

## **CORE March Minutes**

**Tuesday, March 4, 2025**

**UP Civic Building – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room**

**3609 Market Place W – take elevator up to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**

**Attendees:** Sydney Hennessy, Rich Knowles, Barry Crust, Bill Horn(master gardener), Rick Mercier(Bees), Monty Stranski, Tony West(, Sue Gurley, Ian Sweet, Robert Sweet, Debbie Klosowski, Jessica Hannity, Kris Docherty

**Approval of Minutes** February Minutes approved

**Treasurer's Report** \$18,623.51 This does not have any of the contracts amounts yet to be submitted. When they are completed, the total will be \$6,606.(Family Tree, Jessica and Jane plus the Sweets which can change) Family Care tree contract completed but not submitted yet. They complete their work on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Volunteer Hours** – Orchard hours for February 189.5

**Staff Report-** Tony says the storm water pipes will be removed in a week. Brookside fencing is ½ done with a gate in the design. Next Spray will be in March.

### **Adoption Updates**

Kris- Trees adopted to date 121 (includes 3 free trees) +6 tour trees

Number of Requests for Core to prune trees? Core responsible pruning 61 trees 59 Adopters will prune their trees. After meeting received additional 80-dollar adoption request from a renewal adopter, CORE this season will be responsible for 62 trees to prune.

**Tree tags-** Barry says all tags are up to date. Rich and Barry will be refurbishing signs that are weathered. They requested when we work in the orchard and see worn signs to let them know.

### **\*PRUNING Parties-**

-Feb 22 Recap 1 volunteer, Core team(includes Robert and Ian), 2 Students signed in. Weather held for us but was not expected so probably affected turnout. Robert Sweet was expecting master gardeners who would have practiced what they learned in training, but they were a no show. However, they were here in full forces to receive Robert's training a couple weeks previously in the snow.

-March 1 pruning party was great weather. There was a great turn out.

-Upcoming parties: March 15 and 29

-Family Tree Care report-they have completed their pruning for height on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. They were contracted for 18 trees plus 3 additional as time allows.

-High Density/espalier status-

-Jessica H tree update- Jessica and Jane completed their tree 12-1 to demonstrate their skills. They did a fabulous job. It was a big tree which took two days as misunderstanding that they could use a ladder. Core approved a contract for Jessica and Jane for \$400 dollars for 4 trees. Since they can use Ladders due to their insurance coverage, they will focus on height reduction. How many trees any contractor can do is determined by the size of the trees. We did assign new adopters several trees that had not been adopted season 2024 or longer. The hope was to increase the number of trees having been pruned.

-CORE approved up to \$1000 for Robert and Ian. They will do 2 days at the end of March. Robert responded to how to chose what to remove on a tree that was not trimmed recently. Robert removes all vertical growth one inch thick and over 2ft high. If you have vertical shoots that are 12-18 inches high the width of pencil Robert says leave them as these shoots will develop fruit buds the next year. This information will be sent out to adopters prior to the next pruning party March 15<sup>th</sup>.

-Discussion regarding max limit and /or fee increase for 2026-Monty reviewed the expenses this year regarding pruning due to the increased volume of adopters paying for pruning (61). He is concerned that we could easily deplete our bank account. CORE needs to determine if the current adoption fees are realistic. Pointing out the average cost to prune trees with help of contractors is approx. \$150. Pruning fee is 80 dollars. We are experiencing an increase in adoptions requesting that CORE prune their tree. We had 62 trees that CORE needed to prune this year. The decision was to table this discussion till July when brochures need to be updated for the 2026 season and the total amount paid out to contractors will have been completed and paid out.

### Rootstock/grafting

**Email adopters re Grafting Process-** Spring Grafting Show( Saturday March 15 from 10 to 4 ) Sponsored by the Peninsula Fruit Club at the West Side Improvement Club, 4109 W."E" St. Bremerton. This show does conflict with our next pruning date. Bill will be meeting with Andy on Thursday to confirm Andy Matelich's grafting location and the number who can attend his grafting. Andy has received the rootstock last Friday.

**\*NEW Tree Arrival-Delivery/** Locations? Debbie will get an email when Raintree sends the new 4 trees this month. There will be two early blooming trees William's Pride and Wynooche Early which need to be near to each other for pollination. CORE chose row 24 tree 2 and Row 25 tree 5. The other two trees are Dolgo Crabapples purchased as Pollinators. They are Early-mid season blooming trees. CORE chose rows 12-4 and 35-5 for them.

After determining where the new trees would be placed, it was time to discuss how to protect the trees from deer, rabbits and voles. One of the concerns was destruction of the bark by the local wildlife. *It was decided that wire needs to be 6 feet away from the tree so deer can not lean and strip the bark.* The height ideally needs to be 6 ft high if possible. In addition adding chicken wire around the base to deter the voles( meadow mice ) and rabbits. Six feet space may give Owls a chance to help rid area of the Voles.

Concerts-Sue proposed concert dates of July 24, 31, August 7, 14,21 Cost per concert \$2400 --\$600 apiece with 1 military concert free. It was pointed out with pruning costs our account will be approx. \$11,000 before paying for the concerts. The group felt it was something the community looks forward to each summer. It draws families to the orchard other than adopting. Steilacoom is not doing theirs this year. Dropping a concert was suggested but in the end the majority approved the 5 concerts. It was felt having the concerts each week was successful draw last year. City pays for Mark S. Sue will take care of obtaining the banner for the concerts. How can we support this activity financially was discussed with no resolution.

Other- Jessica thanked Barry for his help in taking away branches

Kris got hacked which raised concern on how it happened and is it safe.

Debbie has received the insect lures and put them in the barn.

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, April 1 6 – 8 pm** either in person or by Microsoft team access codes on top of agenda.