

*MISSION: The “Friends of Big Finn Hill Park Trails” promote safe, sustainable, multi-use trails within a healthy, natural environment while fostering relationships and engaging the broader community.*

## **Friends of Big Finn Hill Park Trails (FBFHPT) Executive Committee General Meeting Minutes**

Date: February 3, 2021  
Location: Zoom Meeting  
Facilitator: Gary Johnson  
Note Taker: Wayne Hoofnagle

### **Committee Attendees:**

Ayrault, Lisa (At Large)  
Blanchard, Bill (Neighbors)  
Gerrish, Bob (Dog Walkers)  
Gerrish, Janice (At Large)  
Hoofnagle, Wayne (Bicyclists)  
Johnson, Gary (Dog Walkers)  
Leach, Jeanette (Walkers)  
Meredith, George (Walkers)  
Meyer, Debbie (Neighbors)

### **Absent Committee Members:**

Hall, Bill (Bicyclists) - Excused

### **Non-Committee Attendees:**

Hughes, Joe (King County Parks)  
Paul Fischer, King County Department of Natural Resources  
Kayla Swerin, University of Washington Grad Student

**Summary of Meeting Topics:** A quorum was present.

### ***Big Finn Hill Park Stewardship Project:***

Paul Fischer introduced himself and outlined the goals of forest stewardship for King County. He described the focus on overall forest health with a long-term outlook on species diversity, impact of climate change and coordination with local planning. King County has been supporting the work of Kayla Swerin on Big Finn Hill forest health.

Kayla Swerin introduced herself; she is currently completing her Master’s in Environmental Science with the UW. She recently completed a review of the overall forest health in Big Finn Hill Park and presented a summary of her work. In general, the Park has a typical diversity and is healthy. She noted some areas of fungal impact but nothing serious. She noted some

of the invasive species (Blackberry and English Ivy in particular). There were additional comments from the Committee about Holly and some other species of concern. It was noted also that Joe Hughes' team was actively killing Holly as part of eradication efforts.

Kayla Swerin noted that the old orchard area may be a good area to restore back to its older homestead state, enhancing the apple trees and removing the Blackberry bushes. It was noted that Blackberry removal was discussed in this area, and some in the neighborhood wanted blackberries left for summer harvesting.

Kayla Swerin will hand off her work to Paul Fischer when her degree is complete end of March 2021.

Paul noted that this forest stewardship frees up additional funding from the County for invasive species removal and other activities.

Gary Johnson requested we be provided a copy of the final stewardship plan when it is complete.

Paul Fischer and Kayla Swerin were thanked for their presentation.

### ***King County Update (as reported by Joe Hughes):***

1. Down trees – we have been very busy in the last couple of months removing down trees from the trail system. This will continue most likely until March or April. Thank you all for reporting down trees and other issues within Big Finn Hill Park.
2. Park Benches – Desiree has been busy repairing and re-staining all the park benches at Big Finn. I will be ordering new garbage can receptacles similar to the one in the playground area later this year.
3. WTA Adult projects – In the last couple of weeks, WTA adults and Melissa from our Back Country Trail Crew completed several projects at Denny Creek and Big Finn. Last week they completed the “big staircase” on the northeastern end of Denny Creek that they started a couple of years ago. They also worked on drainage and repairing storm damage from 2020. At Big Finn, they removed the 20 foot puncheon behind field #2 and replaced it with a brand new updated one. This puncheon should last for 20 plus years.
4. WTA Youths projects – Last December I met up with a few members from the group to go over drainage issues and concerns on the west side of Big Finn. Wilson and Jim met up with members from the volunteer program who will be working with WTA youths to address those concerns. They will be constructing a turnpike in a few areas discussed and continuing doing drainage work throughout the trail system. They are scheduled to work on February 20-21 and again on March 6-7. Gary questioned if the erosion problem on Halls Pass between W10 and W11 will be addressed. Joe said some of the erosion throughout the Park will be addressed by the WTA, but the work needed on Hall's Pass will need to be confirmed. Wayne Hoofnagle will work with Bill Hall to accurately describe the work needed."
5. Volunteer Events – Crescent Calimpong held her first volunteer event in the Bear Creek District. She is the new Project/Program Manager II replacing Sean Walters. Her first event took place last Saturday at Juanita Woodland west working with Emerald Parents Association. With the help from 12 volunteers comprised from 5 families they removed Himalayan Blackberries and Holly.

