

MINUTES JENSEN-OLSON ARBORETUM ADVISORY BOARD

Zoom Webinar | Wednesday, August 11, 2021 5:15 P.M.

I. Call to Order at 5:19 pm by Co-Chair, Ed Buyarski

Present: Nell McConahey, Deborah Rudis, Ed Buyarski, Patricia Harris, Paulette Schirmer, Sarah Dolan

Absent: Kristin Bartlett, Rose Evans, Peter Froehlich

Staff Present: Ginger Hudson, Arboretum Manager; Amanda Babin, Staff Liaison

II. Agenda Changes – None.

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

IV. Approval of Minutes –

A. Wednesday, May 12, 2021: P. Harris moves to approve minutes, no objection. *Minutes adopted.*

B. Subcommittee Wednesday, May 12, 2021: P. Harris moves to approve minutes, no objection. *Minutes adopted.*

V. New Business – None.

VI. Unfinished Business –

A. Revenues withheld for household use:

G. Hudson: Right now the FY22 JOA Endowment Distribution for Unrestricted – Rents and Donations is \$71,099. Michele Elfers encouraged me to make a list of things that we could spend that on. For the manager's residence, the two biggest concerns are water quality and internet. This is a list of priorities from my perspective on how the unrestricted funds can be spent. I put it in priority because I know renovating the kitchen was on the list. While that would be nice, for quality of life and business purposes internet and water are more important. Window replacement was previously on the list but has been removed and will be a CBJ Capital Improvement project instead. For the next endowment committee meeting I hope to have more data on the cost to improve the internet. Right now, it doesn't even meet rural standards. CBJ MIS does not think they can tackle it. Someone from CBJ Law may need to review the contracts.

S. Dolan: I read the water quality report and although it's marked under the maximum amount it seemed a little high. What are you doing for drinking water right now?

G. Hudson: I have contracted with Alaska Spring Water for bottled water for drinking and cooking. That comes out of my CBJ budget. I'm tracking that in hopes to present the cost to CBJ and say that if we can't fix the water then CBJ needs to cover this cost under my utilities. I have a filter on my showerhead and under the bathroom sink. What is disturbing is the water is worse coming out of the house than in the well. That's another Capital Improvement Project that CBJ might have to take on. I've tried different standard retail filter options and those don't work. I'm looking for ideas for whole house filters. The idea of a cistern tied in with whatever new supply we have. The other idea, which takes a lot of money, is drilling a new well in another location. Michele advised us to wait and see how much it's going to cost down at the Eagle Valley Center.

D. Rudis: Electrical outlets and lack of them was on the list. Is there any fire hazard for the existing ones?

G. Hudson: I'm not an electrical engineer but in the house itself there are some junction boxes that I question. The wiring in the garage is very old and still paper wrapped so that

is a potential fire hazard. All the panels are new so its surprising new wire wasn't run at the time they replaced the panels.

D. Rudis: I worry about fire because the Arboretum is so far away from response. Maybe that should be bumped up for the city to consider.

E. Buyarski: If you had a cistern with a separate pump and a generator that could help provide you with some additional fire protection.

VII. Committee Liaison and Staff Reports

A. Chair Report – None.

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

C. Friends of JOA:

P. Harris: We had the solstice event and I think our net for that event was about \$1,000, part of that was an auction. The Lovely Loo art contest winner is Larisa Manewal with her project called "Light". Her project involves luminescent tiles and a floral mural that will cover three walls of the Loo. We held two family events, Intertidal Day and Bug Day, both a great success. We are thinking about hiring an education coordinator to coordinate both family programs and adult programs. For several years we've been talking about trying to get more adult education programs at the Arboretum. Our annual raffle tickets will be going on sale in the fall. Funds this year will be used to augment the potting shed area behind the garage. It's pretty wet back there so we're going to put a roof on, probably shielding the new oil tank, and some other improvements. The field guide has been published and it's gorgeous. Members at the family level and above get a 20% discount on the field guide. The online plant sale is taking place in lieu of the super plant sale we always have in the spring that hasn't happened in two years. It takes a lot of coordination between Ginger, the gardener's, people that check the emails and the webmaster but I think it's working okay and has been very successful. At this point our membership's status is 86 annual members, which includes couples so probably over 100 people, and 23 life memberships.

