



AGENDA
JENSEN-OLSON ARBORETUM ADVISORY BOARD
Zoom Webinar
Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 5:15 P.M.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Agenda**
- III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Meeting of November 18, 2020
 - B. Subcommittee Meeting of November 18, 2020
- V. New Business**
 - A. 2020 JOAAB Annual Report
 - B. Welcome Ginger!
 - C. Manager Residence Maintenance
- VI. Unfinished Business**
 - A. Commercial Use Update
 - B. Endowment Update
- VII. Committee, Liaison, and/or Staff Reports**
 - A. Chair Report – N. McConahey
 - B. Manager Report – G. Hudson
 - C. Friends of JOA Report – P. Harris
 - D. Other Business
- VIII. Adjournment**

Next JOAB Meeting: Wednesday, May 12 at 5:15 – Zoom Webinar

DRAFT MINUTES**JENSEN-OLSON ARBORETUM ADVISORY BOARD**

Zoom Webinar | Wednesday, November 18, 2020 5:15 P.M.

I. Call to Order at 5:27 pm by Chair, Nell McConahey

Present: Ed Buyarski, Rose Evans, Peter Froehlich, Patricia Harris, Nell McConahey, Paulette Schirmer, Deborah Rudis

Absent: Kristin Bartlett

Staff Present: Merrill Jensen, Arboretum Manager; Michele Elfers, Deputy Director; Lauren Verrelli, Staff Liaison

II. Agenda Changes – Added update on Commercial Use from M. Elfers.

III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items – None.

IV. Approval of Minutes –

A. Wednesday, August 12, 2020: N. McConahey requests to remove Melissa Hebdon from present list. E. Buyarski moves to approve updated minutes, no objection.
Minutes adopted.

V. New Business –

A. Appreciation & Recognition of Merrill Jensen

N. McConahey: We are all looking forward to a retirement party next summer. On behalf of the JOAAB, we wish you a fabulous retirement and thank you for all the magic you have created at the Arboretum.

P. Froehlich: Thank you for being the best manager the Arboretum has ever had. I am grateful and honored to have worked with you. You have been everything we could hope for.

E. Buyarski: I second everything Peter said. I have enjoyed working with you, Merrill, and sharing plants back and forth.

D. Rudis: The primroses wont the be same without you! Thank you so much for everything!

B. Update on Merrill's Replacement

M. Elfers: We offered the position to Ginger Hudson and she has accepted. We are thrilled to have her start as the Arboretum manager in early January. She has worked at the Alaska Botanical Garden, the American Botanical Council, and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She has great experience with managing a public facility and garden, which will serve us well. She also has experience with educational programming, and a passion for writing.

N. McConahey: What is Ginger's official start date?

M. Elfers: We are looking at January 7 being her tentative start date; it all depends on the ferries. We will have a CBJ employee who will be a caretaker in the interim. We will be renovating the bathroom and doing some maintenance on the residence.

Ginger Hudson: I am looking forward to being down there! I do believe my gardening and writing skills will be a great benefit for the Arboretum. What Merrill has built, he has made an incredible foundation and I just hope to share that with more people throughout the state, country and the world and build on what he has done.

VI. Unfinished Business –

A. Arboretum Commercial Use Comments

M. Elfers: Nothing has happened since our last meeting where we agreed to send the document to CBJ Law and SEAL Trust. In the interim, we heard back from CBJ Law about our overall Commercial Use regulations. I decided not yet to send it to SEAL Trust until I

hear back from our Law Department with their revisions for the arboretum document. Things are currently slow due to COVID and staff turnover. My plan is that once we get the document from Law, if there are only minor changes, I will send it along to the board and to SEAL Trust. However, if there are larger changes from Law, I will bring it before the board for review before sending it to SEAL Trust.

N. McConahey: Yes, if it is just simple verbiage keep moving it forward, just let us know.

D. Rudis: Do you think there is a possibility to have this done before next summer?

M. Elfers: Yes, I think we can have it done. Once I have something, I will notify the board and if there is any significant changes and send it along to SEAL Trust.

VII. Committee Liaison and Staff Reports

- A. Chair Report:** Presented the 2019 JOAAB Annual Report to the HRC in August. Wade Bryson asked if we were interested in reducing the size of the board in the future. We currently have 9 seats. Something for us to consider in the future. We have three members with terms ending in January 2021 - Rose, Ed and Pat. I also assisted with the interviews for Ginger Hudson, our new Arboretum Manager.
- B. Manager's Report:** *Merrill's last report Included in minutes.*
- C. Friends of JOA –**
Pat White: Pandemic has made them become digital; now have a Facebook and Instagram account and opened an online store. Sold 320 tickets for the fundraiser with all proceeds going towards interpretive signage and interactive visitor tablets.
- D. Other business—** None.

Adjournment – 6:14p.m. *Having no further business before the Board.*

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Verrelli, Recreation & Public Services Manager, 2/6/2021.

Jensen Olson Arboretum Advisory Board – Endowment Committee

Zoom Approximately 6:15pm (following full board meeting)

November 18, 2020

DRAFT Minutes

Members Present: Paulette Schrimmer, Nell McConahey, Rose Evans

Staff Present: Michelle Elfers,

JOAAB Members Present: Peter Froehlich

Chair Nell McConahey called meeting to order about 6:15pm.

Sept 23, 2020 minutes approved as presented.

Nell agreed to create minutes for this meeting from recording.

Clarifying the subcommittee minutes of Dec 2019 were approved at the January 2020 full board meeting.

Lauren is working on posting the EC committee minutes to the CBJ website, currently not there.

