in the gap.

Jonathan: How did you determine that \$400,000 is an appropriate reserve?

Elaine: When I first started with the park district in 2013, we had a different funding model. We had a tax anticipation note that served as a line of credit. The purpose for that was to fully spend funds in the present tense. April and October are our primary funding months from the County. In those lean times in September and March, \$400k tended to be the amount we would borrow on the TAN to get us through for cash flow. \$400k was determined to be a safe amount to have in reserve and get off the notion of borrowing. We were highly criticized by state auditors for using that kind of funding model, and they strongly encouraged us to do what we are doing now. It took a long time. We had other debt problems we also had to address. \$400k was determined to be safe for managing cash flow going forward and serving as a safety net in the event we needed emergency spending we had to address immediately.

Jonathan: I would like some clarity about the excess levy option and why that is not a favorable alternative?

Elaine: An excess levy requires a district to run a levy before the voters every single year. Imagine trying to do long term planning when you don't know year after year whether or not your levy is going to pass. It's hard enough with a four year levy. It's expensive – every year it would cost between \$10k - \$20k depending on when we did it; it's not something we want to have to budget for. It is an option if the house bill fails, and it's good we have that alternative. But the time and energy it takes to educate voters about levies year after year after year sucks the life out of you. On a four year cycle, it takes months of communication and education. You talk about social media, I cannot tell you how much time I spent answering questions. It's a lot of energy, it's expensive, it's a really difficult planning model. It's good to have that as an alternative, but we certainly don't want to have to exercise it.

Doug: I grew up on Vashon. At one point that was the funding mechanism for the school district. As a kid, it was devastating to my family, because my father assumed that if the excess levy did not pass, he would be laid off. Every year we went through that. Ultimately, I don't think it ever did fail, but just in terms of employee morale, it is a terrible mechanism, at least from the experience of my own family.

Jake: You have great candidates to choose from. Different candidates fill different needs. I'm not like the others. I'm not a talker, I'm an engineer with a slight bend toward aspergers. I fished on the Standard Oil dock for years. I played in the mens league at Agren for 20 years and coached the womens league at the high school. The park district has supported a lot of things; I would like to see them support more. If you need me, I'm the people person that connects with people on this island. I may not be the best talker or planner, but I have that magic in me. In a sense, this is the island I grew up on and learned so much about life. Leadership has always been my thing.

Sarah: I know the Park District has a lot of plans. With the current crisis, I'm sure they will have to be tabled. I'm curious how you will prioritize what will be tabled.

Elaine: In terms of choosing what we will cut, we had a brief overview of the big ticket items awhile back. You have read in the BC we were pro-rationed \$133k. It's actually \$175k that includes the drop in property taxes and some movement in KC. That's 11.5% of our budget. As a glossy overview, we looked at the big ticket items without making any determinations at that time. That included staff; the recreation budget as a whole, but considering things like Concerts in the Park where we get big bang for the buck in terms of what we can provide to the community; the interlocal payment; the winter pool season. We did not arrive at any decisions specifically, intentionally, because we'll have to engage in pretty critical thinking when we make that determination. There is no question capital projects have to go. Every item we look at has huge downsides. It will be a tough Board decision if that time comes.

Bob: I would add that the VES situation took about 4 or 5 years to get under control. We were left with a huge list of deferred maintenance projects that couldn't be fixed as a result of the lack of money. As we developed our Strategic Plan, we had those things pretty well listed out by priority and when they would be completed. Now that's been cut back. That's very important, because we have to keep the facilities in shape to be able to use them. It's a matter of chipping away at those individually and deciding not only which ones are most important but which parts are most important.

Sarah: I have a friend who works on happiness indicators. She tries to understand what are the important things on a social level, so you can evaluate things that are relatively difficult to compare. How can you say what has a social impact that makes people happier than another. That's very tough. In a productive way, the counter argument of the parks not being funded enough is, people think King County will step in. I'm curious about your response to people thinking KC will step in and take over when, in fact, they gave stuff to us to manage?

Elaine: I specifically asked the Director of KC Parks, whom I know, that question, since that came up several times when we ran our last levy. She said emphatically they will not. They may help us liquidate our assets. They may assist the community in making decisions about properties. But remember, they are levy-based, as well. It's not like they have this magic bucket of money to draw them. They not only don't have the financial resources, they don't have the interest.

Sarah: Going back to communication, I don't think the community understands that liquidation would be the response. Even if I wasn't in a Board position, I would love volunteer to help communicate this stuff. It's important for them to know the impacts that the taxing districts have created for us.

Jonathan: I second that.

