



December 2020



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Holidays everyone! It has been a busy and unique year on Raft Island. We have made some very amazing improvements on the island. Thanks to help from dedicated community members the brand new playground at South Beach was completed the first week of July. South Beach continued to have much needed maintenance/improvements including the installation of a new kayak storage rack thanks to the ingenuity of Mike Neil and help from fellow residents. This allowed us to re-home kayaks that were left on the beach and also paved the way for a brand new fire pit to be enjoyed with family and friends.

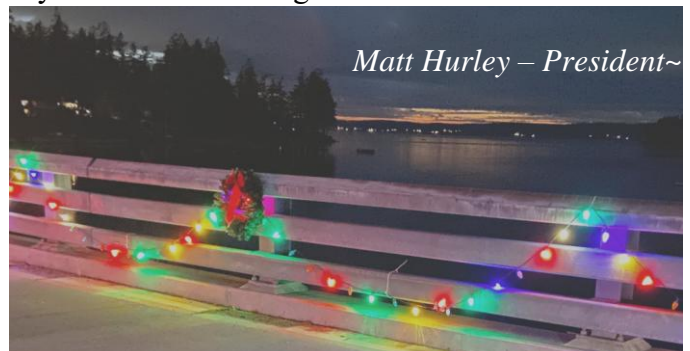
With the complications of COVID in our daily lives, we are blessed to spend our time quarantined on our own very special island. That is why it was so important to invest in our parks this year and what a success it was. Because of the incredible help we received from so many of our residents we were able to accomplish all of these improvements. It is amazing to see so many families enjoying our little piece of paradise.

Over the years, many residents have suggested that we replace sand near the beach and create golf cart parking near the boat launch. Listening to the community, we as a team made that happen. With the help of resident volunteers we pulled weeds, removed old debris/glass from an old firepit and replaced it with brand new beach sand to rest our feet, build sand castles and roast s'mores in the new firepit. We also added new official golf cart parking near the boat launch to free up much needed space at the South Beach parking area. Finally, we also made our way to the Tennis Court Park and replaced the old, leaning split rail fence.

I again want to personally thank all the resident volunteers who regularly take time out of their busy schedules to keep our community looking great and festive during the holidays. Residents place flags on the bridge for Veterans, Memorial and Independence Day. The community also gathers to place Christmas lights and wreaths on the entire span of the bridge. With the help of residents, we can continue to improve our community assets while saving costs which in turn will keep our island dues from increasing. Additionally, we can keep our island roadways and abutting properties clean and neat by chipping in with the occasional vegetation trimming and roadway blowing in front of our homes when possible. On a final note, we will continue to upgrade our parks and common areas in the months to come and hope to revamp the float in early Spring.

In closing, we are always looking for resident volunteers to serve on our Board or to help with our committees, including security, roads, parks, bridge and the CC&R/By-laws. If you would like to get involved and have not done so already, please reach out to our HOA island manager Shirelle Schaefer at [shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com](mailto:shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com). If you have suggestions or ideas to improve our community please reach out to me at [matthurley1@hotmail.com](mailto:matthurley1@hotmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you. A very famous person once said, "There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit."

*Matt Hurley – President~*



## MANAGER

### Hello Raft Island Residents Happy Holidays!

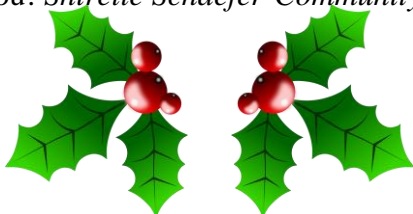
The mail system seems to be taking longer and longer to deliver mail, so please ensure that you are sending your payments early enough in the month to arrive before the 10<sup>th</sup> to avoid late fees. Online payments can be made via a link on our website: [www.hoacommunitysolutions.com](http://www.hoacommunitysolutions.com). One time or recurring payments can be made via e-check or with a debit or credit card. ACH automatic debiting is also available to residents. Please contact our office staff at 253-985-3812 Ext. 1 if you would like more information about those options.

