

**Newburyport Waterfront Trust**  
Online Meeting  
August 24, 2022  
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, Leslie Eckholdt, Matt Pieniazek, Dan Mello and Mike Sullivan.

**3. Minutes**

Dan Mello moved to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2022, meeting. Matt Pieniazek seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Leslie Eckholdt, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

**4. Regular Business**

Dan Mello moved to approve the payment of items #19 to #28 of the Disbursement and Deposit Detail Request dated August 23. Matt Pieniazek seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Leslie Eckholdt, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

**5. Ongoing Projects**

**a) Parking Agreement**

Matt Pieniazek said he believes the Trust is receiving about half of the meter revenue from the City that it should. The costs allocated to the Trust appear to be too high. The revenue from the Trust's lot is approximately \$165,000, while the Trust receives \$70,000 of this. He said the agreement has been in place for about five years and during that time, revenue growth has outstripped expense growth. The amount the Trust receives under the agreement has not changed despite the doubling of parking rates and the increase in hours. He thinks the Trust should receive \$40,000 to \$50,000 more than it currently is. He and Wilbur Shenk will ask for clarification about figures on the City's spreadsheets at an upcoming meeting.

**b) Ad Hoc Central Committee on Market Landing Park Expansion**

Matt Pieniazek said he and Wilbur Shenk met with Andy Port to discuss the concerns about the expanded park that the Planning Board raised at its July 17 meeting. He said not all Planning Board members are in agreement about the proposed location of the shared-use path. Some would like it to extend further from the embayment and more towards the Firehouse. The Trustees are firm in their position that the path should be near the embayment in the location that it is currently proposed. The path should be widened at the point where it meets the embayment to create a safe area for

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cyclists to dismount from their bikes. At these two points, some mechanism, such as a gate, should be put in place that would make it necessary for bikes to be walked through the park. The exit from the shared use path into the west lot should be widened so that an alternative to the sidewalk in front of the Tuscan Grille is provided. Bike racks should be located on the grass, as the Trustees do not want to sacrifice parking spaces for bike racks. The Trustees are in agreement with the proposed changes to the bullnose in the west lot to improve vehicle circulation.

The Trustees also do not want 10% of their spaces to be allocated for electric vehicles, as has been proposed. At this point in time, these spaces would be underutilized, resulting in a loss of revenue. It would be preferable to locate the spaces in the parking garage. The Trustees would like to dedicate only two spaces in their lot to electric vehicles. Conduit should be installed so that spaces could be added in the future as demand increases.

The Trustees are supportive of the concept of installing artificial turf in the area near the Harbormaster's facility where the docks are to be stored during the winter. During the summer season, the shared dock storage space would be used for events. The provision of a covered space would not be practical, as a roof would be considered a structure that would require additional permitting. It would also block views of the water.

Swings have been proposed for the park that would cost \$50,000 each. The Trustees are supportive of a less costly alternative, such as the swinging benches on the Rail Trail. Dan Mello commented that while he agrees in general with scaling back on costs, the City has hired a world-renown design team with a vision for creating a premier park that would be a North Shore destination.

The existing restroom trailer would be removed in the first phase of construction, but the replacement building would not be constructed until the third phase. It would be necessary to provide some type of restroom facility in the park during construction. Portable toilets could be located in the area of the existing Pop Up Park. They could face the parking lot and be screened to be less visible from Merrimac Street.

The Trust has been asked to donate \$120,000 to \$150,000 towards the cost of the portion of a new irrigation system that would run through the Trust property. This integrated system would replace the Trust's existing system, which functions reasonably well. While the Trustees understand the value of an integrated system, they would not consider the replacement of their existing system but for the expansion of the park. The amount requested is higher than is feasible based on available funds. The Trust has committed \$50,000 to the bulkhead repair project. The Trustees would be willing to contribute \$50,000 towards the irrigation system at this time. They would perhaps be willing to make an additional contribution at a future date, when the cost of maintaining the expanded park is known, as well as their level of income. A greater contribution might be possible if revenue from the parking contract increases.

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Mike Sullivan moved to contribute \$50,000 towards an integrated irrigation system that would cover the current Waterfront Trust property and the expanded park property. Dan Mello seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Leslie Eckholdt, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes).

**c) Bulkhead Repair**

The work to repair the bulkhead will be delayed one year due to requirements related to a federal grant.

**d) Bill Harris Memorial**

It has been suggested that one of the ways should be named in honor of Bill Harris. The new way that would run through the east lot has not yet been named. The City owns this way. Consideration is being given to the naming of Upper Railroad Avenue to recognize indigenous people.

**e) SLS Contract Extension**

Wilbur Shenk said he would like to extend the contract with SLS for one or two years and to offer a 10% increase. It is not known how the construction of the park that is to begin next year will impact the maintenance needs. The contract extension should include a contingency that if less work is involved, an increase would not be paid.

**f) Firehouse Lease**

The lease with the Firehouse has been at the same rate for the past eight years. It terminates at the end of the calendar year and must be renegotiated.

**6. Adjournment**

Mike Sullivan moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m. Matt Pieniazek seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote (Wilbur Shenk, yes; Matt Pieniazek, yes; Leslie Eckholdt, yes; Dan Mello, yes; Mike Sullivan, yes.)