

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA

Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 8:00 AM
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

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 June 8, 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
6. New, Other Business
7. Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, August 10, 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, June 8, 2021

8:00 AM

Virtual via Zoom

Members Present:

Ruzzel Zullo
Paul Bocko
Dian Mathews
Suzy Krautmann
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

Members Not Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Judy Sadoski

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

12
13 **1) Welcome and Call to Order**

14
15 Dian Mathews, acting Chair in the absence of Mr. Winsor, called the meeting to order at 8:03am.
16 Roll Call was taken.

17
18 Thomas Haynes became an active member for the meeting.

19
20 **2) Acceptance of May 11, 2021 Minutes**

21
22 Suzy Krautmann moved to accept the minutes of May 11, 2021 as presented. Ruzzel Zullo
23 seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

24
25 **3) Finance Report**

26
27 Mr. Bohannon stated all April expenditures came from the project fund so there were no finance
28 report updates for their budget. He mentioned that later on in the month of June they would
29 likely see a bill from Bartlett Tree.
30

31 Ms. Mathews brought up Sam Jaffe from the Caterpillar lab. He had looked at the Rotaract circle
32 in the back of the park and commented that one of the trees was an Asian Cork tree, which meant
33 the Cork tree had spread into the park. This was noted as problematic because the Asian Cork
34 tree is now known as an invasive species. Ms. Mathews asked if Bartlett Tree took that into
35 consideration when they came and looked at the trees in the park, and suggested that it would be
36 important to remove the Asian Cork tree.

37

38 Mr. Bohannon checked the inventory and reported that tree number 39 is labeled as an Amur
39 Cork, with a tree value of almost \$8,000. He informed the board that he would ask Bartlett Tree
40 to investigate whether or not the particular species is now invasive, and if that would warrant
41 removal of the tree.

42

43 **4) Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum**

44

45 Ms. Mathews reported that The Friends appointed a new Treasurer, Jane Parent, and are in the
46 process of setting her up with Walpole Bank. She also informed the board that she got in touch
47 with the insurance company and a new policy is being drawn up for The Friends.

48

49 Ms. Mathews reported that the new pollinator bed they recently put in the park is doing very
50 well. The kids sprinkled in Liatris seeds which are growing nicely as well. They planted 2 pussy
51 willow shrubs on either side of the main park gate by West Street, which she stated are receiving
52 water from the sprinklers. However, all of the shrubs on the Starbucks side are not getting water
53 from the sprinkler, as well as the bed with the large main park sign. Additionally, Ms. Mathews
54 stated the shrub in between the bank entrance and the entrance to park isn't doing all that well
55 and they are looking into why that might be. She reported that they continue to water with jugs
56 which is very difficult and time consuming, taking about 1.5 hours each time.

57

58 Ms. Mathews stated that The Friends are going to pair up with Delta Kappa Gamma of Retired
59 Educators for a work day on the first Saturday of every month. She is going to see if she can
60 bring on the Rotaract and Workforce Opportunity participants as well and noted that it would be
61 a good step towards getting more people to volunteer. She had not yet heard from the Rotaract
62 Club kids.

63

64 Ms. Mathews reported that the Workforce Opportunity process requires change and she is in the
65 process of figuring that out. She explained that the kids aren't always free to come to the park
66 because they are involved in workplace support, which is where an adult accompanies them to a
67 set workplace.

68

69 Next, Ms. Mathews reported on the shed, which she stated is in very bad condition. She is
70 working on cleaning it with bleach and suggested no one be allowed in until the cleaning process
71 is complete.

72

73 Paul Bocko stated that he reached out to Sean Fitzgerald, Provost at Antioch University, and
74 reported that he will not be able to join The Friends; however, he is trying to find someone else
75 to represent Antioch University.

76

77 **5) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation**

78 **A) Invasive Species** – Mr. Bohannon welcomed Eloise Clark from the Conservation
79 Commission, who was present at the meeting to explore offering some educational
80 opportunities in the park related to invasive species. He mentioned that the board had
81 previously talked about educational opportunities but it wasn't the right time of year, and
82 wondered if now would be the right time to have a joint educational session with the
83 Conservation Commission and advertise it to the public. Ms. Clark replied that it was a
84 great time of year for it and a joint venture advertised to the public would make a lot of
85 sense. She stated that she would be fully on board with making that opportunity happen.

86

87 Ms. Mathews suggested the board become more educated themselves before they begin
88 to educate people in the park; furthermore, she suggested that they go around and ID
89 everything in the park with tags to aid with public education sessions.

90

91 Ms. Mathews mentioned speaking with Doug Cygan, Invasive Species Coordinator for
92 the State of NH Department of Agriculture, who recommended buckthorn baggies to
93 contain invasive species. She suggested they have the public help with the process of
94 placing baggies over invasive species in the park, as an educational experience.
95 Additionally, she stated Mr. Cygan recommended they avoid mowing the knotweed and
96 potentially getting pieces into the river, and suggested they get in touch with the Ashuelot
97 River Corridor Management. She also reported that tarp placement over the knotweed
98 should occur in the early spring, after making the site as clean and flat as possible and
99 putting down 4-6 inches of mulch.

100

101 Mr. Bohannon asked if they could remove the current tarp covers, put the mulch down,
102 and put the tarps back in place. Ms. Mathews stated it was too late because the plants are
103 already too big. She went on to state that they have to get to the site as soon as they can in
104 early spring, before the invasive species begin growing.

