



Minutes for Dec 15, 2022

Vashon-Maury Community Council Meeting

Location: Land Trust Building, 10014 SW Bank Rd and on Zoom

Minutes taken by: Debby Jackson, V-MCC Secretary / Interim Corresponding Secretary [**original draft** (DJ): 12-18-22; **updates** (DJ): 1-2-23]

Attendance: There were 18 people visibly present in the video at the Land Trust building. There were 54 attendees on Zoom, for a total of 72 attendees.

		Jenny Stamper	Patrick Dunn
54 ZOOM PARTICIPANTS	Deborah's iPhone Debra Bethel	Jill Janow	Rachel Rome
Alan Aman's iPhone	Debra Gussin	John Staczek	Richard Gordon
Alice Bloch	Doug Ostrom	Judy Wright	Robert Gibbs
Armen Yousoufian	Dustin Coe	Justin Hirsch	Robert Piston
Art Chippendale	Elizabeth Shepherd	Kat Taylor	Sarah Ann Thompson
Ben Carr (he/him)	Ellen Kritzman	Kathy Abascal	Scott Harvey
Beverly Skeffington (she/her)	Emily Scott	Kathy Ostrom	Sean Malone
Caitlin Rothermel	Evy Horton	Kevin Jones	Steve Macdonald
Call in Attendee 206-463-5355	Georgianne	Linda Fox	Steven Bailey - Vashon Library
	Heather Volpe	Marion Comaskey	Susie Murphy
Camille Staczek	Heidi McWatters	Martin Stallings	Tony Mann
Dan Schueler	Holly Shull	Mary Sage	Yvonne Kuperberg
David Vogel	Jar Lyons	Michael Sage	
	Jeanne	Mike Sudduth	
	David Goebel	Kyle Britz	Susan Jones
18 IN PERSON PARTICIPANTS	Diane Emerson Jenny Cassel	Marian Brischle	Theressia Hamilton
Chris Hamilton		Rey Hansen	Thomas Parobek
Debby Jackson	John Affolter	Rial Cummings	Unknown Attendee
	John Dwight	Sarah Watson	Vicki Boyd



Wendy Aman

Quorum (25 members) was reached at: 7:03pm

Meeting recording at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/lun50oPzl4PTQ27HsOmGwTL9zPM4QvrjvUjPohdO4lulzRrRDNUx3xAnKMHaDu5W.Zaldqp1bi4XvB2hq>

Passcode: 6KW%GCD&

The post office discussion begins at 1hour 12 minutes 51 seconds of the recording.

1. **Informal Welcome** to the meeting as people join the meeting.
2. **Formal Welcome** President, Diane Emerson, opened the meeting at 7:02.
3. **Brief Technical Overview:** Diane presented overview for use of Zoom and In-Person Meeting Attendees.
4. **Review agenda:** Diane asked for any changes or additions to the agenda. **None were offered, so agenda remains as sent.**
5. **Approve minutes:** For the last meeting (Nov 21, 2022). Diane asked for any changes to the Minutes. **Hearing none, minutes were approved as written.**

Introduction of Guests: No guests from off-island were present.

- **Captain Heather Volpe** of the King County's Sheriff's Office was present at the very beginning of the meeting, but then left. (there were concerns at the November 21 meeting about a safety issue at the crest of Cemetery Road).
- **Public Records Request Update** (info was not presented at the meeting; informational note added to minutes by Debby Jackson, Interim Corresponding Secretary: Debby reports that she has applied for an account with KCSO so she can submit a Public Record Request, as



requested at the Nov 21 V-MCC meeting: *“Robert Gibbs wanted to know how many reports have been made by the Sheriff’s Office regarding the person living at the crest of Cemetery Hill. He was told to send a Public Records Act request for the reports to the Sheriff’s Public Disclosure Unit.”* Debby also sent an email to Lisa Devereau, of the Cemetery District, to get more information and updates. **Debby will continue to pursue this.**

