



AGENDA
JENSEN-OLSON ARBORETUM ADVISORY BOARD
Zoom Webinar
Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 5:15 P.M.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Agenda**
- III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Meeting of November 10, 2021
- V. New Business**
 - A. 2021 Annual Report
 - B. 15th Anniversary
 - C. Winter weather effects [*see Managers Report*]
- VI. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Residence water/internet update [*see Managers Report*]
- VII. Committee, Liaison, and/or Staff Reports**
 - A. Chair Report – N. McConahey
 - B. Manager Report – G. Hudson
 - C. Friends of JOA Report – P. Harris
 - D. Other Business
- VIII. Adjournment**

Next JOAB Meeting: Wednesday, May 11 at 5:15 – Zoom Webinar

DRAFT MINUTES JENSEN-OLSON ARBORETUM ADVISORY BOARD

Zoom Webinar | Wednesday, November 10, 2021 5:15 P.M.

I. Call to Order at 5:21 pm by Pat Harris

Present: Deborah Rudis, Peter Froehlich, Patricia Harris, Paulette Schirmer, Sarah Dolan, Kristin Bartlett, Rose Evans

Absent: Ed Buyarski, Nell McConahey

Staff Present: Ginger Hudson, Arboretum Manager; Michele Elfers, Deputy Director; Hunter Huddlestun, Staff Liaison; Lauren Verrelli, Recreation & Public Services Manager

II. Agenda Changes – None.

III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items – None.

IV. Approval of Minutes –

- A. Wednesday, August 11, 2021:** P. Froehlich moves to approve minutes, no objection.
Minutes adopted.

V. New Business –

A. Upcoming term expirations

L. Verrelli-We have four board members that have their terms expiring on January 31, 2022. You should have received an email from Granicus and we will send another email with a link for those who wish to reapply.

K. Bartlett-I was going to have another person from the school district that was going to take my place, but that didn't end up happening, so I will reapply.

B. Amalga Meadows Park Master Plan

M. Elfers- A couple years ago Kristi started a neighborhood group, and they were interested in creating a master plan with public input. First off we wanted to look at what's out there, what's the historic use and what the value is. In the first map is an assessment plan, different zones that we've noted to be historic use and ongoing use. Our other plan is circulation and connection plan and that's about the trails and how people get in and out of the park. The last map is impact zones and uses. This will set the management on different areas of the parks, some areas will be more protected because higher value of habitat. The boundary of the plan has been brought down to the Arboretum at the southern end of the property. We will be fixing the boundary so that the plan is not part of the easement for the arboretum.

P. Harris- What is the proper channel to make comments?

M. Elfers- You can give me a call or e-mail me at any time.

C. Residence Water & Filtration Options

G. Hudson-I have found an interim solution and that is delivery by Alaska Spring Water at a cost of \$1,000 a year. Michele has spoken with Nate at building maintenance about potentially installing a filter system in the residence. This would alleviate most of the delivery, however there is still no water in the gardener shed, so there would still possibly be some water delivery.

M. Elfers-We recently drilled at the Eagle Valley Center. We have a bond project to do energy efficiency upgrades. It was a little over \$70,000 to drill. Related to the Arboretum we started to look into other solutions. If the board wanted to make a motion to support use of the endowment funds to pay \$1,000 annual fee.

P. Froehlich- I feel the city owns the building; it should come from the city funds.

M. Elfers-These are unrestricted funds that are coming from the rent that the manager pays. The way its set up is that money goes to the endowment, but its stays as these unrestricted funds

P. Froehlich-I think that is different from the rent, it makes sense to me it is a landlord expense.

G. Hudson- During my discussion with Michelle this and internet are things that CBJ considers it should provide.

M. Elfers- We could put it in the budget. It would come out of the operating budget, which means Gingers discretionary money for the Arboretum drops by the cost of the water.

P. Harris-Would anyone want to make a motion to that effect that we use discretionary funds?

P. Schirmer-I would make a motion to use the discretionary funds to pay for the water.

M. Elfers- I would suggest changing term in the using the unrestricted funds, instead of discretionary.

P. Harris- Are there any objections?

P. Froehlich - I object, if we pick something up it will stay that way forever and I don't think it should.

P. Harris- What about a temporary time clause? I think the major point here is that if the city has to pay for it right now, funds are going to be reduced because it's not part of the Arboretum budget right now.

P. Froehlich- How about we amend a motion along the lines of, the rest of this fiscal year to give a stopgap to give the city a chance to deal with it on a more permanent basis.