D. Other business

G. Hudson: Is there any feedback that you all have from the community?

D. Rudis: I did have two people mention to me they were disappointed in the number of weeds. I explained that you had lost staff this summer and they said "oh that explains it".

E. Buyarski: We can introduce volunteers to weeds as an option.

S. Dolan: I had some friends in town and they said it was "heaven on earth" and loved it out there. They said everything was cohesive but there were distinct separate areas and they enjoyed them all.

P. Schirmer: I had four or five friends who went out there and said rain or shine it was gorgeous and relaxing.

P. Harris: Ginger I really appreciate you including Sealaska Heritage in the devils club workshops. I think that's brilliant and I hope we can do more things like that. I'd like to see some development in the word garden, especially Tlingit words and the English equivalent.

E. Buyarski: My wife coordinates the gardens over at The Shrine and there's a lot of referrals back and forth since its right there across the cove. It's a pretty incredible neighborhood overall and we hear it both ways, great gardens, different gardens.

Adjournment – 5:56p.m. Having no further business before the Board.

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Babin, Parks & Recreation, 10/24/21.

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

August 11, 2021

- The cool and second rainiest May on record stunted the growth of most direct seeded vegetables. Despite the rain, we succeeded in sheltering a few pumpkins that have set fruit! Otherwise the weather has been fine for great perennial displays.
- The extended May rain did affect seed production of early season Primula. Late season Primula have ripening seed heads at this time.
- Successful BugDay held with family groups separated for Covid mitigation. Over 30 people in attendance. Volunteers included FJOA members, USFS employees, AKF&W employee, and librarians.
- We used BugDay as one of our field day collections and identifications of Alaska bumble bees and the plants they pollinate. This is part of the partnership with the BLM and UAA herbarium's Alaska Bee Atlas Survey.
- The first and we hope to be annual summer Solstice fundraiser held onsite by the FJOA on June 20. Lite dinner, music, and a silent auction was held.
- Sealaska Heritage conducted two devil's club, *S'áxt'*, *Oplopanax horridus*, harvesting workshops at JOA on May 12 and July 1. Overgrown specimens by the manager's residence were removed, plants were trimmed along the driveway. Sealaska brought interns from around the county to the second workshop. At each event, participants learned where, when, and how to harvest then processed for personal use offsite.
- 47 lbs of vegetables, herbs, and fruit have been donated to Zach Gordon Youth Center, the Glory Hall, and traded to Coppa for rhubarb sorbet—the sorbet donated to P&R admin office.
- Two weddings are scheduled at JOA in August.
- An offer has been made to an artist to beautify the interior of the Lovely Loo vault toilet, we are awaiting a reply.
- The underground fuel oil storage tank onsite since the 1960s when the current residence was built is being replaced. A new tank will be installed above ground next to the propane tank on the exterior wall outside the manager's office. The in-ground tank will be emptied, cut open, and filled with sand. Work to be completed in August-Sept.
- AEL&P has advised that the European mountain ash, *Sorbus acuparia*, growing near the onsite power pole needs to be removed. AEL&P has offered to take the tree down as a donation. I will be

requesting permission from SEAL Trust per the conservation easement. I will also request to remove two other ash in the same area that are encroaching on two native coastal pines, *Pinus contorta*.

- Staff of Parks and Landscape came to JOA with a bobcat and chipper/shredder to help with two projects: turning a large, years-old compost pile and shredding the large bits; and removing the previous stone pathway leading from the driveway to the house and shed. By time this JOAAB meeting occurs, the front path should be complete, composed of smooth pre-cast pavers with a natural stone side path leading to the Primula display shelf by the gardener's shed.
- At the end of May I lost one of my seasonal staff who took an offer for a higher paying opportunity. It took a while to find another groundskeeper assistant, I actually recruited Jacob Dangeli from Don Abel. Jacob works at Eaglecrest in the winter. Jacob is from Juneau, has worked in construction, studied Formline art, and is interested in gardening. He began work at JOA on July 7. He has been invaluable in catching us up with groundwork, heavy projects, especially the fuel tank pad and front path renovation.
- I hope everyone saw my interview in the Juneau Empire on July 25. I spoke to KINY on Capital Chat on Friday the 23rd.

Thank you for your support of the arboretum.

Submitted by Ginger Hudson