6. Committee and Board Updates

- **Affordable Housing Committee** Morgan Brown
Morgan Brown NA
- **Equity, Social Justice and Inclusion Committee** Kevin Jones
Kevin reported on 2 initiatives: 1) Land Acknowledgement – an in-person meeting is planned in January based on info gathered. Thanks to Jessica and James for their work, 2) the committee is having meaningful discussions with the community to understand what barriers exist for people on Vashon. Please put contact info in chat if you are interested in joining the ESJI committee, or if you are interested in being interviewed about your experiences. Next meeting is next Wed Dec 21 (meetings are on the 1st and 3rd of each month). There were no questions or comments from the audience.
- **Ferry Advisory Committee** Justin Hirsch

Diane noted that there is an opening on the Ferry Advisory Committee. Diane reported that V-MCC is the entity that fills this position. There are 3 candidates tonight who will introduce themselves and then we will vote. Justin joined the meeting from the ferry. He talks to the ferry system on a fairly regular basis. Justin noted he is politically unaffiliated.

1) Dustin Coe was not at the meeting. Diane read his statement: **Please describe what you use the state ferry for and how often you use it (commuting, to reach services, once**



a week, occasionally, etc). I use the Ferry service for work and to reach services. I typically use the ferry three times a week.

Please explain why you feel you are the most qualified candidate for this appointment. I feel as though I would be a strong team member because I have lived on both Vashon and Whidbey island. I have also worked for the ferries back in the 90's. And I currently commute off of the island on a regular basis. So I not only have experience as a customer of the ferry system. I bring a unique perspective to the team.

2) Jar Lyons is present on zoom. He has lived on Vashon for about 10 years, and commuted all those years. His job is to keep trucks running. Fauntleroy choke-point is on the Fauntleroy dock. Jar feels he has a useful perspective. He is really angry about the situation. His goal is to become a “thorn in the side” of WSF until we get better service.

3) Wendy Aman is present in-person at the Land Trust. She has worked in publishing. She moved to Vashon 4 years ago. She has experienced ferries when they run well, and wants to see ferries return to better service. She has skills for organization, eg, she was active in Bellevue regarding development issues, work on impact fees to subsidize development, redesign of bus routes improving connections between people and services, spent 5 years on the homeless services board, and helped to develop workable homeless services.

A vote was taken on a new rep to the Ferry Advisory Committee: Dustin 9 / Jar Lyons 21 / Wendy 28

Justin continued with his report. The next Ferry Advisory meetings will be Wed Jan 11 at noon and Thur Jan 12 at 6pm. Service restoration is the main topic, also possible fuel



surcharge. Also, yesterday morning there was no boat on the southend. WSF has been able to expand the program of elevating deckhands to licensed deckhand and deck officer. It takes 500 days to become a licensed deck officer. Estimate is that WSF needs up to 107 deck officers to restore normal service. WSF did have 70 internal applications, but only has funding to take on 12. WSF is going to request 36 slots funded per year. Re: new boats, WSF retained a consultant. By law, WSF has to accept the lowest bidder. Next issue in restoring service is that on the Bremerton route, they are able to free-up some deckhands to use on other routes. There are a couple other runs ahead of us in service restoration. Dustin will put the report in chat. It's possible that no WA builders will be in the mix to build boats, and this would free WSF to use an out-of-state shipyard, but with this option, it would take about a year longer to get a boat.

WSF is going to implement a passenger **Code of Conduct**. Related to 2 incidents that have happened on Vashon: 1) driver on southend did not go in lane directed to and ran over the deck-workers foot, who then had to go to hospital, 2) a driver coming off Vashon spit on a dock worker and used foul language. These incidents are not only reprehensible but affect retention of employees. With the Code of Conduct in place, a ferry worker can use police officers to carry out appropriate actions against unruly members of the public.

Justin wants to be able to reserve a library room for in-person meetings over this next year. WSF has offered to send an occasional representative, as their schedule allows.

Scott Harvey asked a question about the need for 107 deckhands to restore service. *Is my math correct that it will take 3 years?* Math doesn't quite work out, but at 36 trainees per year, it takes a lot of time to work up from deckhand to deck officer.



Deborah Gussin reports sadness about the actions against ferry workers. Deborah wonders if V-MCC can write something for the Beachcomber. Diane asked Wendy Aman if she would like to do that and Wendy said yes.