As your Community Manager it is imperative that we have up to date contact information for all RIIA owners as well as any tenants. Please remember that it is your responsibility to notify us of any changes to your mailing address, phone numbers or email addresses so that we can easily contact you when necessary. If you rent your property, it is also helpful for us to have your tenants' names and contact information so that they can be included in email notifications about island happenings and any safety notifications.

Regarding email notifications, it has come to our attention in the past that some email security settings seem to block our group emails or send them to a spam folder. This seems to be especially occurring with Centurytel email addresses. If you have not been receiving our emails, please check those security settings to always allow emails from my address: [shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com](mailto:shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com)

If you need parking passes or a key to the boat launch, those are available at our office. Each owner can obtain two parking passes free, but additional passes and keys are \$5 each. If your passes have gotten worn out and no longer cling to the windshield, bring in the old passes and we will swap them out for new ones.

Thank you! *Shirelle Schaefer-Community Manager*



## RIIA PARKS

This summer we did some improvements to South Beach Park and we had many rave reviews by residents. One resident said, "This is now Raft Island Resort." There was a sharp increase in park use this summer and both fire pits had a lot of family fun. The kids loved digging in the sand.

Despite one complaint by a resident who decided the improvements violated county codes by the removal of native grasses and depositing sand on the beach. They turned the island to Pierce County. Pierce County visited the site and the code Enforcement Officer said that all the work fell below the threshold of requiring a permit. It turns out the grasses that were there causing the area to be unusable littered with broken glass and poison oak were non-native invasive species native to Asia. These were introduced back in the 1930's in California have wreaked havoc along the west coast with birds who rely on their native vegetation for nesting. The sites we found referring to the grass suggest that this grass should be removed because it also creates a fire hazard.

The only issue that was found requiring attention was noted by a County Biologist who visited the site later. She said we would need a permit for the Kayak Rack. Even though it has been there for years and reconstructed in the same place it has always been. We believe it should have been grandfathered, but we are not going to argue. Tom Phillips, Board Member, is submitting the paperwork.

We have heard nothing but praise over the Kayak Rack and those who have used it are very happy not having to bring their kayak to the park every time they want to use it. It also cleared up the area where Kayaks were piled in the grass and now making things look more orderly.

Once again, a big shout out to all of our neighbors who helped with South Beach upgrades. I have said it before and I will say it again. At the same time we are doing projects together we are building relationships, memories and community having a ton of fun and lots of laughs.

*Mike Neil - Parks*

## RAFT ISLAND TREASURER

I was asked to stay on as interim Treasurer while Keith Mummaw, your elected Treasurer, took care of some personal issues that arose. Unfortunately, Keith will not be able to resume his role as Treasurer this year. I will remain as Treasurer if the Board approves.

We received the draft audit report back from the CPA's. No significant items were noted. The final draft of the audit should be out shortly and we'll post it on the website. The reserve study is required to be done every 3 years. The reserve study was done in February and finalized for the annual meeting. It is posted on the website. The annual reports for the USDA regarding our bridge loans were prepared and sent in August.

We ended FYE June 20, 2020 mostly under budget and had some exceptional items like the playground equipment and the removal of some dangerous trees near the tennis courts. The playground equipment, approved by special vote, is included in the South Beach costs on the budget vs. actual report. The playground equipment was not included in the operating budget since specially approved. We also had the tennis court pressure washed. We were over budget on Traffic/Security to repair and replace a broken camera. We were hoping to spread the cost of repairing the dock/float over last year and this but both bills got counted in this year so put us over this year but under last year. Lastly, liability insurance is over budget. When preparing last year's budget, I didn't realize the timing of the insurance policy renewals so the budget didn't include the D&O policy expected premium since it was paid in the prior fiscal year.

Happy Holidays *Anne Scea – Interim Treasurer*



## RIIA INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

The Investment Committee meets quarterly and provides recommendations to the Board of Trustees for the Bridge Replacement Fund (BRF), specified General Fund (GF) monies, and the USDA Reserve (a requirement of the 2014 bridge reconstruction financing). Current members are: Monica Butler #101, Brent Ross #79, and Mike Hirko #113. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact me at 253-686-5288.

