

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA

Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 8:00 AM
ZOOM Invite, Online Meeting

- Due to the COVID State of Emergency, this meeting will be conducted using the online meeting platform, Zoom. The public may view the meeting online at www.zoom.com and click on “Join A Meeting” then enter Meeting ID 819 7366 0123
- To listen to the meeting, please dial (646) 876-9923 and when prompted as a participant, enter Meeting ID 819 7366 0123
- If you encounter issues accessing this meeting, please call (603) 757-1835 during the meeting

Members:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Judy Sadoski
Paul Bocko
Suzy Krautmann
Ruzzel Zullo
Dian Mathews
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Acceptance of May 11, 2021 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum
5. Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation
 - a. Invasive Species
 - b. Pollinator Gardens
 - c. Education
 - d. Ashuelot Rediscovery & Boat Building Festival
 - e. Antioch University – Bee Study
6. LWCF Application – Letter of Intent
7. New, Other Business
8. Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 8:00 AM

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
4
5 ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

8:00 AM

Recreation Center,
Room 12

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Paul Bocko
Dian Mathews
Suzy Krautmann
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,
Recreation & Facilities

Members Not Present:

Judy Sadoski
Ruzzel Zullo

8
9 **1) Welcome and Call to Order**

10
11 Chair Winsor read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to
12 Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions
13 of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-
14 19 State of Emergency.

15
16 Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM. Roll call was taken.

17
18 **2) Acceptance of April 13, 2021 Minutes**

19
20 Suzy Krautmann made a motion to accept the minutes of April 13, 2021 as presented. Paul
21 Bocko seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

22
23 **3) Finance 2021 Budget**

24
25 Mr. Bohannon briefly reviewed the budget they agreed on during their last meeting and informed
26 the advisory board that it was approved by the trustees.

27
28 **4) Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum**
29

ARPAB Meeting Minutes
Month Date, Year

30 Dian Mathews first brought up the water issue in the park. She stated that Mr. Bohannon is
31 working on putting in two faucets and she is trying to locate something similar to a horse hose,
32 with a valve that automatically turns on and off with a certain placement of the hose. She
33 mentioned that she found a grant which could be used for purchasing more hoses; however, she
34 can't apply for it until January of next year.

35
36 During the recent working days in the park Ms. Mathews observed that some of the plants were
37 unknown to the adults, which resulted in some valuable plants being pulled up. To avoid this in
38 the future, Ms. Mathews stated that she plans to walk around and put in wooden tags with
39 labels on the plants that she can identify, and eventually transition to metal tags. She reminded
40 everyone that they still need to discuss stepping stones for the Bartlett Tree ID tags. She tested
41 them with high school kids using their cell phones and they had to walk right up to the tag to
42 make it work, which puts the plantings around the trees at risk for damage from the foot traffic.

43
44 Ms. Mathews reported the next project for the Friends will be a pollinator garden, noting that
45 the Rotaract Club would like to do it in their circle. She suggested the area in the park where
46 they recently took down the black locusts, since the area gets a good amount of sun. She has a
47 list of plants ready and mentioned that it would be a good project for the Conservation
48 Commission to get involved with.

49
50 Next, Ms. Mathews touched on invasive species, stating she took a walk around the park with
51 Sam Jaffe from the Caterpillar Lab. He recommended that they mow the knotweed often and
52 then place tarps over it afterwards. She informed the advisory board that she is working on
53 obtaining more tarps from Julie's Garden and Amanda, a contact from a local farm. Ms.
54 Mathews noted that tarps were put in place during the last working day and knotweed was
55 already pushing them up when she checked four days later, indicating there will be a need for
56 frequent mowing. The walk around also revealed new natives as well as a service berry, which
57 will be relocated. Ms. Mathews referred to the beds on the right of the park between Mascoma
58 Bank, stating that area is what Sam Jaffe felt the entire park should eventually look like, more
59 filled in and with good ground cover.

60
61 Ms. Mathews mentioned that she found an insurance liability policy for The Friends and asked
62 the board for their thoughts. Mr. Bohannon replied that The Friends should have board
63 insurance.