P. Schirmer-That would be a good alteration to the amendment. It is in the information for the endowment that the expenditures for capital, improvements can be taken from the Support Fund for the benefit of the property, it is within our endowment information. I think running it right now, as a stop gap is probably a really good idea.

M. Elfers- Just a clarification by making a motion today in favor, this is for the budget for next year (FY23).

P. Froehlich-I will withdraw my objections.

P. Schirmer-My motion still stands. I move JOAAB recommends using the unrestricted funds to pay for the residence water.

S. Dolan-I still second.

Motion passes unanimously.

D. Internet upgrade options for residence

G. Hudson-I had an additional meeting with CBJ MIS department and further learned CBJ is limited by what the service provider's offer. Neither ACS nor GCI is willing to extend modern internet services out the road. There is one service that is currently available and that is Hughes Net for \$1,440 per year. It would give improved speed, currently our Internet service is one megabyte per second upload and download. Hughes net would offer three megabytes.

R. Evans-Has anyone checked with AT&T for internet?

G. Hudson-I'm guessing that you probably have to be within shot of a cell phone tower and that is the current issue with Snow Cloud trying to extend the reach of the cell phone towers.

P. Harris- Sounds like this question is still up in the air; Ginger can use more research.

VI. Unfinished Business –

A. Commercial Use policy & Administrative Supplement

M. Elfers- Parks and Rec has been going through a process to update our commercial use regulations at the Arboretum. There are three documents we are considering for commercial

use at the Arboretum. First is the Parks and Rec Commercial Use Regulation we are working on with Law. Then we have a policy for the Arboretum that would be more specific about commercial use at the Arboretum. Lastly, working with SEAL Trust on the conservation easement, which has information regarding commercial use specifically. In the conservation easement, an administrative supplement helps guide the Arboretum for commercial use. Last year, the board had reviewed the administrative supplemental draft that we worked on with SEAL Trust. We recently got an updated version from law that has some changes. For nonprofit commercial activity, this administrative supplement says, you can have nonprofit commercial activity as long as it meets the other goals and values of the conservation easement and the arboretum. For profit commercial use is on a case by case basis.

Krista Garrett (SEAL Trust) - We view these administrative supplements as clarifying documents and standing interpretations of the easement. The goal would be that CBJ does not have to come out every time about certain topics.

M. Elfers - We have sent the board the latest draft of the administrative supplement to look at and ask any questions. We also will be sending it to our city attorneys to review as well, and any questions or comments before it goes back to SEAL Trust after that review. We attached the policy that you reviewed before and that has been unchanged. What I would propose is that we just leave it as is until we get the commercial use regulation approved by the Assembly. Once we have the administrative supplement regulation, then you can look at the policy and make any more changes since the policy is going to be the document with the most detail. Once we look at that, we will send it back to SEALT for review and work with them on it to get some general allowances.

B. Memorial Policy Proposal

G. Hudson - Most public places have a memorial policy and I have received quite a few requests over the summer. I have created a draft memorial policy, which includes some memorial ideas. We have discussed putting a piece of art on the side of a building, say a tree or something and folks would purchase a goodbye leaf for their loved one.

P. Harris - I like the idea of something on the side of a building, I do not think we want to overrun the garden with plaques on plants and trees.

R. Evans - I liked how the Shrine is so intentional about their area. It doesn't have to be throughout the whole place but a certain part.

P. Harris - Maybe you could combine those two ideas, the central place for remembrance.

P. Harris - I suggest we table this until the next meeting, and that will give people a chance to brainstorm some creative alternatives.

VII. Committee Liaison and Staff Reports

A. Chair Report – None

B. Manager's Report: *Included in packet*

C. Friends of JOA:

Pat White - For our annual raffle we are raffling off about seven gifts and if anyone wants to buy a raffle, they are \$10 apiece. This is so we can raise money for the supplies.

D. Other business -None

Adjournment – 7:53p.m. *Having no further business before the Board.*

Respectfully submitted by Hunter Huddlestun, Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant I, 11/22/21.

Jensen-Olson Arboretum Advisory Board

Annual Report - 2021

To: CBJ Assembly Human Resources Committee
From: Nell McConahey, Chair. Jensen-Olson Arboretum Advisory Board
Date: February 2, 2022
Subject: Jensen-Olson Arboretum (JOA) Advisory Board 2021 Annual Report

The Jensen-Olson Arboretum (JOA) property was donated to the City of Juneau by Caroline Jensen on her passing and opened to the public in 2007. The property had been in her family since the late 1800's and had extensive gardens. Mrs. Jensen provided an Endowment, now worth over \$2.5 million which helps pay expenses. The property is also part of Southeast Alaska Land Trust. Both the wishes of Mrs. Jensen and SEALT guidelines help the Advisory Board and CBJ Parks and Recreation Department decide the best ways to operate and maintain the property. Friends of the Jensen-Olson Arboretum (FJOA) is the non-profit organization that does fund raising and special projects at the property.