Josh: I want to thank you all for your time. Two questions. First, what will be the single biggest challenge, aside from pro-rationing, in the budget facing the new board member you will select?

	<p>Abby: I literally can't think of anything besides pro-rationing.</p> <p>Bob: Putting up with the rest of us. There is no question pro-rationing is a big one. And making do with what we've got. You hear Elaine talking about having to shut down the pool – one of our greatest facilities and a tremendous benefit to the island. We have a lot of aging people out here. Staying active is important and a low impact way to do that. Unfortunately, it costs a lot of money to run it. That's certainly on my mind. A new member will have to think about that pretty seriously.</p> <p>Elaine: I think our biggest challenge outside the pro-rationing issue gets back to what Bob said about the Strategic Plan. When we did the Strategic Plan, it was hand-in-hand with a levy run of 52 cents. That levy failed, so we ran a second levy modifying our position to 45 cents. The reason for that 52 cent ask was to address the capital improvement plan Bob discussed. That is not a wish list of new facilities. Rather, it is to address asset preservation concerns. We really got into a hole in debt with VES, and a lot of things were seriously neglected. Outside of finding alternative sources of funding, which we have been very successful doing, like grants, but we really had to modify that list when that 52 cents failed. In my opinion, that is our greatest challenge outside of pro-rationing.</p> <p>Doug: This is true from before I was on the Board, but I think one of our greatest challenges is making sure community interests at large are represented. Like all governmental bodies, both locally and nationally, we tend to hear a particular group over and over again. We have to be aware that may not be the community interests as a whole. The group may have noble ideas, but they don't necessarily reflect the whole of the community. It is hard to say no to people, like when a large group is crowding the room saying they want something. It can be difficult to sort out those two things.</p> <p>Josh: What advice would you offer to the new Board member?</p> <p>Abby: When I joined the Board, it was important to learn all the efforts that have gone into the District. One thing that has come up a lot, and there is a reason we struggle – it's communication. It's not easy to get people to care about the Park District. It is not an easy solve.</p> <p>Bob: A lot of listening and getting together with other Board members to get up to speed to where we are right now. We're all happy to spend time with you to make you as productive as you can be to hit the ground running.</p> <p>Hans: Thanks all for your time and your commitment to wanting to serve the island. We expect to be partners with you all one way or another.</p>	
2.9.21 Minutes; 2.5.21 – 2.20.21 Preliminary Vouchers; January Vouchers	<p>Abby: Motion to accept.</p> <p>Doug: Second</p> <p>Pass 5 - 0</p>	<p>Motion to approve the 2.9.21 Minutes; 2.5.21 – 2.20.21 Preliminary Vouchers; January Vouchers Pass 5-0</p>

January, 2021 Financial Report	<p>Elaine: I'm not going to go into detail, since it has only been one month. I'll just provide highlights. Starting Cash is \$832k, up from \$800k in the final budget. As you recall, that is a result of COVID closures, furloughs, etc.</p> <p>Levy dollars – down \$150k, since our final approved budget was prior to the effects of pro-rationing and the final property value decrease numbers. Again, we are down \$175k from 2019, but we accounted for the first hit from the known drop in property values.</p> <p>Admin – at budget</p> <p>Maintenance – ahead \$4200 – just odds and ends at this point</p> <p>Commons – ahead \$3500 – again, odds and ends.</p> <p>Programs – at budget</p> <p>Pool – ahead \$7800</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having been closed January and most of February, revenue is down \$10k • Offset by personnel costs being down \$14k • All else is odds and ends <p>Randy intends to open the pool with the previous MWFSat schedule beginning March 1. Will try a soft open the week of Feb 22, and can use Derek as a guard until March 1. Eric and Rob are ready to return, but not until they've had their second shot and a 2 week waiting period. They've both had one so far, and both are targeting March 1.</p> <p>Point Rob – ahead \$4300 – all odds and ends</p> <p>Fern Cove – ahead \$4700 – odds and ends</p> <p>RFA/Other – ahead \$800 – no RFA activity</p> <p>CIP – At budget</p> <p>Ending cash - \$422k – budgeted \$509k</p> <p>Doug: I am confused about the budget compared to 2020 numbers.</p> <p>Elaine: That's a typo. It should be 2021.</p>	
VES Lights	<p>Elaine: The new lights at VES have become highly problematic. From the git go, I have received numerous complaints from the neighbors about how bright they are to the extent that I wouldn't be surprised if one neighbor brings a lawsuit. Our policy is that they must be off at 9:00 p.m. They are not used during the summer, but when winter hits, the complaints flare up. They are completely up to code, which means that less than 1 foot-candle spills onto neighboring properties. We did have Qualite come back out to confirm that. We have adjusted them to 50% capacity and tried using just the inside lights only, but the users state any less than that would not be suitable or safe for play. The only other solution would be to install light shields, which would cost \$39k. The sport groups do not have that kind of money nor have they responded to my ask that they fundraise (which, to be fair, would be difficult in these COVID times). Neighbors are relentless with complaints and I'm about at my wit's end dealing with it. I have explained our budget challenges with pro-rationing and that if our bill passes, maybe we can squeeze this in. I would recommend we try. I can try for a grant, but that will be a ways off into the future.</p> <p>Bob: We should meet up there at night and arrange to have somebody there who knows about the lights.</p> <p>Elaine: David Hackett would be the one. I know the neighbors would appreciate that. I certainly believe</p>	

