

# VASHON PARK DISTRICT (VPD) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## MEETING MINUTES

Teleconference, 7:00 pm  
**DATE: Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

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

ISSUE	DISCUSSION AND OUTCOME	FOLLOW UP
<b>Call To Order – Review Agenda</b>	Hans called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.	
<b>Public Comment</b>	None	
<b>3.23.21 Minutes; 3.21.21 – 4.8.21 Preliminary Vouchers</b>	<b>Abby: Motion to accept. Bob: Second.</b>	<b>Motion to approve the 3.23.21 Minutes; 3.21.21 – 4.8.21 Preliminary Vouchers Pass 5-0</b>
<b>Board Votes</b>	<b>Bob: Motion to remove the “Not previously convicted of a felony” from the Commissioner Duties and Qualifications policy. Abby: Second Abby: We need to follow where the law is going, so I am okay with that. But it still feels weird. Pass 5-0</b>	<b>Motion to remove the “Not previously convicted of a felony” from the Commissioner Duties and Qualifications policy. Pass 5-0</b>
<b>House Bill 1034 – KC Best Starts for Kids Levy</b>	Elaine: As reported via email, our Bill has passed the House and Senate. It actually went back to the House for approval of the amendment, and that passed 54 – 44. Again, the amendment makes the Bill specific to the Vashon Park District and expires in 5 years. So we do have a lot of work to do over the next five years to determine our	

funding source. As it stands, we are now on the Governor’s desk awaiting his signature, but all indications are that we will be good to go.

As I reported in a recent Board meeting, we will be safe in the 50 cent gap even if Roads and Library lid lifts pass in the near future, which we anticipate. I provided the “Prorationing Worksheet for the 1% Constitutional Limit” with 2021 rates and us at 45 cents, as this is where we will live starting in 2022. You can see at the bottom that there is .61262 cents left over.

The next Prorationing Worksheet adds Road and Library Lid lifts. All other rates reflect 2021, but there will likely be some erosion. In this picture, we are still safe, but barely -- .00862 left over.

The third Prorationing Worksheet adds in our new threat over the horizon, again assuming Roads and Library lid lifts occur – the KC Best Starts for Kids Levy. This is Dow Constantine’s baby, part of the King County General fund that is made of a lot of levies for KC services (parks, public health, sheriff, courts, etc). The Best Starts for Kids Levy is currently at 11.5 cents. A November ballot measure will increase it to 19 cents (up 7.5 cents). In this scenario, we will get hit 5.6 cents – even worse than this year. We are currently at 40.6 cents; this would take us to 39.4 cents, or a loss of \$213,000 from 2020.

I learned that the King County Council wrote a pro-ration protection feature into the ballot measure for Fire, Healthcare, and Metropolitan Park Districts throughout KC. I have written to Joe McDermott twice over the past two weeks asking him to add Park & Recreation Districts to the protection feature, particularly since we are the only P&R District in KC. He has not responded. I called him today and spoke with a staffer who said she will get right on it, so hopefully we will also be protected.

In the meantime, until we learn how this shakes out, we need to consider how this would affect us. We know a Roads lid lift will be on the November ballot. We do not know yet about Library, but that will likely run in 2022. Until we know we are safe from pro-rationing, which would hit in 2023, I would suggest we still hold off on the capital projects we tabled this year. Thoughts?

Hans: On a global level, it strikes me that all districts on Vashon should advocate for protection of all levies within the District when it comes to what KC is doing. This is a perfect issue for the all-district meeting. It is appropriately reasonable and politically wise for KC to do this. It doesn’t cost them much to protect us, and it would be stupid not to. It is a matter of continuing to nag; I don’t mind being an additional nag.

Elaine: It looks like the next all-district meeting will be in June. I will bring this up.

Abby: You said it wouldn’t cost a gazillion dollars to the County to protect us, but that money has to come from somewhere. From the taxpayers.

Elaine: For us, the hit would be \$213,000, so that is what they would build into their budget with the voter-approved rate. It’s basically a buy-down. They would just give us that money.

Abby: Does that mean they would do that for every district? They are planning their budget based on the rate they are asking. Would they raise taxes some other way?

