

ForeverGreen Trails Board Retreat

Tacoma Nature Center

January 13, 2016

In Attendance: Barbara Skinner, Bob Myrick, Brianna Charbonnel, Bryan Bowden, Chris Beale, Ernie Bay, Gary Cooper, George Walk, Jane Moore, Kurt Reuter, Shawn Phelps, Terry Reid, Tony Tipton

President Chris Beale called the retreat to order at 12:31 PM and opened the meeting with introductions and an icebreaker.

What does ForeverGreen Trails do?

Round-robin discussion; review mission and vision

Chris mentioned that the Executive Board thinks that it would be good to hear from Board members on what ForeverGreen Trails should do. A round robin discussion took place.

- Bob Myrick talked about finding politicians and other officials that are interested in trails and working with them on building trails.
- Barbara sees ForeverGreen as an organization that informs the public of trails and opportunities and attempts to influence agencies to add to these opportunities.
- Bryan sees a void in that there is no one entity that controls all jurisdictions and ForeverGreen tries to fill this void by seeking collaboration.
- Kurt feels that advocacy and collaboration are primary activities. We should work to have our voices heard throughout government, including the State Legislature.
- Ernie feels that we are unique in that we have both advocates and political movers and shakers on the Board. He thinks the Annual Trails Conference is very important.
- Barbara feels that we should be able to get more money, perhaps through a project that we ask for funding on. Fundraising should be a focus this year.
- Chris agrees that we need a more sustainable source of funding. Trail stewardship could be a way to achieve this and should be one of our goals and part of our mission statement.
- Barbara said we need to make sure that we don't get in the way of work of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition.
- Ernie thinks we need more involvement with Puyallup Tribe
- Terry discussed efforts by physicians who write "prescriptions" for patients for physical activity and using trails. He thinks this is a connection that is worth exploring. He feels that the health care community could be great advocates for trails.
- Chris thinks that we should make connections with smaller trail advocacy groups.
- Tony thinks that we should remove the last part of the Vision statement that says "advocate for financial and technical resources to design and construct trails", since it is redundant with first sentence of Vision. (this will be done)
- Tony thinks that there has been enough visioning and we need implementation. He also feels that we need to energize the public to get involved in advocating for trails 365 days a year, not just once in a while.
- Tony alluded to the momentum that there is to raise the minimum wage. Kurt mentioned that traction will come when trails become part of election platforms. He feels that ForeverGreen can be integral in increasing advocacy.
- Gary feels that one of the biggest obstacles is that citizens don't want to pay extra for a bond or fees that fund parks.
- Tony feels that government should be more involved in engaging the community on being healthy.

Long Term Goals

Chris led the Board through the Long Term Goals

1. Tony feels that the Pierce County Regional Trails Plan should still be the overarching document guiding trail development in the County. Jane mentioned that ForeverGreen has funds to work with agencies in 2016 through Puyallup Watershed Initiative (PWI) funding. Ernie proposes that we work with politicians to get commitment on voting for trails.
2. Chris suggests that a Board member sit down with local Parks leaders about what their budget is for trail development and preservation.
3. Tony reminded the Board that their historically wasn't design that required construction of trail and sidewalks. Tony mentioned that the recently adopted Complete Streets Ordinance as an example of this type of action. Chris suggested and the Board agreed to change the language to "advocate for design standards that accommodate pedestrians and bicycles".
4. This goal will remain, as it is fundamental to the organization.
5. This will remain a goal.
6. Keep, but remove last part – "and for related public relations"

Short Term Goals & Action Planning

Jane passed out handouts of the Short Term Goals and Activities and a new table that has the Long Term and Short Term Goals side by side. The Board went through the Short Term Goals one by one.

1. Keep as is. Also add a goal relating to the Pierce County Parks Impact Fees and add names of participants – Kirk as lead,

Jane/Buzz/Gary as alternates.

2. Keep. Bryan mentioned that Tribe included a trail in their Transportation Improvement Program recently and that Pierce County and the Tribe will be meeting with the Tribe on the relationship of the proposed Canyon Road extension over the Puyallup River with trail construction.
3. Keep goal and involve Board members in future as needed. Add a statement about supporting grant applications.
4. Keep. There is funding from the PWI for this.
5. Keep, but discuss the level of involvement at future Board meeting.
6. Puyallup Watershed Initiative (PWI)
 - a. Keep. White paper being revised this month.
 - b. Keep, but revise to include only community workshops. Prioritization will take place in 2016.
 - c. Complete. Remove.
 - d. Model program complete. Rewrite to address outreach (Chris lead).
 - e. 2016 funded PWI items will be added to this goal. Jane talked about new funded PWI proposals for workshops to train advocates for public speaking and educating public officials. There was discussion about Board members talking to agency staff before Council meetings. The Trails Conference is also partially funded by PWI.
7. Keep. Chris thinks we should broaden this to include a strategic plan for sustainable funding.
8. Keep as ongoing effort to reach the media about the importance of trails. Bob mentioned that the PWI Economic and Health Benefits study is done. Tony suggested that the Board role could be to regularly share the report and findings to elected officials. Chris put forward the idea of a quarterly newsletter. ForeverGreen also adds content to the monthly PWI newsletter.
9. Keep
10. Keep
11. Keep
12. Keep
13. Keep – part of PWI Active Transportation Community of Interest (AT COI) effort. The Forests COI is putting together a public opinion poll for sustainable funding for forest lands. Other COIs, including AT are participating. The public will be asked about what types of activities and facilities they are willing to fund with a bond measure.
14. Keep, but discuss at later meetings.
15. Complete so remove.
16. Keep, but do as a subcommittee rather than a workshop.
17. Add another goal to address potential of becoming a 501c3, since bylaws need to be revisited.

Planning for Executive Director

Jane shared a chart that showed the absolute and percentage hours by task that she spent in 2015. Board members praised Jane for her work and efforts. Jane clarified that the PWI tasks are reimbursed by the PWI. Chris would like other Board members to spend more time on PWI tasks. Jane thinks more time should be spent on advocacy. The question of whether we should decrease our presence at public events was discussed. Chris thinks that having things like the newsletter, stewardship handouts, and trail count opportunities would attract more attention. Brianna suggested that we discuss advocacy opportunities with the public at these events. Chris and Barbara suggested that we share our web page with the public. Terry suggested that we talk to people who are using trails, since they are more of a captive audience.

The first event that we might attend is the South Sound Sustainability Expo on March 5th. It was decided that we will have a booth at the Expo, since there has been a lot of interest in our booth at past events.

Ernie suggested that ForeverGreen have something akin to the Foothills Rails-to-Trails-Coalition Courtesy Patrol. The Board will explore different options on public involvement in the future.

Board Development

Jane distributed list of current Board members for discussion. Some of the Board members who haven't attended lately will be contacted. Jane will ask Scott Gallacher if he might consider having one of his Board members attend in his place. Derek Young will be contacted to see if he might want to replace Rick Talbert as the County Council representative. Jane will pursue finding a new Tacoma City Councilmember now that David Boe has resigned. Chris will talk to the Puyallup Mayor John Hopkins about being on the Board. Jane will talk to Milt Trembley of the Buckley City Council. Shawn will talk to Mary Dodsworth, Parks Director of Lakewood. Bryan suggested we have someone from the private sector. It was suggested that someone from REI or Multicare be contacted.

Final Thoughts

It was mentioned that Tacoma will be hosting the Washington Bike Summit on March 21st and 22nd.

Chris adjourned the retreat at 3:59 PM