



*Our mission is to improve the quality of life on Whidbey Island by **providing support** for the nonprofit sector, **assisting donors** to build and preserve enduring assets for charitable purposes, and meeting community needs through **financial awards***

## **History of Whidbey Community Foundation**

*Updated June 2019*

After decades of attempts to establish a community foundation on Whidbey Island, the effort that led to its success began in 2012 when Robin Hertlein, a certified Grant Professional (GPC) identified a number of regional grant opportunities that the community was missing out on because there was no community foundation to funnel funding through. After researching possibilities, she worked with Town of Coupeville Mayor Nancy Conard to host a series of Exploratory Meetings with community leaders from Oak Harbor, Coupeville, and South Whidbey.

Exploratory Committee meetings were held in 2015 and 2016, and members of the Committee included Robin Hertlein, Nancy Conard, Cheryn Weiser, Elden Smith, Molly Hughes, Christine Cribbs, Bob Severns, Steve Shapiro, Fred McCarthy, Janice Vaughan, and Mary Hudson.



The Whidbey Community Foundation was incorporated in September 2016, and the first official board meeting was held on 9/7/16, with initial board positions being held by Steve Shapiro (Chair), Robin Hertlein (Secretary/Treasurer), Nancy Conard (Executive Director), and Bob Severns. Initial start-up funding was provided by Whidbey Island Bank, a division of Heritage Bank. On 1/25/17 the IRS granted Whidbey Community Foundation tax exemption under code 501(c)(3).

Whidbey Community Foundation began providing nonprofit support in October 2017. The first meeting, held in Freeland, allowed 45 representatives from Whidbey nonprofits to come together in one place and learn about support available through Washington Nonprofits.

The first round of Grants was held in the summer of 2018, and 15 grants were given out to nonprofits.

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In April 2019, Jessie Gunn was hired as our first part-time Program Manager. As Program Manager, Jessie will help the WCF board and volunteers provide excellent, knowledgeable service that achieves results for the nonprofit sector on Whidbey Island.