

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

8:00 AM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Judy Sadoski
Dave Whaley
Paul Bocko
Suzy Krautmann
Dian Mathews
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

Members Not Present:

Andy Bohannon read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency.

1) Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM. Roll call was taken.

2) Acceptance of January 12, 2021 Minutes

Suzy Krautmann motioned to accept the minutes of January 12, 2021 as presented. Thomas Haynes seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

3) Finance 2021 Budget

Mr. Bohannon apologized that the updated budget was not in the minutes. He stated the actual for the landscape contract should be \$6,000; however, they can't accept the \$6,000 until he has obtained two other quotes from other companies, because it's over the \$5,000 threshold. Mr. Bohannon stated he will get that figured out for March so the committee can vote on the full budget. The Bartlett Tree pruning quote came back at \$3,185, which is below what they have budgeted in the last couple of years. Mr. Bohannon wanted the committee to be aware that he added a map with numbers to their packet. This map outlines all the services Bartlett Tree will complete and the corresponding trees they are

going to service. Chair Winsor commented that the numbered tree map is a very helpful way to identify and communicate about the trees they will be servicing.

There were no questions from the committee regarding the budget review.

4) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation
a) April Work Outing

Mr. Bohannon stated the date for this April work outing will be April 26-28 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) with the intention to go rain or shine. He went to the Trustees of Trust Funds to allocate the Rachel Marshall Learning Lab funds to this particular project, which was approved. He then went to Interact Clubs and has been working with Bensonwood and will go in front of the Finance Committee this week. Mr. Bohannon stated there are two clubs, the Monadnock Regional High School Interact club and Keene High School Interact club, and each will donate \$5,000. That \$10,000 plus the \$5,000 from the Rachel Marshall fund will make up the \$15,000 to cover the pergola specifically. In addition, Bensonwood is going to donate all of their time so the Board will only need to pay for materials. Bensonwood will also be working with any student who wishes to learn the process of what they do and will be introducing the students to the trade, likely remotely due to COVID-19.

Ken Stewart, who manages the parking lot behind the park, was set up to begin removing all the parking lot pavement. He has agreed to wait until this project is over and not start pavement removal until May. This will allow the Board to bring lumber trucks into the parking lot, set up a generator, and keep things more socially distanced. Mr. Bohannon stated he envisions groups in the front of the park and the construction vehicles and materials coming in the back of the park.

Mr. Haynes asked what role the board members will play during these project days. Mr. Bohannon replied that he'd love to have volunteers at the park because there will be 30-40 kids each day and he wants people to be spread out for social distancing purposes. Mr. Bohannon added that an incentive for the kids to do the work well is knowing they have their prom pictures in the park, and will likely want to get it looking really nice for that event.

Chair Winsor asked about the education piece with Bensonwood and if that is something Mr. Bohannon would set up with Louise Zerba. Mr. Bohannon replied yes, he is working on getting a project list and volunteer forms ready for Louise Zerba and will eventually have a meeting with Chair Winsor and Dian Mathews to go over all the information.

b) Invasive Species

Mr. Bohannon stated the Conservation Commission has had a big push for this and he thinks, with the Resiliency Plan, this is a good time for the Board to begin to address it. Conservation Commission is holding a workshop in the spring about invasive species and the Board will try and do some more education and awareness for the community as well

as try and resolve issues in the park. They will also try and help the Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum or garden clubs to remove invasive species if they start to see them in their garden beds.

Paul Bocko stated Elizabeth McCann, in the Environmental Studies Department at Antioch University, offered that her project, Community Garden Connections, could help with invasive removal and restoration activities. Mr. Bohannon stated he will get in touch with Ms. McCann. She also mentioned an interpretive signage fall course which Mr. Bohannon will follow up on as well.

c) Pollinator Gardens

Mr. Bohannon stated that he thinks they have some opportunity to put in some more pollinators as they are replacing plantings in the park. This will help their Master Plan initiative and the Conservation Commission, and be a win for the community. Chair Winsor stated Dian Mathews was involved in this heavily in the past and will have some guidance. Dian Mathews asked who the Conservation Commission connection is so she can meet with them and get the conversation started. Mr. Haynes stated he will find out who the contact is during their next meeting and let Dian know. Dian Mathews added that her grant is specifically for shrubs but she has a lot of ideas about other plantings. Mr. Bohannon referred to page 38 in the Master plan, stating that it focuses on the pollinator stream bank garden and identifies several plants they could plant, and a description of what could happen.

d) Grants

Dian Mathews stated, through her Old Homestead garden club, she applied for National Garden Club grant and was awarded \$1,000. The grant has a lot of restrictions and has to be completed by April 2022, so she is going to apply for another grant through a gambling casino who awards grants to 501c3 organizations.

5) Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum

Dian Mathews stated the Friends had a small meeting about a month ago but have their first official meeting later that day with her as Chair. They will be talking about fundraising to purchase native plantings, creating a Facebook page, and a summer or fall event to get the membership of the Friends going. Suzy Krautmann stated 100+ Women donated a lot of money for murals in downtown Keene and suggested Dian Mathews apply for a grant through them also. Dian Mathews thought that was a great idea and Mr. Bohannon stated he can help her with that application.

6) New, Other Business

Dian Mathews asked if Keene City Council is following a different addition of parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order, for example do they have to make motions to accept minutes. Mr. Bohannon stated yes because the minutes are public

record. Chair Winsor stated it might be a good time for the City of Keene to do another workshop on the rules for everyone and Mr. Bohannon stated he will look into that. Dian Mathews asked about the Friends following these rules with their meetings and Mr. Bohannon responded they are a non-profit organization so the rules don't apply to them.

Chair Winsor asked if anyone had any new business. Mr. Bohannon stated Soofa, the company that had created solar benches, has moved on from benches and they now create public bulletin boards with the same technology. He's continuing to try and find some type of solar bench or station they can utilize for plug-ins. He also mentioned solar waste compactors from a company called Bigbelly, but stated the cost does not seem worth it as of now, unless a company is willing to sponsor that purchase. There was no other new business.

7) Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 8:00 AM

Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:39 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Edits Submitted by,
Andy Bohannon, Staff
February 26, 2021