7. Old Business

Board Needs: Diane announced that there are a number of needs on the V-MCC board. Board members attempt to keep in touch with various sectors of the Island in order to be more aware of their needs and plans. Current sectors are Affordable Housing, Business, Culture/Art and History, Education, Environment, Faith, Food, Health and Human Services, Latino Community, LGBTQ, Recreation, Safety (traffic/sheriff's office), Youth, and Old Time Vashon. Also needed are people to help with skills relative to WIX/tech, committee chairs and minutes-takers, event planning, and volunteer recruitment. Contact Diane at her email on the V-MCC website, send a message in chat, or talk to her in-person. dianeemerson@yahoo.com

- **Progress on VMICC dissolution:** David Vogel.
Nothing new to report. He will continue to follow up.
- **Passenger Ferry Resolution:** Robert Gibbs
Diane discussed that this resolution is to support using the King and Kitsap County PO boats to supplement the spotty WSF mid-day schedule while we wait for additional WSF boats. This motion was moved at the November meeting. It will now be discussed again, and a vote taken.

Robert reported that since our last discussion, he found that Kitsap got \$230,000 from the state to use existing passenger boats. Apparently this money was from the governor's office, not WSF. For the runs for Southworth, Bremerton, and Kitsap, there are 56 runs throughout the day. Vashon has 6-7 runs per day. That's what we would like to do with King County Water Taxi, and work with Kitsap to, perhaps, add a triangle route with the passenger ferries

Diane read the resolution which we will be voting on tonight:

Whereas the WSF service from Vashon is uncertain and often significantly delayed, even on the current reduced schedule,



And whereas this unpredictable schedule has substantial impacts on Vashon residents who need to travel to Seattle or Tacoma for medical appointments, requiring cancellations of appointments and penalty charges, and/or planning for an hours-long trip for a short medical appointment,
And whereas, King County and Kitsap Transit both have reliable new passenger ferries traveling to Seattle six or eight times a day, but no boats in mid-day,
And whereas, a triangle route from Southworth to Vashon to Colman Dock could be operated with the existing passenger boat fleet without new boats or docks,
And whereas, it is anticipated that it will take WSF another five years to build any new ferries to allow it to operate on a reliable/frequent schedule,
Now therefore the Vashon-Maury Community Council resolves to request that King County Transit work with Kitsap Transit to utilize the existing passenger ferry fleet to provide daily service to Seattle from Vashon and Southworth throughout the day, and to seek supplemental funding for this service from WSF or other State entities to provide for this service for so long as WSF is unable to provide reliable service throughout the day due to lack of operational boats/crew.

Discussion:

Kevin wondered if this is within the scope of the Ferry Advisory Committee. Justin has spoken with Robert, and is fully supportive. However, he thinks WSF will want to stick with their restoration plan. Justin feels the more pushing the better.

Doug Ostrom wondered about crewing systems of other boats and how this will affect working together. According to Robert, passenger boats rarely do not run due to crewing issues.

Ellen Kritzman felt that if Kitsap County has gotten money from the Federal transportation budget, Vashon needs to take that route. Robert replied that we will take money from whoever will give it to us.

Vote on the Resolution: Yes 38 / No 1

Diane said that we will work out the next steps later. Robert suggested for next steps that the Council reach out to our county council



representative, and our state representative to ask for their support and to take it up on our behalf. And, if our Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) is willing, to contact the Kitsap County FAC to help us work it through.

8. **New Business:** Post Office Complaints

Diane said we will have 10 minutes for community members to share their frustrations about the situation. Each person has up to 1 minute to speak. Everyone can share their stories in the chat.

Tony Mann thought his story was fairly typical. He was to receive a package that he was told was delivered to his house, but it was actually delivered to the post office. They said he needed to present a slip to the desk at the post office. Apparently his package has been stuck in the backroom for 3 weeks.

Ellen Kritzman said this was news to her. Last week, of the 5 days she should have gotten mail she has only gotten it twice. A package for her was sitting across the road all night. Ellen recommends we get our US Senators involved.

Ray Hampton came up to talk. He worked at Vashon USPS 2019-2021. He said that Google at Crested Butte just asked for FISA request for the contract between Amazon and USPS. It is an all or nothing situation. There were 3 fulltime Vashon carriers, until 1 resigned last week. Very difficult, they refuse to show the contract. Have to prioritize packages. USPS won't give us lockers due to the contract. USPS loses about half a billion \$ per month. This is a National problem! We MUST get Congressional representatives involved.

