



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

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Date: January 8, 2024  
To: Mayor Ruthanne Fuller  
From: Hattie N. Kerwin Derrick, Director Community Engagement & Inclusion  
Subject: Request for Docket Item for City Seal Redesign Update

I am respectfully requesting that we docket with the Honorable City Council an update regarding the City Seal redesign.

In the Fall of 2019, our then City Clerk David Olson, Director of Historic Newton Lisa Dady and my predecessor Dana Hanson, Director of Community Engagement & Inclusion, were asked to look at the history, origin and iconography of the City seal (which also appears on our City flag) and to discuss the seal's role in representing the City. The Newton City Seal was created 155 years ago.

The Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group was convened, met from September 2020 to March 2021, and submitted a final report to Mayor Fuller in November 2021. During that time, the Working Group solicited input through public meetings and letters from community members and Indigenous leaders, local and regional.

The Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group was asked to provide recommendations about whether the image depicted is still relevant and meaningful and whether there were graphics and/or words that would better portray the values, identity, and spirit of Newton. The Working Group developed a full report ([click here](#)) as well as a two-page report which summarizes the full report ([click here](#)). The Creative Brief (Appendix 1) in the Working Group's final report would serve as a guide for the graphic designers.

The current City Seal is described in the [City Ordinance Section 1-8](#). Updating the City Seal requires the City Council to amend this Ordinance.

We docketed a request to the City Council to move forward in the process of updating the seal and to do a Request for Proposal (RFP) for graphic design services on February 14, 2022.

The City Council's Programs and Services Committee deliberated on this request in the spring of 2023, unanimously approved it, and referred it to a Committee of the Whole.

The City Council on April 18, 2023, unanimously approved proceeding with the process of updating the City Seal and submitting an RFP for a graphic design professional(s).

On October 19, 2023, the [RFP](#) process began with proposals due on November 16, 2023. Three proposers completed the RFP process which the Evaluation Committee then reviewed. The Evaluation Committee consisted of Lisa Dady (Director Historic Newton), Shubee Sikka (Urban Designer in the Newton Planning Department), Bill Humphrey (City Council Ward 5) and Hattie Kerwin Derrick (Director of Community Engagement & Inclusion).

On December 15 and 18, the three proposers were interviewed by the Evaluation Committee. On December 22, 2023, the Chief Procurement Officer awarded the contract to Sebastian Ellington Ebarb Design (SEED). This decision was based on the superior qualitative rankings. The cost for the services is \$36,000, which will come from the DEI Consulting funding previously approved by the City Council.

The City Seal Team will be meeting with Sebastian Ebard to set up a schedule of meetings. These meetings will include Community Forums to solicit additional input from residents and others. We will keep everyone informed about the meetings through the Mayor's Update and the website [here](#).

Potential designs will be presented to the City Council. We anticipate that members of the community will provide feedback as well and that the final design will be done in an iterative process. Ultimately, the City Council approves the final design.

Sincerely,

Hattie N. Kerwin Derrick  
Director, Community Engagement & Inclusion

cc: Lisa Dady