

Orcas Highlands Association Agenda  
Board Meeting, Oct. 26, 2020, 3:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84122485875?pwd=L01hYXdESk9OVllWVWk11Wllhd2h2QT09>

- I. Roll Call: Chris Graham, Bob Burke, Mike Shivers, Jens Kruse, Lee Goodwin, Brian Ehrmantraut, David Turnoy
- II. Call to order: 3:05
- III. Approval of minutes from Aug. 31: Approved
- IV. President's report: Happy to report that directors are contributing much time and effort to ensure the smooth and safe functioning of the OHA; the horrendous outbreak of fires on the West coast have redoubled our efforts to minimize risk in the Highlands to include all common areas and right of ways and has also renewed our effort to elicit the cooperation and support from each and every member on both developed and undeveloped lots, alike, to play their critical role in fire prevention. More to follow as the Board will actively solicit the voluntary support and cooperation of OHA members in this regard.
- V. Treasurer's report: Mike sent out balance sheet, accounts receivable, and budget. We will finish transitioning to Islanders Bank. Accounting records look good.
- VI. Old business
  - A. 1. Youngren logging: For the logging fee, we need to check back to find the amount per truck load. I checked in last month's minutes but found no figure for this. I thought we had talked about \$50 or \$100 per load, but today a higher figure was mentioned. If anyone knows where and when we might have discussed this, please let us know.
  2. Youngren tansy ragwort: It is a class B noxious weed, eradication is not required but encouraged. At some point we can summarize Arthur's email to send to Eric, but not yet. We should also contact the county to ask their advice, asking what the process is. Perhaps residents can help with eradication as volunteers. We want to keep it neighborly while making a serious attempt to mitigate the spread of tansy ragwort. Bob asks if this may be a hopeless situation, as it may be futile if it isn't being taken care of outside Youngren's property. We could ask the county to look at the property and decide if it is really too late to do anything about it. Tansy is dangerous if you ingest dust from it. Brian says that any logging plan should have a weed control plan, as it is well known that tansy will come up wherever logging is done. Find out what would happen if a report is

made to the county. We need to inform Eric if a county person is coming out to look. Do we have authority to enforce members eradicating tansy, or do we just inform? County does the enforcement., we don't have the power. Get a professional opinion from county, then assess the next step. Bob moved that we authorize a board member or committee to contact the county to make an assessment of the tansy situation on Eric's property and throughout the Highlands. David will make the contact. Take the county person to Ashcraft and Strauss properties as well as Youngren. If we go onto Youngren's property, we'll first obtain Eric's permission. Perhaps we can have the county look at two properties in the Highlands and just tell that person about Eric's situation during the review. The link for the county weed board is <https://extension.wsu.edu/sanjuan/noxious/>

- B. Shane Perry billing: David explained his failure to have a communication with Shane, our treasurer will send a formal letter explaining the fee and the amount, which is \$1,742.33. Lee says there is a policy on the roads fee for construction, and Shane was notified about this fee. David will contact Marcia about writings exchanged with Shane regarding the roads fee. The board has authority to make assessments and create fees. Chris says we should clarify the fee policy-- when it applies and how it will be calculated, and publish this information on the website as well as provide it to also real estate agents or others inquiring about purchasing in the Highlands. Brian says we should put all our fees in one place on the website.
  - C. Road sign cleaning: We did some. We'll continue doing same as needed.
  - D. Burn day: Successful day. The pile needs some maintenance, make a more level surface and take care of trees right there, we could have this done professionally or do it ourselves. The dump truck is invaluable. It is hard to consolidate the pile while burning. We could rent some equipment to do maintenance around the pile. There is a lot of deadfall near the area cleaned up by Rich Harvey. With the right piece of equipment, it could follow the truck to pick up the piles, it is a track hoe for \$600 per day, it would reduce the labor, we could handle a much larger volume. The truck costs \$100 plus diesel to fill it up. We found on the burn day that a lot of owners need to clean up their dead material. We could have John Olson cut down the two trees near the burn pile, they are growing as one, leave the tree on the burn pile, Bob will buck it up. Moved, seconded, and approved.
- VII. Committee reports:
- Policy: Chris will create a document related to fees.
  - Architecture: Nothing.
  - Nominations: Jens says our bench is fine. Steve Pettyjohn is willing when a vacancy occurs. Jens and Arthur are on the committee, is a second director needed? We don't think so. Chris will check.