64
65 Lastly, she asked if it was possible to have a representative of Antioch University on The
66 Friends board, referring to a previous discussion about Antioch helping with signage as an
67 education component. She also wondered if someone from the Conservation Commission
68 would be willing to join. Paul Bocko stated he would help to try and find a representative from
69 Antioch. He mentioned their Provost, Sean Fitzgerald, was previously a member of The Friends
70 board but his role doesn't allow that flexibility anymore. He also offered to connect with the
71 instructor of the interpretation class at Antioch for the signage project, as well as Libby
72 McCann. Thomas Haynes stated he would check to see if anyone from the Conservation

73 Commission would like to get involved and Ms. Mathews recommended it be someone who is
74 interested in Bee City.

75
76 Mr. Bocko stated, with regards to the Japanese knotweed, he is concerned about cutting it due
77 to pieces flying around and possibly getting into the river, unless they pick up every bit of it
78 each time. Ms. Mathews agreed, stating the knotweed is going to be an ongoing issue. She
79 recalled Sam Jaffe recommending one other technique where they plant shrubs and low trees in
80 with the knotweed, which would shade the area and make it less viable for the knotweed. Mr.
81 Bocko suggested a consultation with someone from the state agricultural sector. Ms. Mathews
82 mentioned they had discussed having a meeting devoted to invasive species and suggested they
83 decide when that will occur so she could invite someone from the state to be involved. Mr.
84 Bohannon suggested they focus on invasive species during their June meeting.

85
86 Suzy Krautmann mentioned a natural poisoning mechanism for the invasive species and she
87 and Ms. Mathews stated they will both look into it for the June meeting.

88
89 Chair Winsor agreed it would be good to focus the next meeting on invasive species. He
90 mentioned that they could move some of the Bartlett Tree tags if that would help solve some of
91 the issue of people damaging the area when walking up to the trees.

- 92
93 **5) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation**
94 **A) Invasive Species** – Chair Winsor stated the invasive species talk will be tabled for
95 the June meeting.
96 **B) Pollinator Gardens** – Mr. Bohannon stated someone from the Lady of Mercy
97 School reached out to him and informed him that they have 15 high school kids and 3
98 adults that would help with the pollinator gardens. They are only available on May 26,
99 2021 from 12:30 to 2:30pm. He offered that option to Ms. Mathews and stated they could
100 discuss details in a separate meeting.
101 **C) Education** – Mr. Bohannon reported that they want to increase educational
102 outreach related to the park and invasive species. He suggested they bring in Eloise Clark
103 from the Conservation Commission for the June meeting to discuss this and help them
104 promote conservation outreach.

- 105
106 **6) Request From Ashuelot Rediscovery & Boat Building Festival**

107
108 Chair Winsor invited representatives for the Boat Building Festival to present.

109
110 Heather Holloway introduced herself and her husband Wade Smith. She explained that they run
111 Mill Hollow Works in Keene which is a heritage craft school where they teach boat building,
112 woodworking and carpentry. Their goal is to help people learn how to live more sustainably by
113 working with traditional tools and utilizing local resources. Mrs. Holloway stated they are
114 looking to host the Boat Building Festival in 2022 and would like to bring in education
115 elements relating to the Ashuelot River and its history, and basic river ecology. She stated they

ARPAB Meeting Minutes
Month Date, Year

116 aren't necessarily sure how it will all incorporate into the park but they do want to incorporate
117 the board's mission into what they are doing. Mr. Bohannon replied that the event absolutely
118 meets the board's mission and their master plan of climate resiliency. He felt there was a
119 potential for collaboration and welcomed the board to discuss.
120

121 Dian Mathews asked if they were looking to have it as a festival to launch the boats they build.
122 Mr. Smith explained that he designed a boat building project 20 years ago at Mystic Seaport
123 and they have since been teaching it as a class at their school on a smaller scale, by building 4
124 boats at a time. The idea with the festival is to make the class available to more kids in the area
125 who may not necessarily have access to the program. He mentioned that they could do the boat
126 building at their shop but would really like to build them right on the side of the Ashuelot
127 River, to highlight it as it runs through Keene. He went on to state that they would hold a
128 month long series of boat building with several different groups, say 6 boats and 6 teams per
129 week, and then have one big launching celebration at the end of the month. Additionally, he
130 stated that they would like to bring in experts to explain different elements of the Ashuelot
131 River, such as history of water power and transportation and current ecology.
132

133 Mr. Bocko asked if they had an indigenous perspective in mind and stated if not he has a
134 contact from the Abenaki that he could pass along to them. Heather Holloway stated they don't
135 have a contact but it has always been a part of their plan to eventually involve the indigenous
136 aspect. She welcomed Mr. Bocko's help with the topic and connections.
137

138 Suzy Krautmann added that the festival sounded like a fabulous idea and asked if the Historical
139 Society had been contacted for involvement in the event. Mrs. Holloway replied that they've
140 done preliminary research on whether or not there would be enough interest and are now
141 working on details such as dates and times. Once they have more concrete information they
142 plan to reach out to places like the Historical Society. Ms. Krautmann asked if the groups
143 would all be at the Ashuelot River Park building the boats, or would they be along the river in
144 multiple locations. Mrs. Holloway replied that 6 boats would be built per week and they are
145 hoping to obtain one location for the building process. Ms. Krautmann inquired about how
146 much square footage they would need for building. Mr. Smith answered that the canoes are 14
147 feet long and built on a set of sawhorses, and they could be flexible working with space limits.
148 He did note having some sort of tent or shelter would be helpful.
149