Elaine: I don’t believe so. They aren’t going to ask more than 19 cents.

Bob: Back to the five year deal, is there a chance of renewing that 5 year deal with another bill? Is there language that specifies 5 years?

Elaine: The amendment specifies a January 1, 2027 expiration, but that’s not to say we couldn’t pursue renewing it.

Hans: That is our only option, really.

Bob: I can’t imagine the local taxing districts will pitch in on our behalf.

Doug: You talked about Anderson Island also having been pro-rationed. Is there a possibility they would be included?

**Action Item**

A potential ally?

Elaine: With this amendment, our lobbyist made a great attempt to get them associated with our bill. He went to the legislators in their district to lobby to make this a statewide and permanent thing. Nobody budged, and Fitzgibbon didn't want to go to bat for Anderson Island, since his interest was in saving Vashon. As I understand it, the legislators in their district were not interested in stepping in.

Bob: With the way the full \$10 is filling up, you would think there would be a greater effort to overhaul the whole thing.

Elaine: It seems to be that the unincorporated Districts are most affected by pro-rationing. Remember, Bob, when we met with Cody and Fitzgibbon, we talked about – overhauling the whole \$10 structure. Fitzgibbon said that would probably never happen, because there is so much support for protecting the higher level districts. My idea was to make pro-rationing even across all districts, but Fitzgibbon said that would never happen.

Bob: I'm talking about boosting it above \$10.

Hans: Your interest here, Elaine, is getting some guidance on our spending approach for the remainder of 2021, continuing to be conservative on our capital spending, recreation programming, and staffing as well.

Elaine: I will have to replace Marshall at some point, because Eric has too much on his plate. I will do some projections in the next two weeks to see how this all shakes out. For the most part, the options are staying pulled back on capital projects and/or recreation programming.

Hans: So it's about the risk of some revenue loss in 2023. I think the risk is low. First and foremost, I would advocate for staffing up. I would like to see us deliver programs this summer, since people are more available, and we should spend the taxpayer dollars delivering programs and services. We can't continue running as lean as we are and not deliver services. Programmatic decisions I would defer to you. Hopefully, we will learn more from McDermott in the coming weeks. Hold the capital back until later in the year as we learn more.

Abby: I agree with that, too.

Bob: We need to start thinking about pool operations. We can't think about shutting that down.

Hans: You're talking about the operating deficit as opposed to the capital cost of improvements?

Bob: Yes, I'm talking about the cost of operating it. Here we are with a 12 month pool, and COVID has caused us to cut back some, which has had an impact on revenue and expenses. We need to be thinking about getting public support for it. If it went back to the schools, they would fill it up.

Hans: Do you mean us no longer funding the staff to operate it?

Bob: If we run out of money, we would be looking at the big savings.

Hans: I don't think we're running out of money. We're talking about a 2023 risk of impact to our revenue source.

Abby: Keeping the pool going is programming.

Elaine: We're certainly budgeted this year to have the pool up and running full throttle when we're able. I don't propose we cut back there at all. My question surrounds the areas we already cut back, continuing in conservative mode. We are working on more recreation – concerts in the park, sailing camp. We're doing what we can as we're able in COVID, but we budgeted to be conservative.

Doug: My comment is about capital projects – it's about protecting our assets. We have ignored it for decades. The Strategic Plan was to address that. It's a less popular option, because we're not going to get public support for fixing a sidewalk somewhere. But we could lose public support if we cut the hours at the pool. Capital projects are politically unpopular, but that doesn't mean they're not important. I would prefer some cutback in current programs than ignore capital projects.