them, but showing that level of support would be helpful.

Karen: How many neighbors are we talking about?

Elaine: Probably 6 complain regularly, with another 4 – 6 occasionally.

Doug: Has David Hackett weighed in on this?

Elaine: Yes. He has been instrumental in trying to find solutions, like the ones we have implemented. But nothing is good enough. That is not to diminish their concerns. I understand how they must be feeling.

Hans: Is the hour itself an issue? Would it make a difference at 8:00 vs. 9:00?

Elaine: I think it is the brightness in general. I can suggest we cut off at 8:00, but that would mean cutting off the users. Their practices are scheduled until 9.

Hans: I wouldn't suggest it if it wasn't value-added, like if it's bedtime. Or is it just too bright? If it was a sacrifice that created enough value-added, it would be worth considering.

Elaine: I have even suggested we fund getting them black-out concerns, but they say no. It's a quality of life issue. They want to be able to sit out on their front porch and not feel like they're sitting in front of a spotlight.

Bob: Weren't there some temporary lights before? Were there complaints then?

Elaine: They didn't stand as tall. We now have 70 foot light poles.

Bob: So this is direct light coming from the lights into people's yards.

Elaine: Into their windows.

Abby: It's more like you're looking at a bunch of different suns. I drove by this evening and thought they were very bright. It's like a spotlight.

Elaine: I'm happy to organize a meeting.

Bob: I think it's worthwhile, so we can study it and find a solution.

Doug: I thought when we were considering these lights the design was not supposed to have this problem. That was one of the selling points, as I remember. I hate to think people were pushing a product and being less than truthful. I remember that question coming up, and they said it was not a problem.

Bob: What we discussed was not so much direct lights on properties, but more general, environmental light pollution.

Doug: That was the issue, but they made no claims about diminished light pollution. They did make claims about diminished terrestrial pollution.

Elaine: I will review the minutes. If they made that statement, it would be good to go back to the manufacturer if we were sold a bill of goods.

Karen: I have the same recollection that Doug does.

Abby: Me too.

Doug: Certainly, we take the neighbors' word for it, but this is a traditional problem that people have with lights. I'm wondering to what extent they are reflecting the traditional concern.

Abby: I also thought we had a deal with the sport groups that they were to pay all costs.

Elaine: They do pay the additional electricity every month based on who the users are. And the project was fully funded by a grant. There was no talk of something additional like the light shields. Putting a fundraising effort back on them would be in keeping with the intent of the project, that we would not be putting funds toward it.