Firewise: Brian is about to report our activities for the year. Lee asked if Brian could find out about grants available. Brian applies for them almost every year, but funds have been limited. Topping trees is considered unhealthy, better to window them.

Roads: Snow plowing is set, funds from Eric will go into roads fund.

#### VIII. New business

- A. Issue at 162 Discovery Way: Concern about a lot of truck loads going over our roads with material, so there should be a road use fee assessed. The other concern is that there is a 30% slope down to the neighbor on Tall Trees, and there is a possibility that fill may slide down the hill. Bob says the board doesn't have the authority to act in any enforcement capacity, but there are agencies responsible for this. This would be a specific complaint filed by the neighbor. Bob called the building dept, which said they don't get concerned unless over 500 yards, which requires a permit. Then Bob talked to the planning dept, which only requires 100 yards for a permit for an engineered fill. It has been as many as 40 or 50 loads of material. The 10-yard dump trucks have a similar effect as logging trucks. To find out about clearing and grading, go to the following link:  
<https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/SanJuanCounty/html/SanJuanCounty18/SanJuanCounty1860.html#18.60.060>. Can the association make the complaint, or does the neighbor have to do that? Anyone who observes a violation can report it. We could use Bea's email to send an email ourselves to the property owner at 162. Bob does not believe a permit for work at 162 Discovery has been issued. We have charged a road fee in the past when owners who already had homes here added something substantial. Chris will work with other directors to determine what triggers a road fee and reduce same to writing and have this information published and available as noted above. We'll look into the policy put in place near the end of Bea's tenure as on the board. David will contact Bea for the history of when the fee has applied in the past and confirm it is based on the permit and/or number of truckloads. Lee will also contact Judy Cook. Lee adds the following: Road fee was historically not based on number of truck loads. Bea's formula that then BOD used (this was roughly 2007 or so) was a flat fee for new construction (new homes, garages or major modifications) based on Permit Fee. It wasn't to be based on number of truckloads, because that varies. The count of loads only came into play when Eric started his major logging, as that was the only basis to assess that seemed to make sense.
- B. Fiber issue: Mike says we need to talk to Marcia to find out who has been contacting who when buyer isn't current on fiber fee. He will talk with Marcia and Kim. Brian says we need to monitor the real estate transactions and contact the title companies. We need to be notified when someone is buying or selling in the Highlands. We can put a lien on, but it isn't the most cost-effective approach. Mike will look into getting

notified. Perhaps we can keep abreast of MLS listings. We will try to get a system in place.

- C. Forest management: The board will propose a quarterly assessment to set up a fire prevention fund in the budget; this fund will be used to maintain mitigation efforts in all common areas and right of ways and accompany the board's intention to elicit an OHA-wide commitment towards this critically important effort. We can inspect private areas from common roads as a first step in letting people know about their need to clean up and remove fuel for fires. We can do some education and outreach to the membership with the help of county officials and their guidance. Lots that have not been built on are also a problem. Given that much of the fuel lies on private property, we will need the membership at large to step up and cooperate for the basic safety of our entire community. The proposed quarterly assessment can keep ROWs free from debris and other fuel which inures to the benefit of every private lot. Bob suggests using part of the assessment for reviewing conditions on individual properties (with owner permission). Lee says when CCRs were written, there was no concern about wildfire, that is why it wasn't addressed. Prior to and concurrent with proposing and passing a quarterly fire prevention fund assessment, the board will pass on information to inform the membership about what it learns from county officials and fire prevention specialists; this dissemination of critical information will serve as the basis for the proposed said assessment. Do we want to wait until the annual meeting? The board needs time to both educate and hone this fire-prevention message for the benefit of all our neighbors in the OHA. We can solicit ideas from members. Mike suggests we do a fire assessment now. We could have Rich Harvey do this. Brian will contact Rich to look at the common areas and some illustrative private areas from the roads. Lee adds the following: Under "Forest Management" making ROW free from fuel or debris is more complex, in that the dangerous canopy down Lindsay from mailbox up to Strauss involves many trees on ROW. This is where we need Harvey's professional input, plus we know some members will resist removing or cutting way back (this was discussed around 2011 and pushback by a few members was heavy, as it would destroy the nice tunnel charm). We don't need cover in the minutes (I suspect if Firewise team were doing their 2003 study now they'd write it much stronger on this particular OHA risk).

IX. Next meeting: Dec. 21, 3:00

X. Adjournment: 5:38