	<p>Abby: I think the opposite. If we're going to run out of money in five years, we should do more for the public.</p> <p>Hans: I think we need to do both. We need to hold our breath on the capital until we get our feet under us, not do anything this summer. We are heading into our busy season and need to have staff on board to survive and expand. It's a matter of when we'll do them, not that we will not do them.</p> <p>Elaine: Keep in mind, we are down \$175k this year. It's a staggering hit.</p> <p>Hans: We have an established budget that includes the \$175k down. It's still there. Your question is more about when to pull the trigger on some of those things. We can support you in that for sure.</p> <p>Josh: I didn't hear Elaine ask us to pull back on any capital projects, but rather let's not say today we are going to fix something. You're not asking us to pull back, but rather not add anything new.</p> <p>Elaine: I might ask that we hold something back. We already held back on budgeted capital projects and cut recreation. We made that decision based on not knowing what would happen with the bill, but they're still in the budget. I'll redo those projections and come back with a better picture at the next meeting.</p>	<b>Action Item</b>
<p><b>Policy – Removal of Commissioner</b></p>	<p>Elaine: At the last Board meeting, the discussion about the previous felony issue in the Commissioner Qualifications policy led to the need for a policy that would clarify actions of a Board member that would be cause for removing them from office. Bob checked, and the only policy that speaks to removal of a board member for a specific reason is the Attendance Policy, and it only states that if a commissioner misses six or more regular meetings, they "should consider resigning". So, if we intend to have a policy that specifies reasons for mandatory removal from the board, we would need a policy.</p> <p>Bob stated to me in an email that he felt this would be a difficult policy to write, because we don't want it to be too broad, yet if we get too specific there's a danger of leaving something important out, thereby, by omission, indicating approval of that behavior. And the more specific we get, the more we can expect concerns from the community. I did some research into existing policies out there that might define the removal process of a Commissioner. I provided two examples I felt were appropriate. They are called "Code of Ethics" and "Code of Conduct" policies, but they effectively note the same conduct concerns. The C-Tran one actually addresses removal, whereas the other defines various levels of reprimand. These might provide a basis for writing a policy if this is the direction you want to go.</p> <p>Abby: I thought they were really good. Would it be possible to put something in about all four other commissioners voting somebody off the board?</p> <p>Elaine: The C-Tran example has an outside council provide an opinion about removing a board member, whereas the other one actually does leave it up to the Board who decide the opinion and the action. We can combine the two but make it the Board that decides.</p> <p>Bob: We need to be careful it is not a popularity contest. It must have specific reasons.</p> <p>Elaine: Both these policies are specific in their approach.</p> <p>Doug: Are these elected positions or appointed positions?</p> <p>Elaine: They are elected.</p> <p>Doug: To me, that is a critical distinction. If Commissioners remove another commissioner, they are effectively rejecting the vote for that position. We see that on the national level – it is very rare to remove an elected official. It can be a popularity thing or even a policy thing, when you come up with a reason to remove somebody. I think we need to be careful about any provision in this regard.</p> <p>Hans: My intuition is I wouldn't spend any time on this. My observation of this board is that it is not a priority. People</p>	

	<p>can be forced to quit or not be reelected. The idea of a board voting off another member doesn't sound very good at all!</p> <p>Josh: What stood out to me when I read the board policies is that we do not have a mechanism to remove someone. I hear where you're coming from, Hans, but there is a balance that can be struck. If there is a reason, you would have to bring a motion for cause. You can include examples of what cause could be. If somebody goes off the rails, we should have the mechanism to address that without having to wait until the next election.</p> <p>Elaine: Having a policy in place is always a good idea. It spells out the specific reasons somebody could be removed from office. Then there is no mystery. When a new board member reads the policy, they can consider any potential issues of conflict of interest, etc. Those things could come up. It has nothing to do with a popularity contest. You would have to point to a specific issue that is in the policy.</p> <p>Hans: So the question is what the ruling body is. Is it the ruling board or a separate ethics committee?</p> <p>Abby: I think it would be good to have a separate entity to be appointed that can review the cause.</p> <p>Hans: Any board members on it?</p> <p>Abby: We can stew on that.</p> <p>Bob: I'll work with Elaine on this. We'll start with a good code of ethics framework, then take the next step after we get that established.</p> <p>Elaine: These two policies are very similar. It seems to be a matter of merging them and also look at some additional policies.</p>	<b>Action Item</b>
<p><b>Policy #2070 – Commissioner Duties and Qualifications</b></p>	<p>Elaine: Further to the "Commissioner Duties and Qualifications Policy," Josh and I had a meeting a couple weeks ago where he asked about Item 6 in the policy - "Each Commissioner will assume responsibility for one or more parks and act as a liaison with the applicable Stewardship group(s)." We made Commissioner assignments when the policy was first enacted, but we failed to do this when Abby and Hans came on board. Attached is the last list. It needs to be updated, but it provides context for the parks and associated park user leadership.</p> <p>Bob: It's good to have somebody on the Board going by and observing the facilities. They have first hand knowledge. General upkeep, etc.</p> <p>Hans: Abby has done a good job advocating for BARC and Doug Burton Acres and Fisher Pond.</p> <p>Elaine: And Hans for VES, Agren, Commons?</p> <p>Abby: I would take all of LuAnn's except the Commons and Pool.</p> <p>Abby: Doug should take Inspiration Point.</p> <p>Josh: Abby beat me to it, but I was thinking I could all of LuAnn's.</p> <p>Abby: Maybe you should, since I am not running again.</p> <p>Elaine: And would you like Paradise Ridge, as well, Josh?</p> <p>Josh: Sure. I drove by it and thought it could be mine if I take Karen's.</p> <p>Hans: Go ahead and put me for Agren and Commons. And VES.</p> <p>Josh: Can I take Fern Cove? I have a soft spot for Fern Cove.</p> <p>Elaine: And Lisabeula, Josh? Abby, you should take Ober, since you have been really involved there.</p> <p>Abby: Okay. Does Fern Cove include the housing?</p> <p>Elaine: Yes, definitely. If things are looking shabby, bring it up.</p> <p>Hans: Bring it back and see if there are any gaps.</p>	<p><b>Action Item</b></p> <p><b>Action Item</b></p>
<p><b>Public Art - Trolls</b></p>	<p>Elaine: A few weeks ago I received an email and had a phone conversation with a Professor of Swedish Studies from</p>	

