

Birch Bay Incorporation Association Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2024

Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM

Roll Call

- Attending: Matt Berry (Chair) Lisa Guthrie, (Vice-Chair), Sharman Burnam (Treasurer), Brian Bell, Chuck Kinzer, Caprice Pine, Jonathan Mallahan, Jason Polverari, James R. (Bob) Aiken
- Excused: Michael Stringam, Patrick Alesse
- Quorum present
- Matt took notes as our Secretary was absent.

Approval of Minutes

- Matt: May meeting minutes were not sent out until today so we can hold off on approving unless people had a chance to review them.

Executive Committee Report

- Matt: Presentation to Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole about the historical context of incorporation, need for an updated feasibility study. All positive feedback. Similar presentation was made to the Small Cities Partnership as well. Feasibility Study Update will be proposed to the County Council on July 9 and voted on July 23. We encourage all to make public comments.
- Sharman: Public comment is important. We need to get more involved as a community.
- Discussion of the timing of the next Executive Committee Meeting.
- Discussion of Library Pre-Annexation Agreement.

Communications Committee Report

- Lisa: Sharman was able to secure a grant in the amount of \$5,000 so we have some funds to encourage greater community input via mailings, a booth at community events, etc. Website has been updated with a new P.O. Box mailing address. Still working on social media and how to reach those who feel like they aren't being reached. We are also looking into a targeted mailing to Canadian neighbors.

Research & Feasibility Studies Committee

- Chuck: We need to set up a timeline for approaching department heads and different County offices to request specific information. The County Executive suggested looking at School District boundaries but we decided it was a premature discussion. The surveys that we continue to do in the future need to focus on the level of services people want. A survey of potential boundary changes and looking at the tax implications would be useful. We should be reaching out to the Boundary Review Board.
- Discussion of preliminary survey results. We have approximately 25% who support and don't need more information, 25% who oppose and don't need more information, and 50% who need more information.
- Statistically speaking, we have a targeted sample with consistent results but need more responses.
- Question from the audience on whether the respondents represent individuals or households and how both partners may respond if they share an email address.

Finance Committee

- Description of bank account balance and donations received since the last meeting.
- Friends of Birch Bay Library gave us a support letter so that we could apply for the grant so we made a \$100 donation to them.
- The Communications Committee requested a budget of \$1,500 from the \$5,000 grant funding for materials to host an information booth at the upcoming summer events.
 - Grant funds must be spent by April of 2025.
 - It is not a directed grant and we do not need to submit receipts.
 - We must do a report by the end of April including pictures and descriptions of activities.
- Caprice Pine motioned to approve the \$1,500 spending budget for community event information booth materials, Chuck Kinzer seconded.
 - Brian Bell asked if we would be buying a pop-up tent.
 - Matt asked if this would include vendor and registration fees.
 - Motion carried.
- Matt: Michael put together a draft budget and notes. Let's continue to work on and implement this. I will switch over all expenses to the BBIA debit card and email a list of all expenses made to date.
- Sharman: We will be meeting with other businesses about grants and funding as well.

Open Session

- No public comments.
- Question: Has anyone contacted Puget Sound Energy yet about donating to the cause?

New Business

- Matt: Since we are joined by Dan Eisses, General Manager of Birch Bay Water & Sewer, I propose we invite him to speak to the group.
- Dan Eisses spoke to the group about how incorporation relates to our water and sewer service and clarified that BBWSD does not “come with” the city.
 - Water and sewer districts are separate governmental entities.
 - There are two methods for a city to assume either all or a portion of the district and both of those happen after a city is formed.
 - The last incorporation study assumed that the district would continue to operate separately.
 - Discussion of a rate comparison. BBWSD has lower rates than most water and sewer providers.
- Dan took some questions from the group. Refer to the linked video (see below).

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Meeting recording available at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/6gql1qvt8H1IjvYYMC4Cla1SeqxYyPEqu9ZPSPlode0q6nxZ2zmuGendQeCd-GC.00uytLCb8QgH6Cj3?startTime=1718931529000>

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