

**Newburyport Redevelopment Authority**  
City Council Chambers  
October 11, 2017  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Bob Uhlig called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

In attendance were NRA members Leslie Eckholdt, Bob Uhlig, Andy Sidford, Marian Levy and David St. Cyr. Carol Powers was also in attendance.

**3. General Business**

**A. Proposal for West Lot Soils Analysis from ESS**

ESS will soon send an assessment of the work that has been done to date. The assessment will include the recommendation that the arsenic in the west lot be removed. Two potential outcomes would be possible: an AUL might be placed on the property or less restrictive conditions that do not travel with the deed might be imposed.

**B. Central Waterfront Review**

**1. Draft Letter of Intent**

Carol Powers prepared a draft letter of intent that would be issued to the Waterfront Trust and the Custom House. Steve Hines responded to the document in an email but comments have not yet been received from Grace Connolly, the attorney for the Trust, or Michael Mroz of the Custom House. Leslie Eckholdt was concerned the Waterfront Trust would not agree to some elements of the document. Carol Powers explained the letter is an informal, non-binding document. She said it is not a negotiated agreement. It rather expresses the intention of the NRA to make a gift of its property. Steve Hines stated in his email the Waterfront Trust believes the letter of intent should define the time at which the NRA would cease to exist. Leslie Eckholdt asked that this statement be addressed. Bob Uhlig responded the NRA would not dissolve until the design process has been completed, the Trust has been amended and the land has been conveyed. The parcel where the restrooms are located would not be conveyed until it has been decided which entity would take on the task of their management. This could be the NRA. The members of the Waterfront Trust have made it clear they are not interested in the roll. Andy Sidford said as stewards of the land, the NRA should currently be focused on the design of the park and the means by which it would be funded in perpetuity. The other issues would be resolved as time goes on.

**2. Submerged Tidelands Discussion**

No new information

**3. Public Presentation to Mayor and City Council**

The presentation of the letter of intent will be discussed after it has been revised.

### **C. Property Improvements**

#### **1. Somerby's Way Plantings**

Leslie Eckholdt said she is concerned about the condition of the sycamore trees on Somerby's Way. She spoke with Bob Staples of Cicoria Tree Services, who told her the trees are in natural cycle and recommended deep watering.

#### **2. Dumpster Modification**

Quotes have been received from Atlantic Fence and Walpole Fence in the amount of \$13,000 and \$16,000 respectively to replace and enlarge the dumpster enclosure to accommodate recycling. The quotes include the removal of the existing fence, a replacement wood fence with metal posts for the gates and labor. Artistic Landscapes submitted a quote for \$11,000 to create an access road to the dumpster. This would include cutting the curb, grading, installing an asphalt approach and expanding the concrete pad. Design details would be finalized when a contractor has been selected.

Andy Sidford moved to accept the proposal from Atlantic Fence provided it does not exceed the amount allowed under the procurement law. Marian Levy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Andy Sidford moved to accept the proposal from Artistic Landscapes provided it does not exceed the amount allowed under the procurement law. Marian Levy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **3. Free Little Libraries**

Bob Uhlig thanked Marian Levy and Tom and Gretchen Joy for the installation of the libraries. They appear to be well situated and had received a great deal of use in the short time they have been in place.

#### **4. Rail Trail Public Art**

Geordie Vining asked for comments on the placement of a sculpture of an osprey on NRA property bordering the Rail Trail. Leslie Eckholdt was not in favor of the idea. Andy Sidford and Marian Levy said they would support public art in that location but would be open to considering other pieces. Michael Mroz said a local sculptor, Michael Updike, has proposed a monument be made to Adolphus Greely, a Newburyport citizen who led the first expedition to the Arctic and received the Medal of Honor. He supports installing a piece of local significance such as this at the proposed location, which is adjacent to the Custom House. It will be suggested to Geordie Vining that he contact Michael Updike.

### **D. Leases and Agreements**

#### **1. Parking Agreement**

Carol Powers has tried unsuccessfully to discuss the parking agreement with Richard Jones. She will resume her efforts after the election.

### **4. Reports**

#### **A. Clerk's Report**

None

**B. Treasurer's Report**

On September 30 the balance in the checking account was \$18,443 and the balance in the money market account was \$351,218. Parking revenue from the months of July and August combined to total approximately \$62,000. Andy Sidford moved to approve a payment to Gretchen Joy for minute taking for the October 11 meeting and Tom and Gretchen Joy for PUP maintenance and pachysandra watering from September 11 to October 8 in the amount of \$367.50. Marian Levy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**C. Counsel's Report**

Leslie Eckholdt asked about the assertion made by Jamy Madeja that a knowledge of the fair market value of the submerged tidelands would be required for their transfer. Carol Powers said the requirement for the fair market value of the NRA property would be dependent on the recipient. The receipt of full market value would be required if the land were to be transferred to a private, for-profit entity. She said it would be prudent to know the value of that which is being conveyed. The Waterfront Trust should also wish to know the value of the asset it is to receive. A real estate appraisal includes whatever income the property would generate. The NRA would be conveying not only the submerged tidelands, but also an income stream. It should be determined the income stream would be adequate to support an expanded park.

**5. Public Comment**

None

**6. Upcoming Meetings**

The next meeting of the NRA is scheduled for Wednesday, November 8.

**7. Adjournment**

Andy Sidford moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.