

FICRA Building Trust Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 10, 2021, 8:00PM
Nichols Community Center, Fox Island, Washington

2021-2022 FICRA Trust Board

Howard Stapleton	President
Arlyn Lawrence	Vice President
Gina Olson	Secretary
Hal Goodell	Treasurer
Craig McLaughlin	Director

TRUST Board Attendees: Hal Goodell, Arlyn Lawrence, Craig McLaughlin, Gina Olson, and Howard Stapleton all in attendance.

Other Attendees: Diane Abney (Audit Committee), Jim Braden (Project Manager), Joan Broughton (Audit Committee), Ed Burrough (Nature Center Committee), Karen Craven, Philip Craven (Nature Center Committee), Mike Gage, Naomi Grant (Chapel), Renee LeBon, Cheryl Nelson, Lance Powers (FICRA President), Tom and Noranne Skaanland, Dave Walker, Terry Wall (Nature Center Committee), Candy Wawro (FICRA Board & Rental Coordinator)

Howard Stapleton called the meeting to order at 8:13PM.

Ray Kittelberger's Work with the Trust: Ray Kittelberger, a long-term volunteer for several years who has made significant contributions to FICRA and the Trust, including Citizens' Patrol, the Audit Committee, Emergency Preparation Planning, Volunteer coordination and senior groups, has decided to step down from active participation and volunteer positions. The Board recognizes Ray for his generous gift of time to all these important projects and activities on Fox Island. It is also noted that Ray personally assisted many residents in getting COVID-19 vaccinations by taking the time to track and notify others of the locations and availability of vaccines. He will continue to be a consultant to the boards. Craig proposed that Jim write a letter formally thanking him, and Cheryl Nelson suggested that Ray be the Grand Marshal at the next Fair. The Board unanimously adopted a **motion to send a letter thanking Ray and inviting him to be the Grand Marshal at the next Fair.**

Public Comment: Naomi Grant reported that the Chapel request for a Conditional Use Permit is under review by Pierce County. A Zoom meeting is scheduled for June 16th with the Hearing Examiner. Additional information and links to the meeting are available at saveoutchapel.net. Naomi encourages anyone who is interested to attend the meeting, sign the online petition, and give their support. She also noted that the prior lawsuit was dropped, and the suing party moved away from 6th.

Meeting Minutes: There were no changes to the 5/13/2021 Board Meeting Minutes as posted on the website. Craig made a motion to approve, Arlyn seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved. Minutes from a separate Board Meeting on 5/30/2021 to address NCC Use Policy were also unanimously approved as posted on the website.

Removal of Trees on the South Property Line of the Nature Center: Ed Burrough, Terry Wall and Phil Craven from the Nature Center Committee (NCC) presented information.

Ed provided an overview of the Nature Center, stating that there are work parties monthly all year round to maintain the trails and support native plant growth. He emphasized that it is not a park, but a nature center. He thanked Jim Braden for his work with the NCC, Pierce County and Mamea family to correct the property line boundary resulting from a survey error. During this process, they noticed 4 large “top heavy” alders close to the Mameas’ house and proposed that they be removed. Jim also proposed to cutting/clear 16 additional alder trees near the Mamea property line that are potentially at risk of falling onto their property. Jim noted that the Mamea family has not made any request for the additional trees to be removed, but it was proposed by the company who has bid to remove the originally identified 4. Some of them have broken tops, are partially dead, and may, if they fall, possibly drop into the Mamea property. None of the additional 16 are a threat to existing structures. Ed reported that the NCC reviewed the proposal and completed additional research and recommends that the 16 trees be allowed to remain standing, citing the importance of Alder trees.

Phil Craven thanked Jim and the Board for their work and presented additional information related to the creation of the Nature Center. Phil stated that the property was purchased specifically to be preserved as a “Nature Center”. Eagle Scout candidates have completed projects over the years, including bridges, trails and picnic tables. When a proposal was made to clear sites for camping, the community became concerned and the NCC was subsequently formed to advise on the maintenance and use of the property. The NCC exists “To support, preserve, and maintain the Fox Island Nature Center in a natural condition into perpetuity, and to promote public education and low impact use of the Center in a manner compatible with preservation.” The NCC was formed to be a counsel to the Board on proposals such as this. The NCC formally objects to the removal of any trees other than the 4 which are near the Mamea home.

Phil noted that Terry Mace inspects the trails weekly, and when debris falls on the trails, it is cleared in the most natural way. Alders are important tree in succession of forest redevelopment, holding and fixing nitrogen, and liberating more nutrients, breaking up clay to help the maturation and development of the forest. Snags can take up to 5-10 years to fall, even after the tree has died. They are a great home for bats, birds, squirrels and other animals. Cutting down dead trees is not in line with the preservation of the Nature Center, because standing dead fall is part of nature. It also sets a concerning precedent for the future. Insurance inspectors have confirmed that any falling trees in the NCC are considered an Act of God, so the NCC focuses on maintaining the safety of structures they have built for visitors to read, walk/step on, or sit down on.

After questions from Board members and additional discussion, Gina made a **motion, in agreement with the NCC recommendations, to approve the removal of the 4 trees Alder trees near the Mamea home, and allow the other 16 trees near the property line to remain standing in their natural state of age and decay.** Hal seconded the motion, and Gina, Hal, Howard and Arlyn voted to approve. The motion passed with a single dissenting vote from Craig.