105

106 Renee suggested they could cut what is currently under the plastic tarp, put it in bags and
107 throw the bags in the dump, but agreed the best scenario would likely be to wait until
108 early next spring.

109

110 Ms. Mathews suggested the board, The Friends, and the Conservation Commission all be
111 involved in the education session and marking of the invasive species with ribbons. Ms.
112 Clark volunteered to give a tour and education session on invasive species in the park for
113 them.

114

115 Mr. Bocko agreed with the idea and suggested that, rather than marking every single
116 buckthorn and Norway Maple, they only mark certain areas. He also mentioned a past
117 project where they cut and pulled out roots of knotweed, placed plastic over the area and
118 then mulch afterwards, and it seemed to have been successful. Ms. Mathews replied that
119 she would do some research to clarify the process.

120
121 Ms. Clark stated there are reputable contractors who can obtain a certification to spray
122 near wetlands. Ms. Mathews suggested that they to talk to Ashuelot River Corridor
123 Management to explore that route. Ms. Clark added that she is a part of the Ashuelot
124 River Local Advisory Committee, who creates and maintains the park management plan,
125 and would try to help in that regard. She also recommended Barbara Scully as a great
126 source of information.

127
128 Mr. Bohannon suggested they set a date towards the end of the month, around 6pm, to
129 hold the educational learning session, identification process, and general discussion about
130 invasive species. He added that it should be amongst the board, The Friends, and the
131 Conservation Commission. Short discussion ensued around dates and times, with the
132 board landing on Monday, June 28, 2021 at 6pm. Mr. Bohannon stated he would obtain
133 clarification on whether or not it will be a public meeting.

134
135 Thomas Haynes asked about the mustard challenge and if there was another event being
136 scheduled. Ms. Clark replied that there were no more scheduled mustard challenge events
137 at that time.

138
139 Mr. Bohannon reported that the buckthorn baggie prices are \$100 for 100 baggies, which
140 they could do. He suggested first having the educational session and discussing best
141 practices for removal, and then testing some areas at a later date.

142
143 Ms. Clark mentioned that 3 members of the Conservation Commission had completed the
144 invasive species course through UNH Cooperative Extension and stated they would be at
145 the educational session.

146
147 Ms. Krautmann suggested they order the bags now so they are ready to go.

148
149 Mr. Bocko made a motion to purchase \$100.00 worth of the buckthorn bags. Mr. Zullo
150 seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Bocko mentioned the motion was
151 inspired by Suzy Krautmann.

152
153 Mr. Zullo and Mr. Haynes asked for clarification on if the June 28th session would be
154 education and discussion, and then another date would be set for the actual removal. Ms.
155 Mathews confirmed that was correct.

156

157 **B) Pollinator Gardens** – Ms. Mathews stated that there is a possibility to connect
158 the new pollinator garden and the Rotaract garden and end up with one, large pollinator
159 garden. She requested that Mr. Bohannon look at the sprinkler map and see if that
160 connection could be a possibility.

161
162 **C) Education** – Ms. Mathews reiterated that they had already covered invasive
163 species education earlier in the meeting and next brought up signage for the pollinator
164 garden.

165
166 Mr. Bocko stated he reached out to colleagues that teach an Exhibit, Design &
167 Interpretation class at Antioch University and he is hopeful that they will adopt the
168 signage project as part of the course. He will keep the board updated.

169
170 **D) Ashuelot Rediscovery & Boat Building Festival**

171
172 **E) Antioch University – Bee Study** – Ms. Mathews reminded the board that the bee
173 study was placed on hold to be discussed and possibly placed in the budget for next year.

174
175 **6) LWCF Application – Letter of Intent**

176
177 Mr. Bohannon reported that he submitted a letter of intent to the Land, Water and Conservation
178 Fund (LWCF) to do some activities within the back of the arboretum, such as boat launch and
179 connecting the Ashuelot green space, and had a meeting scheduled with the Putnams to review
180 the space. He reiterated that it was solely a letter of intent and that the board doesn't have to
181 pursue the project if the Putnams choose not to. Mr. Bohannon stated he would keep the board
182 updated as discussions progress. He explained that the LWCF is made up of federal funds
183 designated for park space, mentioning that the money is driven from offshore drilling on the
184 coast and sent to the states annually to be split between National, State and Municipal parks. He
185 added that once you acquire the grant the park becomes park land for perpetuity, and since the
186 National Park Service is always looking to expand their footprint this particular project would
187 look favorable.

188
189 **7) New, Other Business**

190
191 Mr. Bocko wanted to identify a teacher, or a few, who might do a project in the park for
192 educational purposes with classrooms, to incorporate more education for kids. Ms. Mathews
193 agreed with the idea and stated it would be great to have more kids in the park. She suggested
194 one of the aforementioned work Saturdays could be a possibility. She also suggested starting a
195 Sunday morning bird walk and noted that she has some contacts she will reach out to for support
196 with that. She felt it would be a start to good use of the park on a continuous basis.

197
198 Mr. Bocko suggested the Antioch Bird Club, mentioning Steve Lamonde who is experienced in
199 birding.

ARPAB Meeting Minutes
Month Date, Year

200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214

Mr. Bohannon stated he recently had a conversation with Gina Hamblet, who was a main founder of the park and arboretum. She shared positive comments about the park, including how much she liked the pergola.

8) Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 8:00 AM

There being no further business, Ms. Mathews adjourned the meeting at 8:56 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

