

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
City Council Chambers
July 13, 2016
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Tom Salemi called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Tom Salemi, Marian Levy, Leslie Eckholdt, Bob Uhlig and Andy Sidford.

3. Minutes

Andy Sidford moved to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2016 meeting as submitted. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Old Business

Waterfront Lot Improvements

The planters in the west lot are attractive, but a blue barrel and cones located there are unsightly and should be removed. Richard Jones will be asked about the cones. They might have been placed there to prevent vehicles from being driven between the boulders to be parked by the berm.

The cost of elevating the area parallel to the embayment to the height of the berm seems to be prohibitive. The gravel area between the granite blocks and the berm parallel to the river is unattractive. The cost to add grass in this area around the picnic tables would be minimal. The work might be considered for the fall.

Parking Agreement

The NRA has not been receiving the parking revenue from the cell phone app. Richard Jones is researching the amount that should have been received for the past six months. He would not be able to look at the records further back in time because the vendor has changed.

Waterfront Trust Issues

Bill Harris has not been available to meet with Carol Powers.

Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee

Jared Eigerman has put forth a timeline for the dissolution of the NRA. According to the schedule the survey would be completed and the Declaration of Public Trust revised by November and the NRA would transfer its property and dissolve by the end of the year. Tom Salemi objected to the timeline because he does not wish the NRA to be held to a schedule it would not be able to meet. Leslie Eckholdt said the schedule is an aggressive one and there is much work to be done. She said the focus should be on revolving the outstanding issues. She asked about the degree to which the NRA might be able to

control the use of the property after it has been transferred. She said the transfer must be accomplished in such a way that the NRA's goal of expanding the park along the waterfront should not be compromised. She added the public should be asked to provide input to be considered along with that received from the City and the Waterfront Trust. Marian Levy said while it might be beneficial to have a timeline for resolving issues, the NRA should be allowed to dissolve at its own pace. Andy Sidford said the focus has shifted away from the appearance of the waterfront to the disbursement of the NRA property. He said he became a member of the NRA not to expedite the transfer of the land, but rather because he is concerned about the future of the waterfront. Tom Salemi said an understanding must be reached on a vision for the waterfront and which group would control it. Bob Uhlig said an agreement must be reached about the cost of both capital improvements and maintenance and how these would be funded. He said he would not wish to proceed with a discussion on what the park should look like until a commitment to its maintenance has been made. He said the maintenance should not be the responsibility of the City. He also said the dissolution of the NRA is a separate topic from disposition of the land or the plans for the central waterfront. He said there is not precedent for a redevelopment authority being dissolved.

5. New Business

Paula Estey asked to incorporate the Pop Up Park in the pop up art shows she has planned at the Browns Wharf Building on Fridays and Saturdays for four weeks in July and August. A staffed table with brochures would be placed in the park during the shows. Andy Sidford moved to approve the request. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tom Salemi moved to approve an application from the Chamber of Commerce for the Riverfront Music Festival scheduled for Saturday, September 3, pending the receipt of insurance information. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Secretary's Report

The next meeting of the NRA will be scheduled for August 17.

7. Treasurer's Report

Leslie Eckholdt reported that on June 30 the balance in the checking account was \$4,553.29 and the balance in the money market account was \$202,949.13.

Tom Salemi moved to approve the payment of a bill from DEP in the amount of \$2,455 related to the Tier Two study on the condition an explanation of the bill is received. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tom Salemi moved to approve payments to Gretchen Joy in the amount of \$150 for minute taking for the July meeting, \$150 for three weeks of Pup Up Park maintenance, \$75 for weeding the garden and treating weeds in the park and \$40.20 for supplies; Tom Joy in the amount of \$87.50 for the assembly of six Adirondack chairs; and the Greenskeeper in the amount of \$150.00 for planter maintenance in the month of June. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Council's Report

Carol Powers was not in attendance. She has been working with Glen Wood on the issues involving the submerged tidelands.

9. Public Comment

Rob Germinara, 2 Ashland Street, said the NRA, Waterfront Trust, Settlers and the public should work together on the vision for the waterfront, and the City should not be given control of the NRA property. He said he would be in favor of an expanded Waterfront Trust that combines the assets of both groups and includes NRA members as Trustees.

10. Adjournment

Andy Sidford moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Bob Uhlig seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.