Treasurer's Report: Hal Goodell shared the financial reports as of May 31, 2021 online with attendees. The following information was presented:

Building Trust Balances

Trust Checking account: May 1 Balance: \$ 23,818.71 May 31 Balance: \$ 20,060.91

Trust Savings: May 1 Balance: \$ 413.90 May 31 Balance \$ 475.20

Trust PayPal: May 1 Balance: \$ 2,911.82 May 31 Balance \$ 5,532.32

Trust Capital Checking: May 1 Balance: \$ 3,683.22 May 31 Balance: \$ 7,983.22

Trust Reserve Checking: May 1 Balance: \$ 319.98 May 31 Balance: \$ 319.98

Trust Money Market: May 1 Balance: \$ 378,320.62 May 31 Balance: \$ 354,099.95

The service fee problem with Sound Credit Union has been resolved. It is now a free business checking account. Craig noted that 501(c)(3) are eligible for PayPal payment processing discounts. Hal is aware of this and working to resolve our account status with PayPal.

Funds need to be transferred from Money Market to Capital Checking to pay for fencing which will be reimbursed by FICRA. Hal made a **motion to approve the transfer of up to \$12,000 from Trust Money Market to Trust Capital Checking to pay for the ball field renovation project by Wes King, to be reimbursed by FICRA completion.** Craig seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Standing Committees:

Jim Braden provides a detailed report for Board members regarding Trust Committees activities in advance of the monthly meeting and a verbal summary is presented at the meeting.

Citizens' Patrol – Jim reports the month has been quiet in regards to crime on the island.

Emergency Preparedness – Jim needs to discuss what we have planned for the Fair.

Trust Building and Grounds – Jim needs to have carpenter help with some projects and assistance with spring cleaning. He would like to see social media posts soliciting assistance. Jim briefly discussed a FICRA & Building Trust Project Form to be used in reviewing proposed projects. He feels this is a good way to document and approve of proposed projects. He would like to see future projects included in the Trust Capital Expenditures Report.

Unfinished Business:

Status of NCC Usage and Rates Discussions – Craig volunteered to create the draft for rental usage policy. The board is trying to create a set of use policies that can answer basic questions for future rentals and use as a reference by the Rental Coordinator. Craig noted that FICRA currently pays the Trust annually for their usage and would like to see the relationship between the FICRA Board and the Trust Board better defined.

The Trust Board will be hosting a meeting on June 15th to gather input from neighbors adjacent to the NCC who may be impacted by noise, parking, frequency of use, etc. The next step will be to survey/gather input from residents of the entire island survey. Howard emphasized that the community needs to have a voice before policies can be set. Howard also requested that Lance Powers, who has a lot of experience with rentals, provide input. Craig responded that he would appreciate help from Lance in drafting documents.

Lance asked that the Board allow the recurring rental by his group to continue until new use policies are established. Craig made a **motion that the Board extend the rental agreement on a month-to-month basis beyond the current July 11 termination date, including a 30-day advance notice preemption requirement.** Arlyn seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved it.

Lance requested/suggested that the current rental amount for his group be increased from the “community use” amount to the rate charged for a ½ day rental by a FICRA member or non-profit group, which is noted by the board to be significantly higher amount than the amount currently paid. Lance believes this is more in line with what is considered the going rate in Pierce County and believes it is best for the community center. The board accepted the proposal by Lance representing Fox Island Foursquare Church.

NCC Internet Service – There is currently no internet service at the NCC, which many rental venues provide. Hal believes that we can increase our rental rates to cover the cost. Howard noted that Comcast does not currently offer reduced prices for a 501(c)(3), which means our monthly cost for 100 Mbps business service would be approximately \$150 dollars/month. 200 Mbps service is approximately \$185/month. The price increases about \$15/month for the 2nd and 3rd years. The installation cost is offset by a VISA gift card. T-Mobile has better pricing for wireless Home Internet service, but it uses something called “carrier grade NAT”, which would not allow us to view security cameras and access a security system offsite, and the service speed and availability is still unreliable. Howard suggests we only agree to a 2 year contract to see if other competitive offerings become available. Jim believes that the Board should be thoughtful about incurring ongoing expense, and consider how the service will be supported. Howard indicated that he looked at business instead of residential service because it is more reliable and fully supported by Comcast. Residential service would a lower monthly cost but would require internal support. Due to the length of the current meeting, consideration of internet service will be deferred a future meeting. The Trust would like the FICRA Board to discuss the issue and advise the Trust of their needs.

New Business:

Wickline Family Holiday Concert at NCC on Sunday, December 5, 2021 – The Tree Lighting and Holiday Concert is a FICRA sponsored event, so the FICRA Board will address this.

NCC Video Surveillance System – Jim reported that the donation from the Men’s Coffee group that was originally to be used for air conditioning the NCC Auditorium will instead be used for a video surveillance system. George Metzger has agreed to manage the project for the Trust.

FICRA Fair – Hal reports that a smaller version of the FICRA Fair is on the calendar for Saturday, August 14th. Music has been lined up for the entire fair. The Chapel will be providing is hot dogs and wine. The special occasion permit has been applied for. There will be some booths, and Citizens’ Patrol and Emergency Planning are expected to participate. The garden clubs will do the flower show. A volunteer is still needed to do Bingo. Information on the Fair needs to go out in July (combined with CP information) and a printed newsletter should be mailed the first week of July. Gina reported that the FICRA Fair Shirt Committee has a design idea in progress that Trust Board have each individually expressed support for.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00PM. The next FICRA Trust Board Meeting is currently scheduled for 8:00PM on Thursday, July 8th at the NCC.

Respectfully submitted by Gina Olson, Jim Braden and Howard Stapleton

DRAFT