6. Upcoming Volunteer Events – Two more events have been scheduled so far for Big Finn Hill Park. The first will be on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup> and the second will be on Saturday, April 03<sup>rd</sup>. Most likely both events would include maintenance on past restoration sites and planting.
7. Northshore Utility District Sewer CIPP Rehabilitation Project update – Northshore has now obtained a special use permit from King County to start the sewer rehab project. I am now waiting to be sent their schedule and to set up a pre-construction onsite meeting. I will update this group when I receive a start date.
8. Baseball Season update – Joe reported the baseball season will start March 1 under Phase 2 (75 people per field).
9. Capital request to rehab entrance, baseball side - Nothing to report at this time. I am still waiting to see where it is on the Capital Improvement list.
10. Restrooms – Restrooms will remain closed until further notice. Once baseball season starts more porta potties will be ordered for the east side.
11. Denny Creek slide – Some of you may be aware of a small slide that occurred a couple of weeks ago in the same area where the hill failed a few years back. We are aware of this slide and are monitoring it until we have several days of dry weather to address it. We are planning on adding fabric similar to what was used to secure the bank along the trail.

Gary Johnson asked if the WTA Youth would be addressing the erosion problem on Halls Pass (mud hole between W10 and W11).”? The WTA youth will address some of these areas- we still need to confirm the detail of this area.

Joe noted that the baseball season will start March 1<sup>st</sup> under phase 2 (75 people per field). King County is working with WTA on ongoing work. The main gate sign is being replaced after tree damage.

George Meredith and others noted some trash issue at old kiosk area in park on West side. Joe was going to look at trash can options (trash can had been removed with elimination of crosswalk at that point).

Debbie Meyer asked if Joe had any success finding our new website contact for King County (to post our meeting info, agenda, etc.). He has not and will continue to work with County on a contact person.

### ***Big Finn Hill Park Trails Project Tracking:***

Gary Johnson reported the two trails made obsolete by the new crosswalk across 138th Place were closed. Gary also reiterated the goal to schedule a work effort every month or two as the weather gets better.

Committee discussed the replacement/installation of signposts since rotten posts need to be

replaced and are only 5 years old. It was suggested different posts or stain be used to prolong the life of the posts.

### ***Annual Meeting (May 5):***

Committee reviewed who will be on up for reelection in our annual meeting May 5<sup>th</sup>. All members said they were going to do another term, with the exception of Bill Hall, he is working on identifying a new nominee.

*Blanchard, Bill (Neighbors)*

*Gerrish, Bob (Dog Walkers)*

*Gerrish, Janice (At Large)*

*Open (Bicyclists)*

*Leach, Jeanette (Walkers)*

Gary Johnson suggested we follow the same virtual voting procedure we used before. He will set up a separate meeting with Debbie Meyer and Wayne Hoofnagle to address details.

Committee discussed possible key-note speakers. Suggestions included:

- King County Parks Historian (Joe Hughes committed to pursue availability)
- Duwamish Tribe representative who is a descendent of Chief Seattle (Bill Blanchard committed to pursue availability)

### ***72nd Avenue Boardwalk Project:***

Bill Blanchard presented the Kirkland “Green Loop” concept and how it may provide funds for a boardwalk along 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave. We can review as concept proceeds. Bill Blanchard advised the boardwalk is preferred to be on the Park side of the road due to pushback from homeowners. There is one issue with bigger plan about where the boardwalk terminates and whether it should be on the other side of the road.

### ***Other Business:***

Bill Blanchard also shared news that a small piece of land on the East side of Juanita Drive may be bought out and gifted as open space. There was support from the Duwamish Tribe to help protect the salmon stream in that area.

The next meeting will be our Annual Meeting of the FBFHPT Executive Committee. Wednesday, May 5, 2021, scheduled from 3 pm to 5 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 pm.