

**HOST COMMUNITIES
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 18, 2024 – 12:00 p.m.
Town of Niagara Community Center
7000 Lockport Road, Niagara Falls NY**

Representatives Present:

Lee Wallace, Supervisor, CHAIRPERSON	Town of Niagara
Mark Laurrie	Niagara Falls City School District
Paul Casseri, Superintendent	Lewiston Porter School District
Lou Paonessa	New York Power Authority
Thomas Burgasser, Esq.	Niagara County
Scott Hapeman, Esq.	Niagara Wheatfield School District
Steve Broderick, Supervisor (via Teleconference)	Town of Lewiston
Robert M. Restaino, Mayor, VICE CHAIRPERSON	City of Niagara Falls

Alternates/Guests:

Jackie Siegmann, Treasurer	Town of Niagara
Nathaniel Bonfede	NCCED

Staff Present:

Mary Melloni, Secretary

1.0 Call to Order

Chairperson Wallace called the Host Communities Standing Committee meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

2.0 Roll Call

Ms. Melloni called the roll.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Introductions

5.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Laurrie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hapeman, to approve the meeting minutes of March 19, 2024. Motion carried.

6. Town of Niagara

6.1 Veterans Memorial Community Park Master Plan – L. Wallace

(Consultation by NRG on 3/09/2021; Approved for funding in the amount of \$3,369,000 by HCSC on 3/16/2021; HCSC approved \$1,350,000 additional funding on 9/13/2022; requesting \$500,000 additional funding approved by Town of Niagara Board on 4/17/2024)

Mr. Wallace explained that this is a request for additional funding in the amount of \$500,000. He explained that this is necessary because there were a number of change orders and the project was originally underbudgeted. He further explained that when the pond was expanded it was determined that a second fountain would be needed. The fountains are not only a decoration, they serve as an aeration system for the fish that are stocked in the pond. It is also necessary to redesign and relocate the retention pond. The Town Board approved construction overruns of almost \$400,000 and approximately \$100,000 in engineering fees. Ms. Siegmann explained that the \$500,000 will be paid directly from the Town's account; it will not be added to the debt relief portion of the project.

6. Town of Niagara

6.1 Veterans Memorial Community Park Master Plan (Con't.)

Mr. Hapeman stated that the project meets all procedural requirements.

A motion was made by Mr. Burgasser and seconded by Mr. Casseri to approve the additional funding in the amount of \$500,000 for the Veterans Memorial Community Park Master Plan project.

A roll call vote was taken.

<i>Town of Lewiston</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Town of Niagara</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Lewiston Porter</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>City of Niagara Falls</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara-Wheatfield</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara County</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>New York Power Authority</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara Falls Schools</i>	<i>Yes</i>

The resolution was thereupon approved.

7. Niagara County

**7.1 Gratwick Park Improvement Project – A. Domaradzki
(Consultation by NRG on 9/10/2019; Approved for funding in the amount of \$100,000 by HCSC on 12/8/2021; Requesting a re-scope of the \$100,000.**

Mr. Burgasser explained that this request is for a re-scoping of the funds that were approved on December 8, 2021 by the HCSC for the Gratwick Park project. They have found it necessary to add parking, and improve the entryway and some of the roadways. The original proposal was for two pavilions and two portable bathrooms. This was during the pandemic and they were able to complete the two pavilions and there was one bathroom in the park. The funds are being re-scoped due to the fact it would be cost-prohibitive to do the bathrooms at this time. The two new pavilions and improved bathroom have created more use and traffic in the park. This was not anticipated when the project was proposed and it will prevent people from parking on the lawns and causing damage. The actual cost will be approximately \$140,000; however, the town will be paying anything over the requested amount of \$100,000.

Mr. Paonessa questioned if this substantially changes the genesis of the project that was reviewed by the Greenway Commission. Mr. Burgasser stated that the Commission approved the entire project, and although the parking improvements were not included the majority of the project was completed with the two pavilions and improved bathroom, which are the reason for the increased traffic in the park. It will improve the use of the pavilions and the park itself. Mr. Paonessa stated that as long as the parking improvements do not replace the original plans for pavilions and a bathroom it will not change the original scope of the project

7. Niagara County

7.1 Gratwick Park Improvement Project (Con't)

Mr. Hapeman stated that the project meets all procedural requirements.

A motion was made by Mr. Restaino and seconded by Mr. Burgasser to approve the re-scoping of funding in the amount of \$100,000 for the Gratwick Park Improvement project.

A roll call vote was taken.

<i>Town of Lewiston</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Town of Niagara</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Lewiston Porter</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>City of Niagara Falls</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara-Wheatfield</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara County</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>New York Power Authority</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Niagara Falls Schools</i>	<i>Yes</i>

The resolution was thereupon approved.

8.0 Any other Matters – there were no other matters to be discussed.

8.1 Discuss Departure of Legal Counsel - L. Wallace

Chairperson Wallace explained that Stan Widger has left his position at Nixon Peabody. S. Hapeman has offered to assist the HCSC for this meeting.

A discussion ensued. One consideration was perhaps asking Mr. Hapeman to offer his opinion on procedure at the meetings. Another suggestion was that we request quotes from several legal firms and place the chosen firm on retainer. It was determined that it is not necessary to go out to bid for professional services.

Another issue to be determined is if the attorney in question should attend meetings. It seemed to be a consensus that this is not necessary. Mr. Paonessa stated that our HCSC is the only committee that has legal representation.

After much discussion, it was determined that Chairperson Wallace would contact the NPC Auditor to confirm that it is not necessary to go out to bid for professional services. Chairperson Wallace asked that members send him any suggestions they have for firms to contact. He will also contact Mr. Widger to see if Nixon Peabody can offer any services and if he can offer suggestions on what elements to ask of any firms we contact for quotes. Mr. Wallace will keep members informed of progress.

9.0 Next Meeting: September 17, 2024

10.0 Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Restaino, seconded by Mr. Laurie. Meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary P. Melloni
Recording Secretary