

# FAUNTLEROY WATERSHED COUNCIL

Meeting #116, Sept. 12, 2024, on Zoom

## ATTENDEES

Watershed volunteers: Dennis Hinton (facilitator), Kathy Mutchler, John Sturtevant, Ryan Lewis, Jesse Todhunter, Tracy Randle, Chaz Hastings, Julia Stavnitski, Phil Sweetland, and Judy Pickens (scribe)

## 1. Introductions

## 2. May minutes

Approved as distributed.

## 3. Park projects

In Karen Farnsworth's absence, Judy reported that Brian Willis is the new district crew chief, replacing Jesse Bonn. She sent Brian our list of outstanding tasks in Fauntleroy Park, with an emphasis on Parks' addressing once and for all the seep at the northwest entrance. The mud there is affecting passage by those taking the circle nature walk, those relying on wheels for access, and students exiting the park on release field trips.

She also reported having provided Find It, Fix It signs to Chris Nack and Karen for both kiosks, to serve until the upcoming wayfinding map takes over. Visitors can use the QR code on the signs to report trees across trails, camping, etc.

## 4. Wayfinding

Tracy provided an extensive update from her work outpost in Arizona:

### About the map

- A large (30" X 20") print version will be posted in the kiosks and visitors can use an Avenza app or QR code to access the digital map on our website.
- It can easily be edited/updated in Powerpoint.
- The goal of those working on this project was to have a highly informative map without trying to do too much, which is why, for example, provide details about trail accessibility or elevation changes.

### Discussion

- Tracy noted that cell-phone reception in the park appears not to be a problem.
- Phil advised double checking park boundaries with the county's official map; what is shown on the draft includes private properties.
- Chaz noted that "Indian plum" is now more sensitively referred to as "osoberry"; checking other names would be wise.
- Regarding placing more emphasis on the park as a natural area, suggestions included such language as "You are a guest in others' homes" and maybe hatch adjacent natural areas. Tracy advised that having a separate poster about wildlife in the park would make more sense, including how trees/shrubs contribute to animal habitat - an idea favorably received.

**Action item: Chaz will get copies of the kiosk map made when it's ready, starting with a test run.**

**Action item: After the meeting, Ryan volunteered to help create a kiosk wildlife poster.**

### About publicizing to the community

Judy asked if it might be ready to publicize starting with a small flyer to hand out at the Oct. 20 Fauntleroy Fall Festival. Tracy advised that would likely be premature.

**Action item: Judy will spearhead an article for the West Seattle Blog and also the community newsletter.**

**Action item: Julia will introduce to preschool teachers on our list.**

Discussion closed with a robust thank-you to all who have worked on this project, including Tracy's colleague, Sam To!

## **5. Education**

**Preschool emphasis:** Julia expressed great enthusiasm for her assignment to help preschool teachers make the most of the creek and park. She reported having contacted the nine preschools in our orbit to introduce herself and offer to help.

**Atlas Summit research project:** Judy reported that, thanks to Kathy's research into testing for the chemical causing pre-spawn mortality, she was able to connect the high-school science teacher at this charter school with staff at State Ecology. The upshot is a relationship that will engage students in understanding the connection, taking water samples in the creek with a DOE scientist, and assisting with data interpretation. Chaz offered to connect with the teacher about her tapping into his knowledge of wetland science for a future project.

**Action item: Judy will plant the seed of Chaz's offer with the teacher.**

**Salmon in the Schools:** Judy noted that a teacher at Chief Sealth International High School got in under the wire to rear fish this term. She said this connection is of particular interest for what it might add to the program's application for special-needs students.

**Action item: Jesse will work with Phil to refresh a used acrylic tank for Alki Elementary to use.**

## **6. Culvert replacements**

Judy reported that city planning to replace the derelict creek culvert under 45th Ave. SW is progressing. Residents successfully opposed having a problematic public viewpoint on the west side of the street. One more round of public outreach is to come, 2026 being the target to start construction.

She referred people to the *West Seattle Blog's* thorough article about the agreement Fauntleroy Church struck for the city to take full responsibility for the church/city culvert in exchange for the church's ceding land to the city. The deadline for a \$7M consultant contract to reactivate the project is end of year.

## **7. Fish business**

Dennis reported having scheduled a Sept. 21 work party to relocate drift logs on the beach so spawners can access the creek. Judy will email this opportunity to salmon watchers if more volunteers are needed. Dennis noted that fishers at the point are starting to see a few coho.

Judy said she plans to start scheduling watchers by the end of this month so that all is ready to begin on Oct. 13 with our annual drumming. She will be coordinating with musician Jamie Shilling as well as with Chaz to plan the drumming.

## **8. Advocacy**

Judy reported that the Seattle Watershed Alliance sent a letter this summer to city elected officials about how Seattle's current tree-preservation ordinance favors developers intent on clearing their sites of trees. She also reported that Seattle Parks may propose adding "activities" to natural parks; she's on the alert for a public-comment period in 2025.

## **9. In the media**

Dennis noted that both the *West Seattle Blog* and in the *Neighbors* community newsletter recently published culvert-related articles. The newsletter also had an article about our new preschool emphasis.

## **10. Money matters**

Dennis reported a balance in our checking account of \$863.90. Judy reported a balance in our stewardship fund of \$16,680.90 and noted that each of our two EarthCorps maintenance days in the Kilbourne ravine cost just shy of \$3,000.

## **11. Good of the order**

Phil mentioned an uptick in the number of unsheltered and/or unstable persons in the park and around the church. Dennis reminded all that the police are quick to respond to an unsafe situation when children are present.

## **Upcoming events**

Saturday, Sept. 21 Recycle Roundup 9 am – 3 pm in the church parking lot

Sunday, Oct. 13: Annual drumming at 4 pm to call in spawners and launch salmon watch

Sunday, Oct. 20: Fauntleroy Fall Festival 2-5 pm in the “triangle”

**Next meeting: Thursday, Nov.14, 6:30 on Zoom**