

From: Bruce Vogel <BVogel@CityofNewburyport.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Richard Jones <RJones@CityofNewburyport.com>
Subject: Document inquiry

Good morning Richard,

In response to your inquiry regarding documents from Lise Reid I referenced at the last City Council meeting, please see attached.

Over the course of the “Parks Reorganization” discussions, I have reached out to Lise to fact-check or ask for clarification. I have also been in regular contact with Bob Morrill and Jack Grady for the same reason.

These latest documents are in response to the debates that took place in the general and committee meetings regarding **COMM0043666_10_11_2022 Ann Marie Monziona re: park bench**.

Lise has given me permission to make these documents public with the caveat that everyone understands that these are quick responses to COMM436 and that more complete information will be forthcoming.

She also points out that the administration should be made aware of the circumstances outlined in the document name *Bench update – duplication of effort and cost*.

This email, as a communication and as an accompaniment to the attachments, is for information only, not as debate.

Thank you for your assistance.

Best,

Bruce



Bruce Vogel <bruce@plumislandcoffee.com>

bench update

1 message

Lise Reid <l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com>
To: Bruce Vogel <bruce@vogelatlarge.com>

Mon, Nov 14, 2022 at 6:38 PM

Here's a quick bench update:

Plaque update

I just found out that City staff are duplicating efforts rather than coordinating with me about outstanding plaques. This is unfortunate as it is resulting in a waste of city money and staff time.

They have ordered and paid for a plaque for the granite seating project which I already ordered some time ago and is due to arrive on my doorstep any day along with two other plaques. I had asked Mike to contact me when they were installing the new benches at Joppa as I had details about placement. He chose not to coordinate that. The footrests for the memorial benches at Joppa are installed backwards. I have not yet had complaints, but I am guessing it's a matter of time.

I am concerned because Mike Hennessey is working from a spreadsheet which I sent him back in July. I have made updates to that spreadsheet as the outstanding orders were completed and even changed, such as the fact that one donor wants his plaque installation to be delayed until next August. Has parks staff noted that change?

In addition, I have a volunteer lined up to install them, but am being told the Parks Department will install them. Interesting that they suddenly have all this extra time and money to do work a volunteer is willing to do and pay for something the Conservancy is willing to pay for.

I have been very forthcoming and generous with my time, met with Mike on site, and offered my assistance to get the projects done right. I do wish city staff would accept my offer to coordinate to save us all extra time and money.

Lise

Lise Reid
978-872-6500
l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com



Bruce Vogel <bruce@plumislandcoffee.com>

Fwd: Notes from our phone call

1 message

Lise Reid <l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com>
To: Bruce Vogel <bruce@vogelatlarge.com>

Mon, Nov 14, 2022 at 5:41 PM

Hi Bruce,

I have not had time to craft my rebuttal, but below are some notes from beginning that effort and from our conversation. Hope it is helpful to you.

I have attached a photo of the engraving that was being done on the Monziona bench, so that you can see we were making our best efforts to get this done for her. As promised I have also attached a sample of a thank you letter sent by the conservancy for the adoption of an existing bench.

Best,
Lise

There is clearly a lack of information as well as mis-information being provided to City Councilors as they publicly consider what they have suggested is fraudulent activity by the Newburyport Parks Conservancy. I offer the following additional information, which I hope will help to more accurately answer some of the questions Councilors had.

Regarding Councilor Wright's reference to a forged check endorsement,

Wright indicated that the endorsement would be considered forged unless there is "a document that says the conservancy is a sub entity of The Mayor Gayden W. Morrill Charitable Foundation."

A 2012 resolution drawn up by Healey, Deshaies, Gagliardi & Woelfel, PC states, ". . . the Foundation resolves to create an account at a local banking institution, to wit: The Provident Bank, in the name of the Foundation d/b/a The Newburyport Parks Conservancy with a Trustee, James Agrippa Morrill and John Grady as signatories."

It is confusing but not illegal that the checks used by the Conservancy list the umbrella foundation as the account holder rather than the Newburyport Parks Conservancy. This is why the refund check issued by the Newburyport Parks Conservancy to Ann Marie Monziona appears to be from an entity that is separate from the Conservancy, when in actuality was issued from the Conservancy bank account.

Councilor Lane suggested there were three donors who did not see their memorial come to fruition.

As someone who has worked very hard with the Conservancy's donors to keep in touch and make sure they were given what they paid for, it is very hard to listen to the suggestion that there are donors being left in the lurch. When I was laid off, I committed to volunteering with the Newburyport Parks Conservancy for the sole purpose of seeing these installations through and making sure that no donors were left in the lurch.

I am in correspondence with all donors who still have outstanding memorials. If there are donations that, as Councilor Lane suggests, have not come to fruition, he should not be coordinating with Mike Hennessey to get them done. It just confuses the issue. He should be reaching out to me through the Conservancy. He will likely learn that we have those donations in process and well under control. The Conservancy will be installing all remaining plaques. Benches themselves are all in place thanks to installation help from the Parks Department.

I am happy to provide a list with status details of the six outstanding plaques and two bricks that need to be installed.

Details about Ann Marie Monziona's bench donation:

Ms. Monziona sent a check for \$1,000 sometime in early 2022 to adopt an existing bench along the waterfront at Joppa Park. We did not have any available. She was notified in March that the Conservancy could either refund her money or she could fund one of the granite block seats along Clipper City Rail Trail at Coombs Wharf for \$3,000. She agreed to do this and later in spring 2022 sent another \$2,000 check to make up the difference.

