

Newburyport Waterfront Trust
Online Meeting
January 17, 2024
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Matt Pieniasek called an online meeting of the Newburyport Waterfront Trust to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were Trustees Matt Pieniasek, Mike Sullivan, Dan Mello and Steven Wallace, who left the meeting at 7:48. The term of Leslie Eckholdt has expired and she has not been reappointed. She attended the meeting as a guest.

3. Minutes

Mike Sullivan moved to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2023, meeting. Dan Mello seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-0 vote (Matt Pieniasek, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes; Dan Mello, yes).

4. Treasurer's Report

The \$50,000 payment was made to the City for the bulkhead repair project. The Trust is due \$34,776 from the City for the parking contract and park maintenance expenses and \$5,000 from the Harbormaster.

5. Approval of Invoices

Mike Sullivan moved to approve payments to Edith Heyck for the monthly park manager salary in the amount of \$2,167; SLS in the amount of \$2,855.56 for the monthly park maintenance contract; CSC Electrical in the amount of \$2,351 for retrofitting lamp fixtures, the Greenskeeper in the amount of \$75.00 for summer maintenance; SLS in the amount of \$180.00 for leaf bag removal; SLS in the amount of \$905.00 for Pop Up Park maintenance; Roz Manley in the amount of \$1,072.50 for bookkeeping services; Gretchen Joy in the amount of \$300 for note taking and Edith Heyck in the amounts of \$224.72 and \$27.46 for spring bulbs and \$771.96 for sandwich boards. Dan Mello seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-0 vote (Matt Pieniasek, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes; Dan Mello, yes).

6. Ongoing Projects

a) Bulkhead Repair

The work is progressing and is reported to be ahead of schedule. There have been no problems with access to the boardwalk during construction.

b) Market Landing Park

It is estimated that the park will open at the end of June. The timing is contingent on the availability of temporary power as National Grid works to install the permanent transformer.

Now that the new City Council is in place, it is important for the Ad Hoc Committee to be reconvened. The Committee was charged with providing a report to the City Council on the recommendations that should be made to the Mayor. Decisions must still be made about the ownership of the expanded park and the responsibility for its maintenance. The contract with SLS for the upcoming year begins in March. A single entity should be responsible for the oversight of the entire park, but it is not yet decided if this would be the Trust or the City. It seems the Trust would be in a better position to handle the responsibility. The Trust is not subject to the same procurement laws as the City and the Trustees have specific knowledge on the operation of the park.

The expansion of the park could present the opportunity for additional memorials. Requests for bench plaques continue to be received, but no locations are currently available. Leslie Eckholdt suggested a listing of memorial donations on the Trust's website. She is concerned that an excess of memorials in the park create the feeling of a cemetery. Edith Heyck said a memorial should be a tangible item. Dan Mello suggested that memorial bricks could be sold for one of the walkways. A discussion of the issue might be appropriate for the Ad Hoc Committee.

c) Boardwalk Repair

The City has submitted a CPA application for \$75,000 for a feasibility study on the replacement of the boardwalk. Matt Pieniazek submitted a letter of support on behalf of the Trust.

d) Leases Renewals

The lease renewals will be discussed at the February meeting.

e) Website

The website revisions will be discussed at the February meeting.

f) William Harris Memorial

No update.

7. Park Committee Report

a) Park Use Applications

A wedding scheduled for June was cancelled and a refund will be given.

b) Park Manager's Report

Edith Heyck said SLS contacted her about the renewal of the contract. A phone meeting will be set up in February.

8. Other Business

The agreement with the DPS for snow removal has been finalized. The Trust will pay \$5,000 annually to the City for the work.

Newburyport Waterfront Trust
January 14, 2024

The Mayor has selected Kim Emmons of the Water and Sewer Commission to fill the vacancy on the Trust. Previous mayors have allowed the Trust to choose its own members. The Trust functions differently than City Boards. The Trustees might individually express their disappointment to the Mayor that Leslie Eckholdt was not reappointed, but Matt Pieniazek pointed out the matter has been decided.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.