UW asking of our interest in participating in an initiative that aims to install a series of art pieces in the Puget Sound region, created by Danish artist Thomas Dambo. The “pieces” are giant trolls, fabricated from mostly-recycled materials, which have been enormously popular in Denmark and several locations in the US. They’re being sponsored by the Scan Design Foundation in Seattle and the National Nordic Museum, with additional funding currently being sought by donors.

For the Puget Sound, the committee is planning a series of 5-10 troll installations, with stories about the protection of nature and the environment, or salmon recovery and watershed protection. With Vashon’s interest in environmental protection - and being a little weird - they thought Vashon would be an ideal location. Ideally, the trolls will be embedded in a natural area that is accessible to the public, requiring a short walk to find them. I thought the forested edge of Ober would be perfect, particularly since, per policy, we need to add an art installation that is at least 1% of the budget but can be donated. Another thought was upper Point Robinson by the Stonehenge structure. The artist decides where it will go. This will require your approval.

They are still working on the plan, but so far, it appears that:

- The installations are temporary for 2 – 5 years
- Site control –municipal public park, non-profit or private landowner
- Responsible for providing free public access to site
- Logistics support including organizing donation of recycled wood (this is new; not sure how we would approach this; maybe talk to Dave Warren)
- Rallying volunteers for the on-site build process
- Provide liability insurance and maintenance support
- Commits to raising \$25k as part of a matching grant from Scan Design Foundation (this is new; this could be a big lift)

Hans: How does the fundraising, donors, and our required 1% interrelate?

Elaine: The 1% piece is a policy, for Ober would be \$2600. We must commit either \$2600 or the value of a donation. This would well exceed the policy requirement. She said there were donors being sought by the committee. But this new piece she sent me says we would have to commit to raising \$25k ourselves. I need to clarify that. I need to get back to her on this.

Josh: I am excited about this, because I saw these in Scandinavia. It could be a great way to add some excitement and fun to the island. I got less excited about the \$25k fundraising, but I would throw my energy behind this.

Abby: Maybe partner with the Nature Center, Zero Waste Vashon, and the Makerspace. There might be more power in fundraising that way. I don’t think we could raise \$25k. That’s a lot to ask, especially for a 2 – 5 year commitment.

Doug: Trolls are a huge thing in Scandinavia. When in Iceland, a woman told me about their problem with trolls. Many problems went wrong with a road construction problem, and they said, “The trolls don’t want it.” There is a designated communicator who went to the trolls and confirmed that the trolls wanted the highway relocated. They relocated the highway. This is not a trivial thing in Scandinavia.

