

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
City Council Chambers
June 16, 2016
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Tom Salemi called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Minutes

Leslie Eckholdt moved to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2016 meeting as submitted. Bob Uhlig seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Marian Levy abstaining.

4. Old Business

Waterfront Lot Improvements

Umbrellas have been installed in the Pop Up Park. The members would like to find someone to maintain the park for a weekly stipend of \$50 with the expectation the park would be checked several times throughout the week. The order for three picnic tables with umbrellas and six Adirondack chairs has been received. These were to be installed in the west lot near the berm. The plans for the Pop Up Park that was to be constructed in this area are now on hold due to comments made at the recent Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee meeting. The picnic tables will be assembled but the ground surface will remain as it is. The Waterfront Trust voted at its last meeting to approve the placement of the chairs on the berm.

Parking Agreement

Carol Powers reported she had a congenial meeting with Richard Jones about the parking agreement. She is waiting for information about permit parking and they will meet again after it has been received. She will then draft the parking agreement for review and approval at the July NRA meeting.

Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee

At the June 13 meeting of the Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee the NRA, Waterfront Trust and City were asked to list the items they wish to have addressed, or the issues they wish to be resolved, at the time the Declaration of Public Trust is revised. The lists are to be submitted to Jared Eigerman before the next meeting of the Committee, which will take place on June 29. Tom Salemi and Carol Powers will work together to prepare the NRA's list.

Waterfront Trust Issues

The Trustees voted to approve a 10% salary increase for their park manager Edith Heyck. The NRA members agreed to pay 27% of this increase.

Wilbur Shenk asked if the members would be willing to implement the plans to raise the elevation of the area inside the granite blocks in the west lot parallel to the embayment to the height of the berm. They responded they would support the Trust obtaining cost estimates for the work. Mr. Shenk also asked about the plans to improve Somerby's Way. Bob Uhlig said he would support the work because it involves the joint maintenance of property. A proposal has not yet been presented for NRA approval.

Carol Powers reviewed the items she outlined in a memo about the changes she believes should be made to the Declaration for Public Trust. Her comments were preliminary and the NRA members have not yet time to review them. She spoke about the need to improve the corporate structure, the maintenance of records and the financial accounting. She said if the Waterfront Trust is the entity to which the NRA chooses to convey land, it should be made as strong as possible.

5. New Business

Next Steps

Carol Powers said before the NRA might disband, it must conclude its business affairs. According to statute, the group may dissolve if there is no further need for its existence and all of its outstanding obligations have been satisfied. She said all transfers must first be completed. The NRA has an obligation to transfer the Ways to the Water. The two processes cannot be done simultaneously. She said while the law is gray about the need to receive full market value for NRA property, it does not indicate the land might be given away. The NRA is not at the point where it would determine the distribution of its assets. The first step in the process should be to strengthen the Trust document. She would not recommend the NRA transfer land to the Trust at this time, even the parcels it is obligated to transfer, because the Trust document as currently written is not strong enough. She added the NRA land is private property. The City would not have a role in determining how the land or the assets of the group might be distributed.

6. Secretary's Report

It will soon be time to prepare the annual report to the State.

7. Treasurer's Report

Leslie Eckholdt reported the balance in the checking account on May 31 was \$7,318.14 and the balance in the money market account was \$194,716.32. She said she has decided not to pursue the replacement of the drinking fountain. Tom Salemi moved to approve a payment to Leslie Eckholdt in the amount of \$326.52 for plant materials and compost for the four pots in the Pop Up Park, stamps and a hoe; to the Waterfront Trust in the amount of \$2,591.74 for maintenance for May and June; to the Greenskeeper for the planting of five pots in the west parking lot and to Gretchen Joy in the amount of \$300 for minute taking for the May and June meetings. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Council's Report

None

9. Adjournment

Andy Sidford moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Bob Uhlig seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The next meeting of the NRA will be scheduled for Wednesday, July 13.