

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

8:00 AM

Room 12 Recreation Center

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
George Foskett
Chuck Redfern
Judy Sadoski
Councilor Steve Hooper

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation &
Facilities Director

Members Not Present:

Jenna Spear-O'Mara
Susan Thielen

1) Welcome & Call to Order

Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

2) Approval of March 14, 2016 Minutes

Mr. Foskett made a motion to approve the minutes of March 14, 2017, which was seconded by Ms. Sadoski and carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon noted that despite a minor error in the Bartlett Tree contract amount approved at the March meeting (approved as \$2,175, despite being slightly more in the contract), the total \$13, 175 requested has been approved by the Board of Trustees. This is great news for the Board and the park, and the Trustees are pleased the planting replacement is with Chuck Simpson, separate from the landscape contract. The budget was well-received and will allow more flexibility this year.

4) Report from Friends of the Arboretum at Ashuelot River Park

Mr. Foskett explained that shortly after the Friends were founded, their treasurer, Sherman Morrison, embezzled approximately \$14,000 from the Friends. Someone in his family paid the money stolen back to the Friends. Mr. Morrison served one year in jail and has served three years of his five-year probation sentence. Because he has conducted

himself well throughout his sentence, Mr. Morrison is eligible for and has requested the support of the Friends to have the last two years of his probation terminated. Mr. Foskett noted the Friends would be meeting to discuss after this meeting; Mr. Bohannon agreed to attend.

Mr. Foskett has spoken with Gem Graphics for an estimate to create signs recognizing the groups caring for plots. It is difficult because on occasion, the signs are stolen. Still, the Friends hope it will be a way to encourage others to begin caring for a plot.

Mr. Foskett provided an update on the renewed collaboration with the Homestead Garden Club. The President of the Club will be attending the next Friends meeting. Mr. Bohannon will attend that meeting as well.

Mr. Foskett explained that in the past, benches have been taken out of the park and refurbished. Often during this process, the plaques are removed and there is uncertainty as to where they belong. Mr. Bohannon replied each year the benches are removed, sanded, and re-stained and to his knowledge, the plaques remain with the appropriate benches; there is one particular plaque which is stolen a lot. Mr. Foskett suggested an inventory of the plaques, as there is for the cobbles. Ms. Sadoski asked if there is a fund for replacement (plaques, cobbles, etc.). Mr. Bohannon replied it is absorbed into the department's operating budget.

Mr. Foskett asked if the area the Lions Club maintains is part of what Mr. Simpson will be working on. Mr. Bohannon replied no, the Lions Club should continue working there. Mr. Foskett asked if there is a calendar for those who have signed up to use the park. Mr. Bohannon replied there is only Home Health Care in June and Art in the Park in September, as well as Links (date to be determined). Mr. Foskett requested an update on the sprinklers. Mr. Bohannon replied it is still being discussed.

5) Park Discussion

a. Educational Workshops

Mr. Bohannon reported that he met with Carl Majewski from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. Mr. Majewski is very willing to lead educational workshops at the park. He suggests two workshops this year to pilot the program on the following topics:

- Insects – good and bad, benefits, signs to look for, and discussion
- How to Plant – proper technique

Mr. Bohannon suggested the best time for these is summer and asked the Board their opinion of scheduling within the week (weeknights, weekends, etc.). Mr. Bohannon suggested late May for How to Plant (Memorial Day is a planting time) and late June for Insects. Chair Winsor and Mr. Bohannon agreed a twilight (6:00 PM) weeknight event may be better attended than a Saturday event; evenings are better for families. Mr. Foskett suggested How to Plant may have greater retiree attendance and Insects would appeal more to children; he said these events could also help recruit volunteers. Chair

Winsor suggested advertising to homeowners at Agway and the Extension will advertise as well; Mr. Redfern added that Agway might help and sponsor. Chair Winsor agreed both topics are interesting but likely will not appeal to the same audiences. Mr. Bohannon noted late June would be ideal for the Insects event because the school year does not end until June 20.

The Board agreed on the following dates to propose to Mr. Majewski:

- Insects – Thursday, June 22 at 9:30 AM (just after school ends)
- How to Plant – Tuesday, May 23 at 6:00 PM (before Memorial Day)

Chair Winsor shared that Michael Dirr, the “godfather of tree identification,” will be speaking at the University of Massachusetts this month and he is working to invite him to Keene State this summer. He said it would be great to also get him to the park. Mr. Dirr is from Ohio originally but spends a lot of time in New England. Chair Winsor has made the initial contact and will keep Mr. Bohannon updated.

Councilor Hooper suggested photography as a theme to engage people with the park as well. Mr. Foskett asked when the Bartlett Tree App would be available. Mr. Bohannon replied that Bartlett Tree provides a service through which they have inventoried the park to place QR codes on the trees that correspond with an educational/photo sharing app. It was a three-year agreement for the service and finishing the QR code process did not happen in that time. The information needs to be uploaded to create a direct link. It would be beneficial for future workshops. Ms. Sadoski offered to work on this effort. Mr. Bohannon will revisit the next steps and include it on the April meeting agenda. Chair Winsor noted this effort was completed at Keene State and it has been well received and gets people interested in the trees.

Councilor Hooper added that he is very interested in helping organize/lead a photography workshop as the park is an ideal location. He also suggested Jeff Newcomer, who teaches education courses and takes classes to the park, might want to partner. He thinks there would be a lot of interest. Councilor Hooper will prepare more ideas for the May meeting.

6) New Business

Mr. Bohannon reported there was a request for a very small wedding and he provided the parameters and other suggestions. He added there is no update on the Ashuelot Greenspace or from the Conway School.

7) Next Meeting Date May 9, 2017

8) Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:37 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,

ARPAB Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2017

Katie Kibler, Minute Taker