Hans: I am very supportive. Sounds that artist will decide on the appropriate site. I agree with Abby about partnering with other community groups. Good to be reticent about the \$25k, but not have that be a red flag.

Bob: I have a feeling the community would get behind this.

Elaine: I will get some more clarification on the funding piece. And get with community groups for participation.

**Action Item**

<p><b>Fee Schedule – After Hours Fee</b></p>	<p>Elaine: Last summer, due to the COVID lockdowns, you agreed to waive the after-hours access fee of \$22.05 to the school district to encourage whatever use was allowed of all facilities and to give Access staff more opportunity to work. With Phase 3, reservations are hugely picking up – like almost back to normal. Continue no \$22.05 commons fee? I would recommend we reinstate it.</p> <p>Hans: And the regular hourly fee is between \$5 - \$40 per hour, and the \$22.05 is on top of it. Is it mostly evenings?</p> <p>Elaine: Currently it is more for weekend evenings, but it will apply to summer when that picks up. Part of the reasoning is that our Access staff have other jobs, so this discourages use due to being difficult to accommodate.</p> <p>Hans: The current hours are pretty generous.</p> <p>Elaine: I don't need a motion, since it is going back to the regular policy.</p> <p>Doug: So this takes it back to pre-COVID.</p>	
<p><b>Staff Reports</b></p>	<p><u>VES Lights Meeting</u></p> <p>Elaine: On March 25, Bob, Doug and I met with the neighbors and several sport club members at 8:00 at night at VES to experience the brightness of the new lights. We all agreed the neighbors' have a legitimate complaint. We concluded that the north lights appear to be tilted outward rather than downward, because the south lights appear to be a more focused drop downward, and it is all the neighbors to the south that are affected – literally out 2 football fields away. So that should be fixed in addition to having Qualite provide light shields. David Hackett believes it is a breach of contract, because we contracted for 100% brightness, but even 50% is too bright. I spoke with the Qualite sales rep about Qualite remedying this problem free of charge. He is talking with his superiors and will get back with me.</p> <p>Bob: It wasn't so much the light on the ground, you couldn't even look at them. Something is really screwed up from a design standpoint. The light on the field is marginally okay for soccer, but it would not be okay for lacrosse. You would have to have it at 100%. Then the light would be so bright to the neighbors.</p> <p>Doug: It is bright at 50%. One of the guys took me into his house. It was actually brighter inside than outside. You could have had a meal without any lights on. This is a huge thing. In the meantime, are they still putting up with this?</p> <p>Elaine: Since it is lighter outside now, we aren't having to use the lights as much, and they will not be used at all in the summer. So we have all summer to remedy this.</p> <p>Bob: And you are keeping the neighbors apprised of the progress? In the summer, it would be tough to test the fix without turning them on at 10 at night.</p> <p>Elaine: I think we should work with the neighbors to do that. I bet they would be cooperative.</p> <p><u>Bubble Down 4/17</u></p> <p>Elaine: Moving into the summer season.</p> <p><u>Recycling Stations – Ober/Village Green</u></p> <p>Elaine: I sent you the MOU between us and Vashon Makerspace for two recycling, trash, and composting stations they built and donated to the Village Green and Ober Park. It is a great community group partnership to reduce waste on Vashon.</p> <p><u>Tramp Harbor Dock</u></p> <p>Elaine: The tribes would like to have a Zoom meeting with us to discuss the pile wrapping vs floating dock alternatives for their approval. Anyone want to participate?</p>	

	<p>Josh: I would like to.  Elaine: And Hans? And Abby? We can only have two.  Abby: I'll back out.  Elaine: I will send the scheduling survey.</p> <p>Bob: You probably heard about the Patty's Place COVID thing. Even if you are vaccinated, the policy on the island is that if you are potentially exposed, you still have to quarantine.</p>	<b>Action Item</b>
<b>Adjourn 8:15 pm</b>	<p><b>Abby: Motion to adjourn.</b>  <b>Bob: Second</b>  <b>Pass 5-0</b></p>	<b>Motion to adjourn; Pass 5-0</b>

Minutes by: Elaine Ott-Rocheford