Discussion of ideas for support, and to identify people interested in working on this issue: David Vogel (interim Post Office task force chair), Rial Cummings

Rial Cummings worked at Vashon USPS 2015-2018 for a part time job. However, he worked 55-60 hours per week. Vashon had 7 routes, all delivered by long-time Islanders (except 1) for about 20 years. Training was brief but regulars took them under their wing. The main job was delivering mail, not parcels. Back when he worked, there were about 37 parcels to deliver. The carrier was supposed to write up a pink slip if the package could not be delivered to a person. An extra large mailbox can accommodate about a 12x8



parcel, but now there is an avalanche of packages. Rial's ask is to have people get mailboxes of about 10Wx12Hx22L (extra-large box).

Please volunteer for the post office task force if you have an interest. A sign-up sheet was passed through in-person participants. Or on zoom, make a note in chat or email Diane. dianeemerson@yahoo.com

David Vogel said people have had packages damaged, destroyed, not delivered and told not at PO but they were. He noted that Louis DeJoy, Postmaster General, put into that position by Donald Trump, has a stated goal of getting rid of USPS. David did not realize there is an Amazon contract with USPS.

Both Ace and Island Lumber have agreed to do promotional offers for extra-large mailboxes. Island installers are willing to put these up. David said it was way easier to get a hold of USPS than Amazon. Apparently, Amazon has off-shored all contact with the public. He feels that a media event is in order.

Please contact David to volunteer. dsvogel.atty@gmail.com

Wendy Aman contacted Rep Jayapal's office and she has a person dealing with the post office issues. The Beachcomber has an excellent article today and notes Ace has an offer in the paper for XL boxes.

Patrick Dunn wanted to address criminal element related to packages left on the street. There are vehicles following the postal carrier. Carrier did not feel safe, he told Patrick. He wonders if there is anything he can do? He would rather get deliveries once a month than have someone else stealing it.

Report mail theft at 877-876-255, per Diane. Diane also wondered about mailboxes at the PO but was told there are no more boxes available.

Elizabeth Shepherd talked to David Rupert, Communications Director at USPS. Vashon PO staff is working 7 days per week. There are 2,500 packages delivered per day to Vashon. This is affecting deliveries to VISD. Also, the Country Store has a mailbox service, Jan Staehli said, but they are not getting deliveries either. This is a huge national problem—she believes it goes back to Amazon AND our use of Amazon.



Mary Marin reported her wife currently works at the Vashon USPS. Addressing national issues and getting XL box are both important. King 5 News came over and this resulted in USPS manager (David Rupert) visiting Vashon. An example of a problem is, there were 3 people who were going to retire and nothing was done to fill these positions before they retired. Mary started a meal-train to get food to the post office workers., especially those from off-Island.

Susan Jones noted that people are leaving large plastic boxes with lids by their mail boxes, and asked how the Post Office feels about this. The current and past post office employees gave a thumbs up for this.

Steven Bailey (Librarian & Information Services Manager, KCLS, Olympic Region at 206.242.1640 or sbailey@kcls.org) announced that a new service at the Vashon Library has launched to mitigate the long wait times island residents are seeing at the post office when trying to ship packages. Steven says the Vashon library now has a postal scale and other materials available! This way you can just drop off your package rather than stand in a long line. Many thanks to the **Friends of the Library** for funding this program. Jim Garrison noted that you can go to USPS under shipping to calculate postage. You can buy a postal scale on Amazon (“just kidding”).

Diane read a list that she has compiled of possible factors that can help the situation, and detailed the need for more reflective address signs, that can be purchased from Vashon Island Fire and Rescue, or online: <https://vifr.org/address-signs/>

Chris Hamilton wondered if volunteers can help. The Post office is working on a hiring event but volunteering is not possible due to background checks and security needs.

Question: *Is there a reason they are low on staff? “No one wants to work for them.”*

Robert Gibbs said other rural areas are probably having the same difficulties. Maybe politically we can build a much larger coalition of rural residents across the Nation. There are a bunch of things Congress can do.



Robert reported that David Rupert, USPS communications manager, says they are thinking of opening a contract post office in Burton.

9. **Next Meeting:** Thursday, January 19, 7:00 pm on Zoom and at the Land Trust Building

10. **Adjourn:** Diane adjourned the meeting at 9:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Debby Jackson, V-MCC Secretary