Ginger Hudson joined the JOA in January of 2021 as the new manager. She and her husband moved from Anchorage to live in the home at JOA as required by the job. We are very happy to have her skills and interest in gardening and to be the team leader at the Arboretum. Because of its 'out the road' location, Internet access and water quality on the premises have been a challenge. City staff have assisted in trying to solve issues, so the residents and visitors have a better experience on site. Resolutions are ongoing.

FJOA held a Grand Opening for the 'Lovely Loo', a permanent vault toilet. They coordinated fundraising and grants to build the loo that replaced a porta-potty. They also created a call for art to decorate the interior of the loo. Sitka artist Larisa Manewal was granted the award and painted the interior of the space with a mural of native plants and birds.

Over 7000 visitors came in 2021. Weddings, school groups, girl scouts, Sealaska Heritage Classes and other events were held. A composting area, for education and garden use was reorganized, and new paving stones installed. The manager presented online at American Public Gardens Association and Alaska Invasive Species Conference among others. Some invasive Mountain Ash trees, a bear attractor, were removed from the property making it safer for all. Onsite seeds were saved and shared with American Primrose Society and National Rock Garden Society Seed Exchanges. While open 5 days a week in the summer, it was decided to reduce winter to 3 days a week (Friday to Sunday) to allow for the manager to access CBJ services in town.

The Board's challenge for the past few years has been creating a Commercial Use policy that works for Mrs. Jensen's wishes, SEALT, and CBJ Parks and Recreation. After an update last year to the P&R Commercial policy, JOAAB has rewritten its suggestions and those are currently with CBJ Law and SEALT for approval.

2022 is JOA's 15th Anniversary. All residents of Juneau are invited to stop in the Jensen-Olson Arboretum and enjoy the plants, the location, and if you are lucky, a docent may be available to tell you more.

Jensen-Olson Arboretum, Manager's Report to the Advisory Board

February 2, 2022

- Budget procedure, (built Dec-Feb) and use of nonrestricted funds in FY23

JOA requested \$13,000 of the endowment's nonrestricted funds be added to the FY23 budget.

These funds will purchase a whole-house water filter device, replacing the water softener.

They will also go toward replacing the copper and lead plumbing with Pex pipe.

JOA also requested \$5,500 of the endowment's nonrestricted funds for installation of satellite internet service. CBJ MIS said this works with their operations. Satellite internet will increase bandwidth, which should enable me to give or interact with online presentations.

- Winter weather effects

JOA purchased a 44" snow blower attachment for \$2,000 for the onsite John Deere tractor mower. The attachment was missing a part on arrival, my husband Ken located a fabricator in-town to make the part and avoid shipping. It is a challenge to get up over the crest of the driveway. I use the walk-behind Honda snow blower to clear a path, then the larger machine gets up and clears the parking lot much faster than the Honda. It arrived just in time for the 41 inches of snow that eventually blanketed the grounds. The John Deere attachment is powerful enough to handle the berm created by DOT at the drive entry, so far. This system replaced a front loader that the previous manager used to get on loan from P&R.

The thick snow arrived before the deep freeze and that is fantastic for the garden beds. However, as with everyone in town, it became a challenge to move and store snow. When the temperatures rose and it began raining in January, rain and run-off from Pt. Caroline Trail into the garden at the entry plaza created a large pond. This happened three times, as of January 27. Because of the surrounding snow depth, the pond was not able to drain for days at a time. Some beds have been soaked and the ground thawed in that area. I can only wait and see how the water might affect those plantings.

Paths, the parking lot, the driveway, and the Pt. Caroline Trail have been icy for several weeks.

P&R crew graveled the parking lot and driveway well. So far no slipping.

In winter wildlife news, a porcupine was observed waddling in circles on the snow between the residence and the garage two days in a row.

A Sitka deer was seen eating lichen out of the birch by the gardeners shed, two days in a row.

The second day it leapt over the 40-inch high berm of snow at the walkway.

One 7-inch diameter, dead tree fell across the entry path about 15 yards from the entry gate. No one was on the path at the time. The trunk was cut and moved from blocking the path.