CBJ permanent fund 'fund balance analysis' draft documents presented, June 30 2020 balance \$2,738,150. Not official until posted to the CBJ website. No current plans to change the investment given the current investment environment

'Fund raisers' misspelled on draft fund balance analysis.

No further business.

EC to meet in May following the full board meeting.

Adjournment about 6:20pm

Respectfully Submitted, Nell McConahey



Jensen – Olson Arboretum Advisory Board Annual Report – 2020

To: CBJ Assembly Human Resources Committee

From: Nell McConahey, Chair
Jensen – Olson Arboretum Advisory Board

Date: January 2021

Subject: Jensen – Olson Arboretum (JOA) Advisory Board
2020 Annual Report

2020 proved to be a very interesting and challenging year at the Jensen-Olson Arboretum. COVID restrictions cancelled all programming for the year which included 4 children's programs, the docent volunteer days, A Day of *Primula*, Alaska Public Gardens Day, all school tours, the annual Mother's Day Plant sale, and all community organizations' various annual picnics. The Arboretum was the only P&R facility that remained opened throughout COVID closures. Administration and Staff determined that the Arboretum provided a safe space with social distancing for Juneau residents to have a place of solace during the pandemic. Many visitors made multiple visits during the season stating it was one of the few locations in Juneau that was open for visitors. The lack of cruise ships and independent travelers lowered the total of overall visits for the year; however visitorship remained very high which required even more staff time for visitor management and engagement.

The weather during 2020 was the exact opposite of 2019's record heat and drought. Unending rains made garden maintenance a challenge. COVID restrictions also impacted staffing. An Assembly decision to limit staffing early on in the pandemic allowed for the hiring of only one of the two seasonal gardener positions. With the strong showing of visitors, the second position was finally allowed to be filled starting in July. With full staffing, several garden projects were able to take place. The entry bed at the parking lot was installed. A large bed adjacent to the vegetable garden was completely redone. The beds around the newly remodeled Gardeners' Shed were formed and replanted.

Changing weather patterns are affecting the Nationally Accredited Plant Collection™ for the genus *Primula*. The drought of 2019 severely restricted the growth of many Sino-Himalayan accessions and some of the more valuable ones were not able to survive the hot, dry conditions. The result of those unusual conditions carried over into 2020 which resulted in decreased vigor or lack of bloom in many accessions. This also resulted in a marked decrease in seed production where the Arboretum has historically been a major supplier of seed donations to various seed exchanges around the world.

The long anticipated permanent restroom was finally installed in October. Funding for this project was provided by donations to Friends of Jensen-Olson Arboretum, and a grant from the Rasmuson Foundation.

The Parks & Recreation overhaul of its commercial use policies was delayed due to the pandemic and is slated to be finished in 2021 and will include items specific to the Arboretum and its management.

Together with the GIS department of University of Alaska Southeast, Merrill Jensen created the first Visitor Map of the Arboretum; this includes a variety of information enhancing the visitor experience and was made available in December 2020. Also in production is the first Field Guide to selected plants of the Arboretum which Merrill Jensen has drafted; this will be released in spring 2021. Printing costs for both publications are generously provided by Friends of Jensen-Olson Arboretum.

As forecast in the 2019 annual report, 2020 was the scheduled year of the retirement of Merrill Jensen, the Arboretum's first manager with a tenure of 13.5 years. A total of 48 people applied for the position; 5 were interviewed. Ginger Hudson was the successful candidate. She brings a background of public garden experience as well as educational programming experience. She began her appointment in early January 2020.

Nell McConahey
Jensen – Olson Arboretum Advisory Board, Chair

Attachment: 2020 Attendance Record

Jensen-Olson Arboretum, Manager's Report to the Advisory Board

February 5, 2021

- The new manager arrived in Auke Bay the evening of January 8, after several weather delays, from Anchorage via AMH Whittier Port. The manager's residence was open and mostly empty for move-in.
- Renovation of the aged full bathroom had been delayed due to asbestos abatement. Asbestos was found in the original sheetrock mud. The new bath was declared usable on January 21, with final inspection on 29th, and still a few punch-list items to complete.
- Unseasonably warm weather persisted through most of January requiring some plants to be "mulched" with burlap bags by previous manager. Snow returned Jan 23, thankfully before a hard freeze thus the snow provided important blanketing to garden beds, and forests. Two trees sustained damage from heavy snow in December: a coastal pine at the north forest edge, and a birch near the garage.
- Turnover maintenance continues in the manager's residence, it is a lot of space to prepare after the previous resident was onsite for thirteen years! I have purchased a new front-load washing machine to replace one ready to retire. Well water is being tested. Cleaning and painting of the manager's office will allow for re-organization of historic and useful horticulture books and ephemera.
- I have met and attended meetings (zoom) of the Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners, the Friends of the Jensen-Olson Arboretum, talked with Matt on KINY Capital Chat, and met many neighbors. I will be joining the Juneau Garden Club meeting in February, and look forward to attending other local garden related meetings. Planning for events with FJOA at JOA, and other garden clubs, remains a challenge to work around COVID precautions.
- The proximity to EVC has been helpful in two important ways: before the bath was complete the manager of EVC offered a shower room to us; due to the front loader requiring major repairs and unavailable for snow removal at JOA, the EVC manager allows me to use their plow truck to move larger loads than the snow blower can handle. (and quicker!)
- I am working to familiarize myself with the systems at JOA- contacts, ordering, filing; and the systems with CBJ. All CBJ staff, especially P&R and Facilities Maintenance have been available with guidance or hands-on-deck (repairing doors frozen shut, snow blowing, cleaning, and more). A warm welcome all the way around.

Thank you for your support of the arboretum.

Submitted by Ginger Hudson