### **Bridge Replacement Fund (BRF)**

At the end of last quarter (September 30, 2020), the total market value of this fund was \$398,286 with a cost basis of \$293,016. This includes a total of \$215,429 in two Vanguard Life Strategy funds (symbols VSCGX and VASGX) to meet USDA Reserve requirements to be held 30 years (2044). The USDA Reserve requirement also calls for a \$2,466 monthly deposit for 10 years (2024) and was \$40,343 ahead of that requirement.

The remaining \$182,857 continues to be invested in Vanguard stock and bond mutual funds; the allocation percentage goals for these funds remain 26% Bonds (VBTLX), 30% Large Capitalization Stocks (VFIAX), 23% Medium and Small Capitalization Stocks (VEXAX), and 21% International Stocks (VWILX). The 10 year Average Annual Return (AAR) for these funds was 10.51%.

### **General Fund (GF)**

At the end of last quarter (September 30, 2020) the General Fund investments totaled \$177,843. This amount is invested in two mutual funds; Vanguard Balanced Index Admiral Shares (VBIAX) and Vanguard Wellesley Income Admiral Shares (VWIAX). These two mutual funds have a cost basis of \$122,542.

All funds are held by the Vanguard Group.

The RIIA Investment Policy is available for your reading on the RIIA web site.

*Mike Hirko-Chair*

## SECURITY

We had a very busy summer this year. From what I have seen and from what other long-term residents have mentioned, I was told repeatedly that they have never seen so many families using the beach and facilities on a regular basis. That is great news!! We obviously had an unusual summer due to Covid-19 with shutdowns and people being asked to stay home. I know this had a part in making it busier than normal at the beach/park. Our beach apparently has continued to be popular for off island individuals who like to use our facilities as their free water access to Cutt's Island and for beachcombing.

This year, to offset the increase in traffic on the island and usage at our parks by off island trespassers, I increased the presence of the sheriff's deputy. Numerous non-residents were contacted and asked to leave South Beach. Unfortunately, those contacted included convicted felons, one that was a registered sex offender and others with previous convictions for rape, burglary, theft, drugs and numerous other crimes. Why were these people here on the island? They obviously do not live here and do not respect our "No Trespassing" signs and/or towing signs that notify people a valid pass is required. How do we keep people from using our island as their personal playground at our expense? Do we continue paying a deputy \$5,000 each summer to keep people off the island or do we do nothing?

We ended up towing six vehicles this summer. This does not count the number of calls canceled as the owners returned to their vehicle before the tow could arrive. Our deputy began taking a tally late in the season from August 10<sup>th</sup> - September 5<sup>th</sup> and found that from his last seven shifts completed, which usually last from 2-3 hours, 57 people were asked to leave, which included 30 vehicles. This number does not include the numerous cars that came across the island with their beach toys that turned around and left upon seeing him.

It is time to face reality and recognize that there are a lot of people who do not care about our signs, do not respect private property and do not have our community's best interests in mind. Ask yourself? Are you ok with anyone visiting your private

property where you live and hanging out? If you answered no, why is it ok at your community parks? Your security should be important to you. It is now time to discuss the best way to keep people off the island who are not invited.

Security is becoming more relevant during these strange COVID-19 times, as our jails are operating at a very reduced capacity. I can attest to the fact that those who should be incarcerated are simply being released or not booked. Please remember that the Pierce County Sheriff's Department Peninsula Detachment, which serves Raft Island, has a minimum staffing level of two deputies for 128 square miles. Geographically, that stretches from the Narrows Bridge to all of the Key Peninsula. With that said, we must all do our best to respect the island speed limit and protect one another from harm. I am sharing that fact to also reinforce why communication with your neighbors is so vital. It can protect our community from becoming an easy target from those with bad intentions.