Action Item

Action Item

	<p>Abby: I understood that to be the arrangement – we would not be putting any more funds toward VES.</p> <p>Elaine: But we can't force them to fundraise \$39k. There are always grants, but that would be way in the future.</p> <p>Bob: We can't expect the neighbors to put up with this.</p> <p>Abby: I agree, but it's worth talking about the sport groups assisting rather than us paying.</p>	
Pool Price Increase	<p>Elaine: The pool will be open again for lap swimming on March 1. Randy is asking that we increase the price to \$6 even, which includes tax (so actually is \$5.52 per swim). This will help increase revenue, but more importantly, it will eliminate the need for him to keep finding pennies for change. There are a number of users that suggested the price be raised to avoid all the change. It was previously \$5.00, which came to \$5.43 with tax. This requires Board approval.</p> <p>Bob: Practically, it makes sense. Based on how fast the lanes filled up when the sign-up came on this morning, there is enough demand to where nobody should really argue about a price increase.</p> <p>I move that we increase the price of pool admission to \$6 even, including tax.</p> <p>Doug: Second.</p> <p>Elaine: Let's suspend the rules, since this needs to be effective March 1.</p> <p>Bob: Motion to suspend the rules.</p> <p>Doug: Second.</p> <p>Pass 5 – 0.</p> <p>Motion: Pass 5 – 0.</p>	<p>Motion to increase the price of pool admission to \$6 even, including tax. Pass 5 – 0</p> <p>Motion to suspend the rules. Pass 5-0</p>
Staff Reports	<p>House Bill 1034</p> <p>Elaine: We are still stuck in Rules. I emailed all the Rules committee members to ask them to pull it to the House Floor calendar, per Fitzgibbon's recommendation, and a couple wrote back and said they would put it on the list. Fitzgibbon thought it would likely move to the House floor this week. Looks like the House must vote by Mar 9 and then the Senate must vote by Apr 11. The legislative session ends April 25. Hans and I feel the timing is of greater concern than it passing.</p> <p>Bob: Is there any benefit to us going down there.</p> <p>Elaine: No, the Rules Committee is not open. And besides, it's all done via Zoom. If it moves to the House Floor, I'll let you know if we can participate. I think there would be some benefit to community members testifying. We were advised when testifying for Finance to only have the two of us, but in retrospect, looking at the other bills, I think there would be a lot of benefit to have more.</p> <p>Local Taxing District Meeting</p> <p>Elaine: Local Taxing District meeting scheduled March 22. Bob and Abby are the Board representatives. It appears there will be two board members participating.</p> <p>Lisabeula Tidelands Donation</p> <p>Elaine: The Phase 1 Environmental Assessment was completed and revealed all is fine based on his evaluation. I am moving forward with our attorney on the transfer. And speaking of real estate, that little parcel on 216th and 103rd was appraised at \$32k – I am moving forward with listing it for sale.</p>	

Tramp Harbor Dock

Elaine: Our land manager with DNR gave me the name of the shellfish biologist for the Puyallup Tribe who is the primary contact for issues concerning docks and geoduck tracts for the Tribes. Last week I discussed our issues concerning the length of the dock and our desire to maintain its length. He said he had a meeting with DNR last Friday, and I am awaiting the response to that meeting. DNR was pretty adamant about their position that the pier be shortened to avoid placement within the tract, but if the Tribes are accepting of the idea of a floating or removable platform within the existing footprint, they would likely be accepting of that, as well. David Winfrey will also take the issue to an interdepartmental group to review. I sent him the material on the options for a floating pier and even pile wrapping, but I suspect the pile wrapping will not fly. This is all to say that the process will not be a meeting with me and Abby. They are reviewing the options and will get back to me. If they don't agree, I will request a meeting with the members.

Doug: If the Tribes are okay with the length as is but DNR is not, and DNR insists on their position, does DNR overrule the Tribes?

Elaine: Yes. They have their interests, as well. They are partners with the Tribes, because it funds the very grant we will be applying for. That is what their interest is in ensuring the geoduck tract is safe and intact.

Hans: Is that based on data that preserving the standing full dock is going to significantly diminish the geoduck harvest?

Elaine: I don't know.

Hans: It sounds unfortunate that the Tribal biologists might not necessarily have an interest in the issue of the dock, yet DNR would interject their interests over them.

Elaine: I will raise that point if we need to. I think the floating dock idea sounds possible. I'm feeling that there is some support on both sides. I would suspect that would be agreeable to the community.

Hans: It sounds like it comes with significant more maintenance, though, in the long run. A standing dock is next to zero maintenance. It's an east storm that does damage, and that would be a concern. On the user side, I don't know that it serves as many people, as well. If you had 20 folks fishing off a floating dock, it doesn't seem as safe. All the docks we have discussed around the Sound are all standing piers. I fully support the maintenance of the Tribes' history there, but I wouldn't just give away the value of the standing dock for the users or our burden to maintain the floating dock without knowing that the standing dock wouldn't preserve the habitat.

Elaine: I'll keep pushing for it. The standing dock with a pile wrap solution is infinitely less expensive.

Bob: From the standpoint of the geoduck bed, what is the difference between a standing dock and a floating dock? It's a matter of coverage and sun. Either way, the dock will have to let the light through.

Elaine: And if the issue is the pilings, the pilings are already there. If we pile wrap, there will be some disturbance, but if we remove the pilings in favor of a floating dock, you're also going to have some disturbance. Why would it make any difference? You're disturbing it one way or the other.

Hans: A floating dock will have four anchors down there.

Bob: I would think with a floating dock you would still have pilings down there. The floating dock would go up and down on those.

Elaine: I'll let you know what they say and if we need to bring out some bigger guns down the road.

Adjourn 9:00 pm	Doug: Motion to adjourn. Abby: Second Pass 5-0	Motion to adjourn; Pass 5-0
	Executive Session – Board Appointment	

Minutes by: Elaine Ott-Rocheford