

MINUTES OF THE  
EMERY ESTATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 20, 2015

PRESENT: Pat O'Leary (Chairwoman), Mary Jordan-Roy, Cathy Torrey, Laura LeBarron, Ron Boretti, Janelle Quinn and Heidi Lewis Smith

ABSENT: Dan Condon and Bill McCarthy

OTHERS: Jim Clarke, Director of Planning and Community Development  
Nicholas Bulens, Grant Writer and Researcher  
Lee Hultin, Recording Secretary

Chairwoman Pat O'Leary called the Emery Estate Advisory Committee meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall, 75 Middle Street, Weymouth.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mary Jordan-Roy made a motion to approve the minutes of September 24, 2015 and was seconded by Laura LeBarron. Voted 7-0

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Staff report on the response for proposals for Reuse, Operation and Management of the Emery Estate:**

Jim Clarke recommended that the group not get into specific details on the reports as executive session was not put on the agenda. Jim will put it on the next agenda for further discussions.

Nicholas Bulens stated that they received two proposals that were submitted to them by the due date which was September 30, 2015. The two responses were from South Shore Support Services and Brand Knowledge/Brian Kain and were distributed to the Committee's members for their review.

The first proposal is from South Shore (S.S.) Support Services which is a Weymouth-based non-profit organization. They provide services to people who are challenged by developmental disabilities and/or age and their families. They are proposing to relocate their administrative offices to the two top floors of the Main House. They plan to focus their efforts on operating a year-round community (CSA) farm. Individuals from their launch program in Cohasset would undertake the farming and landscaping work. They are already active in the Cohasset Farmer's Market. They envision educational opportunities for local school groups, walking trails, and open space for the public and use of the Main House's first floor for small functions, classes, and meeting space. Weymouth residents would have a reduced or waived fee for the use of space. S.S. Support Services agreed to all the RFP's terms and conditions and proposes a monthly rent for the upkeep and long term maintenance. They request that the Main House be accessible on all floors by an elevator.

The second proposal was submitted by Brand Knowledge. The company itself is not a non-profit but Brian Kain, the Director, is proposing to create an independent non-profit organization to be named King Oak Conservancy, LLC. His proposal is an "abbreviated" response to the RFP. Staff considered this incomplete in terms of fulfilling all the requirements. Brand Knowledge proposes to operate the Main House as an events facility. The building's lawn-facing exterior wall would be demolished and the existing portico enclosed and encased to create more space for seated events of at least 150 people. Additional proposals for the Main House include a new modern kitchen for use by private caterers and an exterior elevator to provide ADA-compliant access to the second floor, where smaller meetings and functions could take place. Brand Knowledge states that "a collaborative approach to the architectural modification would be necessary to streamline overall expenses and accelerate the target for completion." The Carriage House would be used as a museum element, featuring a static and interactive multimedia exhibit on the property's architecture, ownership history, and local lumber industry history. Brand Knowledge lists 16 potential community events and revenue generating events for consideration.

Janelle Quinn asked how much it would cost to put in an elevator, and it was stated approximately \$150,000. There was a brief discussion on exterior vs. interior elevators.

Nicholas stated that the staff agreed that Brand Knowledge's proposal was incomplete and S.S. Support Services did a great job in their effort to be responsive. That being said, staff felt that they did not get proposals based on what the Committee was looking for and perhaps that was due to the fact that the RFP was not as tight as it could have been.

Jim stated that they were focusing more on the function piece and the applicants were focusing more on office space with a few functions. The Town's solicitor, Carolyn Murray, suggested to Nicholas and Jim the following two options:

1. If the applicants did not meet what we were interested in due to the fact that the RFP was not clear enough, we could tighten up the RFP and go out again to bid at a later date.
2. If there is potential in one or more of the proposals, then invite them in for a presentation and make a decision, yes or no, did they respond appropriately to the RFP and meet all criteria. If the answer is no, then go back out for solicitation later. If yes, then pursue a contract.

Jim Clarke stated that there was another group that had an interest and their key person was on vacation for the two weeks that the RFP was out. Perhaps there was not enough time to put a proper proposal together.

Cathy Torrey stated that she thought the Town already looked at the CSA component and it was determined that the soil was not adequate.

Nicholas stated that he used a model RFP and they would be looking for comments to improve it if the Committee decided to go back out.

Chairwoman O'Leary stated that she was disappointed in the amount of applicants (2) and maybe adding to the RFP would bring in more competition.

Ron Boretti stated that this is a small group of people who would apply and we may not get more.

Mary Jordan-Roy cautioned about going back out with a new RFP to capture a particular group as she feels there is a chance the two applicants who have already have may not reapply. She likes the Brand Knowledge application as it covers a lot of items they are looking for, especially with public events. She would like to see more from this company and wants to take a hard look at these two applications thoroughly before considering putting this back out to bid.

Nicholas and Jim agree that these two applications need more review. Nicholas will send the Committee members a copy of the RFP, along with a suggested grading system for the members to use when reviewing the two proposals.

Cathy Torrey stated that one group's application is complete while the other group has an incomplete application and just wanted to get their name in.

The Committee would like to review these two proposals in detail at the next meeting before deciding if they should go back out with a new RFP.

Ron Boretti stated that it is very important not to manipulate the RFP process from one person to another by rewriting the RFP; but if we feel that somehow they are missing what our vision is for the property then it is reasonable to re-ask and encourage them to reapply. He would also like the staff to reach out to the applicants who did not apply and see why.

The terms were 3 years with a 5 year extension. Maybe our expectations were too high and we need to be lower key.

Chairwoman O'Leary stated that the Committee needs to go back, reassess what was asked for in the RFP, and take a harder look to make sure the Committee was clear in what the members really wanted.

### **Other Business:**

Abigail Adams Middle School contacted the Town. They would like to bring 100 students to the Emery Estate and use the grounds on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Jim and Nicholas will be working with them on this.

The Halloween event is not going to happen this year as the Community Events Committee is too busy right now heading into the holiday season.

Laura LaBarron stated her daughter has to do a capstone project and would be interested in working with Bill McCarthy on his holiday German event idea and will discuss at the next meeting.

Mary Jordan-Roy stated she submitted an application to be on the Community Events Committee as there is a vacancy.

Cathy Torrey stated that the south shore culture tour stop was a success! She has always thought there should be a "Friends of Emery" set up, because there is a lot of history at the Estate.

Pat O'Leary stated that Southfield had a video on the history of the base and perhaps we should do a video on the history of Emery. It was suggested that we could use Cultural Council funds to make this.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Cathy Torrey made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm and was seconded by Laura LeBarron.  
Voted Unanimously

Respectfully submitted by:

Lee Hultin  
Recording Secretary



11/4/15  
Date