

**Newburyport Redevelopment Authority**  
City Council Chambers  
April 8, 2015  
Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Tom Salemi, Leslie Eckholdt and Andy Sidford. Carol Powers was also in attendance.

**3. Old Business**

**Tree Maintenance**

The Tree Commission approved the plan to remove and maintain the trees on the NRA and Waterfront Trust properties and the work has been completed.

**Clipper City Rail Trail Phase II**

A discussion on the Rail Trail was tabled to the May 13 meeting.

**Dumpster Lease**

Carol Powers contacted the Not Your Average Joe's corporate office about the lease for the dumpster area. She was told the document has been signed but she has not yet received a copy.

**Harbormaster's/Transient Boaters' Facility**

Geordie Vining said the project to construct a new Harbormaster's facility would involve a portion of NRA property. The fisherman's monument would be moved from its existing location and placed on a new brick plaza overlooking the river. Picnic tables, plant materials and benches would be installed around the monument. The site plan review process for the Planning Board is expected to begin in May. The project would be put out to bid in the summer and construction would begin near the end of September.

Andy Sidford moved to authorize Tom Salemi to submit a letter of support to the Planning Board indicating the NRA would allow the fisherman's monument to be relocated its property. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**4. New Business**

**Custom House Maritime Museum**

Michael Mroz presented a full schedule of events for the Custom House.

**Vandalism of Cars**

Several cars were vandalized while parked overnight in the east lot. No new lighting is been planned for the lot at this time. The members discussed adding "park at your own

risk” signage but decided this would not be appropriate in a paid lot. Instead signage might be added to emphasize that overnight parking is not permitted in the lot. Another solution might to be request an increased police presence. The issue will be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the parking advisory committee.

### **5. Pop Up Park**

Mike Hennessey of Hennessey Landscaping reviewed the proposal he submitted for the preparation of the site of the pop up park. The area would be leveled and surfaced with clamshells and lighting would be installed. Low-maintenance plant materials would be placed along the slope that would be created between the park and the parking lot when the area is re-graded. A container for storing furniture and maintenance items would be painted and delivered after the site has been prepared to accept it. The work to prepare the park should take about a week. Mr. Hennessey was cautioned about disturbing the ground to too great of a depth due to the possible presence of contaminated soils.

Tom Salemi moved to approve the proposal from Hennessey Landscaping in the amount of \$13,510. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tom Salemi said he spoke with the Licensing Commission and the Board of Health about the possibility of holding special events in the park. It would be problematic for a food vendor to set up in the park without plumbing and electricity but a license would be obtainable if the NRA decides to go in that direction in the future. He will contact an attorney about assisting in the permitting process in order that any unforeseen liabilities are avoided.

He also said he would like to use social media to make the public aware of the park. Ethan Cohen, 8 Magnolia Street, submitted a proposal for filming a time-lapse video of the construction of the park. He had expected the installation would take two weeks and he would take two photographs per day for a cost of \$2,000. He estimated a one-week installation would reduce the cost only slightly because more photographs would be taken on a daily basis. The NRA members did not wish to commit this amount to the small project. Leslie Eckholdt moved to offer \$700 for a photographic essay on the construction of the pop up park. Tom Salemi seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tom Salemi ended the discussion on the pop up park by saying he sent Ann Ormond a job description for a management of the park, but has not yet received a response.

### **6. Parking Lot and Lighting Improvement Agreement**

The City intends to discontinue the use of a culvert that dates from the late 1800s and runs under the Ale House and the Brown’s Wharf buildings. A new culvert would be installed in Riverside Park in July. The improvements to Riverside Park, which include changes to the lighting, would be done in conjunction with this project. Tom Salemi said he does not yet have a document to review, but the NRA is being asked to contribute \$9,200 at this time to the cost of materials for the lighting improvements on its property.

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Andy Sidford moved to authorize the expenditure of \$9,200 for materials. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

National Grid will remove the light and pole in the west lot, but this should not be done until the new lights are operational. The timing must be coordinated with National Grid and the Waterfront Trust. Leslie Eckholdt will contact Scott Sutherland about the coordination of efforts.

**7. Secretary's Report**

Carol Powers will work with Leslie Eckholdt on the annual report.

**8. Treasurer's Report**

Tom Salemi reported in the absence of Adam Guild that the balance in the checking account is \$7,883.95 and the balance in the money market account is \$203,233.70.

Andy Sidford moved to approve the payment of invoices from National Grid in the amount of \$673.75 and the Waterfront Trust for the NRA's monthly portion of the park manager's salary in the amount of \$337.50. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**9. Council's Report**

Carol Powers is currently reviewing the easements for the Rail Trail. She submitted her legal on the submerged tidelands to the City. It is not know if the City Solicitor, Kopelman and Page, has prepared it own opinion as of yet.

**10. Property Maintenance Report**

Leslie Eckholdt reported that she, Andy Sidford and Adam Guild walked the NRA property. She said the meters are working but the wheel stops are misaligned. The maintenance of the lot is a part of the parking agreement with the City.

**11. Minutes**

The approval of the minutes of the March 11 meeting was tabled due to the absence of two members.

**12. Public Comment**

Elizabeth Heath, 25 Oak Street, asked about the possibility of soils being disrupted during the construction of the pop up park. She was told most of the contaminated soil is more than four feet below the surface and should not be impacted by the work. The landscaper has been made aware of the situation.

Jim McCauley, 27 Storeybrook Avenue, said he is concerned that the landscaper did not seem to be aware of the AUL and the new information might increase his cost estimate.

Joe Brown, 6 Cutting Drive, commended the NRA for taking the initiative to reduce parking and increase the amount of open space. He said he is concerned, however, that this might somehow interfere with the transfer of Somerby's Way to the Waterfront

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Trust. Tom Salemi explained the pop up park would not necessarily be a permanent space and the items that are being added to it could all be moved to a different location.

Natalea Brown, 339 High Street, said she is concerned about money being spent on the waterfront. She said removing parking from the waterfront might depress the economy and she would like the NRA to disband.

Rob Germinara, 2 Ashland Street, suggested National Grid might bear the responsibility for the poles and fixtures in the west lot if the NRA were to enter into a contract to rent them from the company.

**13. Adjournment**

Andy Sidford moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Tom Salemi seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.