Placement of granite blocks to be used as seating along the waterfront side of Clipper City Rail Trail in the Coombs Wharf area were approved by the Parks Commission on November 18, 2021. It was a long process to procure, receive, and place the granite blocks involving a visit to a quarry with Kim Turner and Parks Commissioner Charles

Griffin, lengthy back and forth with the quarry once we identified the blocks, delivery, and then assistance by the DPS to place them.

During this process I met on the Rail Trail in the Coombs Wharf area with Special Projects Manager Kim Turner, Senior Project Manager Geordie Vining, and Michael Updike, the artist we had chosen to create the COVID memorial. While we were there I asked their opinion about the granite seating memorials and whether we should engrave the blocks or embed bronze-style plaques. I got a resounding “engrave them!” from Km and Michael. I decided engraving was the way to go, but I didn’t go back to the Parks Commission to get this approach approved. Feeling the urgency of completing these memorials I went straight to the granite engraver rather than seeking approval as I should have. It took me months to get a granite engraver lined up to do the work.

During the time I was trying to get the engraver scheduled, I had some emails from Ms. Monziona asking when her memorial would be completed. I said I couldn’t give her an exact date, but that we were aiming for August. She wrote back to say if it wasn’t completed by October 1 she wanted her money back. I pleaded with the granite engraver to get it done by then. He was on the trail on Friday, September 30 engraving her granite, when Parks Commissioner Paul Swindlehurst walked past and saw the work being done. He asked the engraver to stop work as it had not been approved by the commission. At that point I had no choice but to let Ms. Monziona know that her memorial was not completed in time and that we would refund her money. I asked Jack Grady to issue a refund check right away.

Memorial Bench Rate

Very early on when I still worked very part time for the Parks Commission, the rate for memorial bench adoptions was set by the Parks Commission. The program was put into place before the Conservancy was established. The Commission’s reasoning for setting a new bench at \$3,000 for a new bench and \$1,000 to adopt an existing bench was that the donation would cover the cost of the bench with additional funding left over to support parks operations.

I felt uncomfortable that the commission was “raising money” so when the Conservancy was established, I thought it would be a much more appropriate vehicle for raising funds through a memorial bench program. Therefore, I had the Conservancy take over that program.

None of us realized at the time that this “fee schedule” should have been ratified by City Council.

2 attachments



granite-block-Monzione.jpg
4314K

 **Thank-you-bench.pdf**
528K



Bruce Vogel <bruce@plumislandcoffee.com>

Fwd: Memorial bench

1 message

Lise Reid <l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com>
To: Bruce Vogel <bruce@vogelatlarge.com>

Tue, Nov 15, 2022 at 12:59 PM

Hi Bruce,

For what it's worth, below are some of the final messages between me and Ann Marie Monziona. There was another with a threat to contact a lawyer. Meant to send it yesterday.

Lise

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lise Reid** <l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 12, 2022 at 1:06 PM
Subject: Memorial bench
To: <tackm4@gmail.com>
Cc: Christine Jackson <CJackson@cityofnewburyport.com>

Hi Ann Marie,

I am writing you from my personal email because it is clear you have not received my most recent email sent from the conservancy email account.

I notified you some time ago that your mother's bench was placed along the Rail Trail waterfront in July. The plaque has been ordered; we expect delivery this month.

If you still wish your donation to be refunded, I am sure the conservancy will do so. Unfortunately, it will be at a significant cost to the conservancy as the granite has been paid for and installed and the engraving ordered. However, I understand it has been a long process and can imagine your patience has run out. Please let me know if you would like a refund and I will request a check.

Best Regards,
Lise

Lise Reid
l.a.r.k.reid@gmail.com





December 31, 2021

Gail Korpusik
6 Spring Hill Road
Merrimac, MA 01860

Dear Gail Korpusik,

It is with sincere gratitude that we acknowledge your gift of **1,000 dollars** to the Newburyport Parks Conservancy, a non-profit organization dedicated entirely to the care and improvement of Newburyport parks.

The Newburyport Parks Conservancy is made possible by The Mayor Gayden W. Morrill Charitable Foundation, long-time benefactor of Newburyport's parks and public spaces, whose many recent projects include contributions to construction of the Clipper City Rail Trail Phase II, the new brick walkway at Joppa Park, the rain garden at Cushing Park, creation of Garrison Gardens at Atwood Park and the many new benches on Inn Street to name a few. Foundation trustees helped establish the Newburyport Parks Conservancy to maintain the improvements to which they have so faithfully given their support. The foundation's fundraising efforts also enrich community by supporting the annual ParksFest/Americana Rhythm & Roots Music Festival, Pumpkin Palooza and the Show Your S'Port athletic field fundraiser.

Your gift makes possible vital work such as professional-caliber lawn and garden care, tree care, repairs to play equipment, maintenance of off-leash areas, and larger improvement projects that continue to beautify our parks. **Your gift in memory of Donald E and Lillian C Bryant will be used for Bench Adoption and Care of Parks.**

NPC is an operating 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and donations are tax-deductible within the guidelines of U.S. law using the following information:

Tax identification number: 04-3049521

Business name: The Mayor Gayden W. Morrill Charitable Foundation dba Newburyport Parks Conservancy.

Sincerely yours,

Marcia Shoemaker

Marcia Shoemaker, Volunteer Administrator
Newburyport Parks Conservancy

P.O. Box 1211
Newburyport, MA 01950
888-465-1733
info@newburyportparks.org
www.newburyportparks.org