CBJ maintenance installed and re-piped an above ground heating fuel oil tank. Decommission of the underground tank was postponed until this summer.

- FJOA ARPA Grant plans

FJOA received an ARPA (federal American Rescue Plan Act) Easy Grant of \$3,500 in October 2021 to use toward upgrading JOAs online resources, to be spent by Sept 2022.

- 15th Anniversary plans/FJOA

Mother's Day, Day of Primula, Alaska Public Gardens day- SEAL Trust will be in attendance, community garden groups picnic, Tidepooling and Seaweed identification class, BugDay; Special installation and FJOA docents at the City Museum

- Hours of operation and staffing

Reduced winter hours, mid-October through mid-March open Friday – Sunday 9a – 4p have worked well. I have not received any negative feedback. Since the weather has been so extreme this winter, even Point Caroline visitation is low. My normal schedule remains Wednesday – Sunday 9a-5pm. In order to meet with other P&R employees and to utilize faster internet, weather permitting, I continue to travel to the City Hall P&R office on Wednesdays and some Thursdays.

I have reached out to one past seasonal worker to see if they want to return. When I return from the NWFGF mid-Feb it will be time to start the seasonal hiring process.

- Outreach:

Interview on KTOO Juneau Afternoon with Rhonda McBride, January 25. Discussed the effects of climate change on gardening at JOA; upcoming presentation at NWFGF; plans for JOA's 15th Anniversary in coordination with FJOA

On February 9, I will be part of a panel speaking on gardening for climate change resilience at the Northwest Flower and Garden Festival in Seattle. I am representing JOA and its maritime environment. On February 10, I will have a stand-alone presentation on Alaska hardy plants that may survive PNW gardens, tested at JOA. The Wednesday Seminar description here:

<https://gardenshow.com/seminars/schedule/wed>

Thank you for your support of the arboretum.

Submitted by Ginger Hudson

JOA Manager's 2021 Annual Report to the JOA Advisory Board

The year seemed to go by fast for me after arriving during an unusually warm January. Residence activities kept me busy the first month. During this time renovation of the main bathroom in the structure was completed; tender plants were covered to protect for cold due to lack of snow; sewage outflow problems were addressed; two bear-attracting European Mountain Ash were removed; water quality was questioned; and weak internet performance inspected. Former Manager Merrill Jensen returned to Juneau in spring to walk me through the property and discuss plant collections, maintenance, wildlife, and more.

JOA landscape and residence water is supplied by an onsite well that has been the same since Caroline Jensen lived on the property. I was informed before moving in that the water is high in iron and sulfur, and the well has the potential to run low when the landscape needs extended periods of water. I requested a comprehensive test which indicated the interior residence plumbing was leaching copper and lead into the water. The director of building maintenance recommended a proper water filter system to replace the water softener. Deputy Director of Parks & Rec Michele Elfers and I determined that the filter system and new plumbing are appropriate uses of nondiscretionary funds from the JOA endowment. We requested \$13,000 of those funds for the FY23 budget cycle to purchase the materials. Building maintenance will install the system when funds are disbursed.

A major obstacle that occupied much of my administrative time was determining why I could not serve as presenter or participate smoothly in online meetings (zoom, etc.) Online meetings have become common place during the pandemic and I am called on often to give informative presentations on various aspects of JOA in addition to general gardening topics. Internet was installed at JOA in 2007 and technology as not been upgraded since. As a result, the service does not have the bandwidth to handle video intensive meetings. Since the major providers in Juneau are not investing in new services, my husband and I researched and worked through the year to find a solution for JOA's remote location. My husband has been an active participant in troubleshooting the internet service since it also affects our personal usage. JOAAB heard the results at the November meeting and recommended use of nondiscretionary funds to proceed with satellite internet service. The funds have been requested and will be

disbursed with the FY23 CBJ budget cycle. In the interim, I travel to town for most of my online meeting requirements.

FJOA held a Grand Opening for the new permanent vault toilet named the Lovely Loo with Mayor Beth Weldon cutting the toilet-paper ribbon. After inspection, I determined the Loo needed some beautification. A contest spear-headed with the assistance of JOAAB President Nell McConahey, and a grant awarded by FJOA to Sitkan Larisa Manewal resulted in a mural of native plants and birds with a bright background. The art greatly improves the interior light. The Loo is a vital part of JOA, it is often the first place visited by guests.