150 Mrs. Holloway mentioned the vacant lot right next to the Ashuelot River park and wondered if
151 they could use that to eliminate some traffic in the park. Mr. Bohannon stated he will connect
152 them with a contact he has to discuss the lot next to the park. He added that they can work on
153 details offline so they can be ready for next year and suggested either within the park or in the
154 Rachel Marshall Learning area as good building sites. He thanked Mrs. Holloway and Mr.
155 Smith for being there.
156

157 Ms. Mathews noted that she felt this was a great idea and that the park could benefit. She
158 suggested doing a different educational topic each week and gave the example of inviting the

159 public in every Saturday in July. Mr. Smith agreed and said they had already begun to discuss
160 different programs for each week to draw different people.

161

162 7) **Request From Antioch University - Bee Study**

163

164 Michael Akresh, professor at Antioch University, explained that he and an Antioch student are
165 leading a study on bees in wetlands throughout New Hampshire, specifically in fens, peatlands
166 and red maple swamps. The goal is to survey the areas and do a full scale study looking at what
167 bees are in the areas and how distance from the uplands might impact the bee community, and
168 in turn how that could then influence policy and laws. He stated that they are looking for
169 funding for the project as well as looking for different sites. One site will be the Keene Airport
170 wetland and fen, for which they received \$500 from the Conservation Commission. Mr. Akresh
171 mentioned that each site requires an estimated \$2,000 to \$4,000 for supplies and work efforts,
172 adding that once the bees are collected they require lengthy identification in a lab. He stated it
173 will likely be a two year project so they could move to new sites next year, and hoped the
174 Ashuelot River Park could be an option. He made note that they could bring in bee education
175 with the information gained from the project and possibly do an education session or day. Mr.
176 Akresh requested any information on the wetlands in the park if available and stated they have
177 a scientific proposal that he can send to the board. He ended by suggesting that an Antioch
178 student could get involved on The Friends board, referring to the earlier conversation Ms.
179 Mathews had brought up.

180

181 Mr. Bocko asked who was currently funding the project besides the Conservation Commission.
182 Mr. Akresh replied that they don't have any funders in the Keene area but this is part of a larger
183 project throughout NH, adding that they did receive funding from the NH Military Army for
184 some work in Strafford, NH. They also received funding from Antioch through the Faulkner
185 property to do work in a town outside of Keene.

186

187 Chair Winsor stated Keene State College did a national resources study 5 or 6 years ago and
188 those materials might inform the bee project. Mr. Bohannon stated he would share those
189 resources with Mr. Akresh. Chair Winsor was unsure if the board could fund a research project
190 but stated they may be able to help find other funding avenues and mentioned the Swanzey
191 Conservation Commission. Mr. Bohannon added that they hadn't supported a research project
192 in the past but felt it was important for the board to hear this project because it seemed very
193 valuable. He continued to state that they don't have the funding in this year's budget but
194 mentioned they may be able to connect Mr. Akresh to other programs to tap into their grants.
195 He added that he would be happy to write a letter of support which would be the main way they
196 could help the project.

197

198 Mr. Bocko mentioned the Rachel Marshall Trust, wondering if that could be used for funding,
199 especially if the project came with a strong educational component. Mr. Bohannon replied that
200 the trust had been closed and put into a project fund related to the resiliency plan. It would be
201 something for the board to discuss and agreed that it would have to tie into an educational

ARPAB Meeting Minutes

Month Date, Year

202 component. Thomas Haynes stated they could consider it for next year's budget if it's a two
203 year study, including the educational component pieces. Mr. Akresh replied that they'd be
204 happy to do it next year and could definitely work in educational components.

205

206 **8) New, Other Business**

207

208 Chair Winsor asked for new or unfinished business. Mr. Bohannon shared a video from the
209 working days that he received from Louise Zerba. Chair Winsor thanked Mr. Bohannon noting
210 he recognized it took a tremendous amount of work and coordination to make the working days
211 happen. Mr. Bohannon read a statement from the Keene Interact Club thanking the advisory
212 board for their help. He also personally thanked everyone for their help and support on the
213 project.

214

215 **9) Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 8:00 AM**

216

217 There being no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 9:00 AM.

218

219 Respectfully submitted by,

220 Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

221

222 Edits respectfully submitted by:

223 Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