I'm happy to say that because of neighbors looking out for one another, we have had relatively low property crime on the island. The area off the island and surrounding Kopachuck Drive has not been as lucky as us. Additionally, if you have not done so already, please join the Raft Island Community Connection via FaceBook to get connected with you neighbors. This FaceBook group is community driven and not affiliated with the Raft Island Improvement Association.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Raftislandcommunityconnection>

*Matt Hurley - Security*



## Event parking policy for South Beach & Bus Stop

Are you thinking ahead to possible get-togethers at South Beach in 2021? Please take a look at the policy below to help with your planning.

### How can I host a special event at South Beach?

-Special events at South Beach (such as parties, birthdays, anniversaries) must obtain permission beforehand.

-Only Raft Island residents can host an event. The host is present the entire time that the event is occurring.

-A scheduled special event would not preclude other island members from using the beach area, playground, and boat launch.

-Raft Island residents may use South Beach for this purpose only once per calendar year.

-RIIA will be held harmless for any injuries incurred during this event.

### How do I get permission to have an event?

-Contact the RIIA Manager, at HOA Community Solutions, for permission to hold the event. The RIIA Manager notifies the Board of Directors, who then determines if this event is permissible.

-The RIIA Manager will send out an all-island email, alerting island members about the event.

### What about parking during the event?

-The event is limited to 8 parking spots at the South Beach parking lot for the host and guests.

-If more than 8 parking spots are needed, guests must use the spaces on the other side of the bridge near the bus shed.

-Hosts can obtain day passes for the guests from the RIIA Manager. This pass allows up to six hours of parking. The pass must be placed on the dashboard of all guest vehicles.

**What if I'm hosting an event at my home?** Can I use the available parking near the bus stop?

-Yes. If a Raft Island Resident hosts an event at their home, and needs more parking, they must notify the RIIA Manager for permission to use the bus stop parking.

-Hosts can obtain day passes for the guests from the RIIA Manager. This pass allows up to six hours of parking. The pass must be placed on the dashboard of all guest vehicles.

### The Raft Island Dock policy

Due to the small size of the dock that we all share at South Beach, please keep in mind the simple policies below. Our Board of Directors developed this to insure that all Raft Island residents have open access to our dock.

-The Raft Island dock is a **temporary** boat tie up for resident-owned boats that are loading and unloading. It is not permissible to keep a boat tied there for any other purpose.

-Boats tied up to the Raft Island dock **cannot be left unattended for more than one hour.**

-Boats are not permitted to be tied up to the Raft Island float overnight.

-If an urgent situation arises which requires a longer stay than one hour, the RIIA Manager must be notified.

*Bonnie Rees, Trustee*



### Work Crews



## Raft Island Halloween



## Enjoying Raft Island



## Island Officers and Trustees

President	Matt Hurley (#182)
Vice President	Charlotte Crain (#8)
Treasurer	Anne Scea (#192)
Secretary	RJ West (#70)
Trustee	Bonnie Rees (#197)
Trustee	Mike Hirko (#113)
Trustee	Tom Phillips (#205)
Trustee	Peter Joyce (#69)
Trustee	Chad Hauer (#201)
Trustee	Jesse Williams (#58)

### Investment Committee

Mike Hirko / Chair (#113)  
Monica Butler (#101)  
Brent Ross (#79)

### Bridge Committee

Open position

### Volunteer Committee

Open position

### Parks and Recreation Committee

Mike Neil, Chair (#2)

### Shirelle Schaefer~ RIIA Community Manager

Phone 253-320-7614

### Billie Jean Hirko (#113) ~ Newsletter Editor

Phone 360-620-1561

### Security Committee

Matt Hurley, Chair (#182)  
Mike Neil, Chair (#2)

### Roads Committee

Open Position

### Emergency Preparedness Committee

Ray Swift (#266)

E-mail [Shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com](mailto:Shirelle@hoacommunitysolutions.com)

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E-mail [bjhirko@gmail.com](mailto:bjhirko@gmail.com)

*Please email BJ any photos or news articles you would like considered for our Island publication*



[www.raftisland.org](http://www.raftisland.org)

**Don't forget to check our website frequently for updates on all things concerning our Island**