As visitation increased and when seasonal gardeners started, I worked to ensure we had safe and healthy working conditions to mitigate COVID. The arboretum continued to successfully serve the Juneau community as a welcoming outdoor space during recurring COVID surges. Despite the virus, two grade school groups adopted safety and mitigation plans to take advantage of JOA for botanical education field work. Two weddings were held onsite, one large and one small, each implementing their own COVID mitigation plans. The Friends of the Jensen Olson Arboretum also created COVID safety precautions in order to return to hosting onsite educational activities: Tidepooling for Families, and BugDay! Out-of-state visitors also graced the grounds, most were independent travelers. Toward the end of the summer a handful of visitors came from cruise ships.

One seasonal garden left JOA for another opportunity at the end of May. It took a month to find a replacement. My husband Ken took leave from his job to act as my number one volunteer to help fill the gap during that month. Ken contributed to the renovation of the pathway, cutting and chipping tree debris, and mowing and edging among other tasks.

Highlights:

7,000 visitation

The Loo opened

1 new interpretive sign installed for Lichen

2 weddings

1 school group

1 Girl Scout group

2 FJOA educational events

2 Devil's Club, S'áxt', harvest partnership workshops with Sealaksa Heritage

1 new FJOA event, Solstice in the Garden

The first edition of *A Field Guide to Selected Plants Jensen-Olson Arboretum* was produced by Merrill and Kelly Jensen, and printed by FJOA

Onsite compost harvesting, creation of 2 compost display bins

Remodel of pathway from driveway to residence and gardener's shed, \$960, one-half of cost contributed by FJOA

First online plant and seed sales events in coordination with FJOA raised \$3,200

6 online presentations by manager including American Public Gardens Association and Alaska Invasive Species Conference

Participation in the Alaska Bee Atlas Survey

3 radio or other media appearances by manager

73 volunteer hours contributed by FJOA

100+ pounds of produce donated to local charities

2 repeat bears with no significant closures

3 bear-attracting and pest species Mountain Ash trees removed

Replacement of underground fuel oil tank with above ground tank

Purchase of 44-inch snow blower attachment for John Deere tractor mower, \$2,300

12 varieties of Primula donated to American Primrose Society seed exchange

9 plant species donated to the National Rock Garden Society seed exchange

Request of use of nondiscretionary endowment funds to upgrade internet

Request of use of nondiscretionary endowment funds to install residence water filtration system and replace plumbing

An additional large European Mountain Ash, *Sorbus acuparia*, was removed from around the property's power pole. All tree removals must be approved by the Southeast Alaska Land Trust and they are in support of removing these trees. It is an ongoing process undertaken by JOA's previous manager. I will continue to work on removal of this species and planting selected varieties to augment the arboretum certification.

Weather was a minor challenge in the spring season. After a welcome warm spell in April, late May into June was influenced by a long rain spell which lowered the ground temperature. The lower temperatures affected vegetable production, yet the perennials persisted.

The Primula collection bloomed well, and a few varieties bloomed that had suffered through the wet summer of 2020 and hot summer of 2019. These special varieties included *Primula waltonii* and *P. capitata*.

Winter arrived somewhat on time in late October blanketing the ground with snow that is persisting through January. Snow continued through November and December before a deep freeze gripped Juneau for two weeks. As of January 9, close to 42-inches of snow are protecting the garden beds from the extreme temperatures. Removal of snow from the parking area and driveway was once done with a front-loader on loan from Parks & Rec. The aged machine broke down and was deemed not necessary to replace. As a result, it was incumbent on me to find an alternative. Last winter the Eagle Valley Center allowed me to use their plow truck. Though helpful, it proved tough to pick up if I could not get out of the JOA property. After much research with assistance from my husband, I settled on a snow blower attachment for the John Deere tractor mower. It was advantageous to use the John Deere since it was already on site and since the JOA pickup truck is not up for replacement for four more years. The attachment cost \$2,300 with freight and was paid with operational funds.

I worked with Deputy Director of Parks & Rec to reduce arboretum ground open hours in the winter. We both agree that weather and road conditions hinder folks from visiting the arboretum in winter. Open hours were changed to Friday – Sunday, 9a-4p, November – March. I remain working Wednesday – Sunday, 9a-5p. There has been no adverse reaction to the change in open hours.

Endowment funds continue to increase due to positive investment growth. The endowment contribution toward JOA FY23 budget is increasing 6%, \$106,200 up from \$100,500 in FY22. I look forward to a well-visited summer of 2022 with predicted return of cruise ships. In following years I look forward to a continued healthy budget.

Thank you JOAAB for your continued support and suggestions on operations for JOA, residential operations, and horticulture selections.

Respectfully submitted January 2022 by Ginger Hudson