

Newburyport Waterfront Trust
Online Meeting
February 24, 2021
Minutes

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

In attendance were Trustees Wilbur Shenk, Matt Pieniazek, Dan Mello and Mike Sullivan. Sean Bradley was absent.

3. Minutes

Matt Pieniazek moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021, meeting. Mike Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

4. Treasurer's Report

The cash balance on January 31 was \$274,571. Revenue for the month was \$850 more than expenses and totaled \$6,735, which included \$7 in interest; a payment from the Firehouse in the amount of \$1,611; a payment from the City in the amount of \$3,867; a payment from Dean Holt for winter dockage in the amount of \$750 and a donation from Fred Hufnagel in the amount of \$500. Investment income in the amount of \$1,810 was realized from the Fidelity account.

Expenses for the month totaled \$5,885 and included payments to SLS for work on the gravel pathway in the amount of \$2,680; Cicoria Tree Service in the amount of \$575; Comack Brothers for winterizing the irrigation system in the amount of \$175; Gretchen Joy for Pop Up Park maintenance in the amount of \$434; payments to the park manager and minute taker in the amount of \$1,758 and for check and envelopes in the amount of \$263.

The Firehouse owes \$3,164 and has been making payments monthly. The payment plan should be reviewed. The City has an amount due of \$7,573 along with two old NRA bills that total \$2,114.

Matt Pieniazek moved to approve a payment to Ritz Payroll in the amount of \$82 for the preparation of Forms 1099; Rockingham Electric in the amount of \$2,265 for the purchase of three light poles and Roz Manley for bookkeeping services for the fourth quarter in the amount of \$1,251.25. Dan Mello seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

Dan Mello moved to send an invoice to the City for 27% of the park manager's monthly salary. Mike Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

5. Chair's Report

a) Newburyport Shipbuilding Memorial

James Hyland of the Lighthouse Preservation Society requested a letter of support for an application for CPA funding for a memorial that would be located on the central waterfront. He and sculptor Mike Keropian described the memorial that would commemorate Newburyport as the birthplace of both the Coast Guard and the clipper ship. The memorial would include a bronze statue of Donald McKay, a naval architect who worked in Newburyport to build the world's largest and fastest clipper ships. The circular memorial would include benches and walls containing educational material. Mr. Hyland described the memorial as a three-dimensional history lesson.

The Trustees were supportive of the installation of new public art on the waterfront and the concept of a memorial related to the maritime history of the city. They said the section of the waterfront behind the Custom House is underutilized and a memorial in this area could help to activate it. Concerns that were expressed included vandalism and the linking of the two somewhat unrelated themes of the Coast Guard and clipper ships in one memorial. Also, the Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee is in the process of selecting a designer for the expanded park. The Trustees had some concern about the way in which the memorial would fit in with a cohesive design for the park. It is uncertain that the Ad Hoc Committee would agree to place constraints on the design at this point in time. Mr. Hyland said he and Mr. Keropian intend to make a presentation to the Ad Hoc Committee. They said the plans for the memorial are in the conceptual stage and they would be willing to work to refine it with the landscape architect selected to design the expanded park.

Wilbur Shenk and Matt Pieniazek will work together to draft a letter to the Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee endorsing the concept of integrating a monument commemorating the city's maritime history into the design for the expanded park.

b) Status of Harbor Commission/City Lease

The draft lease for the submerged tidelands was sent to Mayor Holaday on January 26 and she forwarded it to the Harbormaster and Harbor Commission on February 16. She would like it to be approved quickly in order that the funds could be paid from the FY21 budget. The issue of indemnification is expected to be a part of the discussion.

c) Memorandum of Understanding

The discussion with Mayor Holaday concerning the indemnification of the Trust for the City property it would be maintaining under the MOU is ongoing.

d) Parking Agreement

The discussions Wilbur Shenk and Matt Pieniazek recently had with the Mayor touched briefly on the renewal of the parking contract. She questioned the Trust's practice of not allowing permit parking in its lot.

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e) Light Replacements

The delivery of the replacement light poles is expected on February 25 and the payment of the invoice has been approved. Wilbur Shenk spoke with Harbormaster Paul Hogg about compensation for two of the missing light poles. One was damaged by the crane used for the docks and the second by a boat that broke away from its mooring. Mr. Hogg promised to compensate the Trust for at least one of the light poles. He asked if the Trust would consider not replacing one of the poles because it makes it difficult for the crane to install and remove the docks. The Trustees would not support the permanent removal of the pole but would consider an alternative solution, such as the use of a quick-connect plug that would allow the pole to be removed on a temporary basis.

f) Boardwalk Repairs

No updates.

6. Waterfront Committee Report

a) Winter Fishing Leases

Payments, contacts and certificates of insurance have been received for all three winter fishing vessels. The information will be added to the Trust's website.

b) Summer Commercial Leases

Dan Mello will review the expiration dates of the existing contracts.

7. Parks Committee Report

Park Use Applications

Sarah Oleson has inquired about continuing her summer Sunday morning yoga classes. She was instructed to submit an application. The implementation of the rate structure is uncertain at this time. It is likely to go into effect for the second half of the summer.

8. Other Business

The Army Corp. is planning to dredge the mouth of the river in the fall. The Harbor Commission is interested in dredging additional areas while the equipment is available. The Trustees would consider entering into an agreement for dredging in the embayment and at the Commercial Pier.

9. Public Comment

None

10. Adjournment

Dan Mello moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Mike Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the Newburyport Waterfront Trust will be scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.