

New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 8, 2017

8:00 AM

Recreation Center, Room 12

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
George Foskett
Councilor Steve Hooper
Judy Sadoski

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks, Recreation
& Facilities

Members Not Present:

Jenna Spear-O'Mara
Chuck Redfern
Susan Thielen

1) Welcome & Call to Order

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

2) Approval of Minutes – July 11, 2017

Mr. Foskett made a motion to approve the minutes of July 11, 2017, which was seconded by Councilor Hooper and carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon reported that the Bartlett Tree work is completed and the invoice is paid. The line item in the budget reflects the final cost. Chuck Simpson will begin his work this week, including the contract overage funds that went into the replacement program.

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

Mr. Foskett reported to the Friends last month on:

- Chuck Simpson's work
- The Bartlett Tree thinning
- That no new cobbles need to be purchased for addition around the gazebo, which will be done with the LINKS program
- The good work done by the Fenton Family Dealership volunteers
- That the bug program was canceled
- Councilor Hooper's photography program

- The meeting with Mascoma Bank and their agreement to better inform the plow driver of where to place snow this year

Mr. Foskett reported that the Old Homestead Garden Club has requested the removal of the Burning Bush (*Euonymus*) in their area of the park. They also discussed the fact that the tree by their sign is still there. Mr. Bohannon replied that his crews significantly trimmed the tree and wanted Mr. Foskett to determine if the whole tree should still be removed; if wanted, the tree will be removed. Mr. Foskett continued that the area between the sign and shed will be cleaned out this fall with volunteers so the Club can plant there; the area is currently undeveloped. They are a group of older retiree's so it is unknown how much of the work they will do themselves. He believes some Club members will come on the day of the Links program as well to help show the volunteers the difference between weeds and good plants. The Club also suggested that Mr. Foskett reconnect with Antioch University and the Keene High School Horticulture Club and he will be working on this.

The Friends also discussed raising the price of cobbles going forward and making a push to raise money to place cobbles on the Jonathan Daniels Trail; little revenue is made off the cobbles right now.

Mr. Foskett will be meeting with the City Attorney to review reestablishing the Friends as a 501.C.3 non-profit organization; this status was lost during the past embezzlement situation. According to the state, the group will need reapply and retrain, which not all members are in favor of.

5) Park Discussion

a. Chuck Simpson Update

Mr. Simpson will be starting work within two weeks after this meeting.

b. KSC Links Program – August 22

Mr. Bohannon will confirm the date and email the Board members. Mr. Foskett needs to confirm if his vacation will conflict; if it does, other Friends members will be there.

c. A Photographic Walk in the Park – Steve Hooper – July 19

Councilor Hooper reported this was a good start to trying this event with five people in attendance. It was an enthusiastic small group; he enjoyed leading the program, and hopes to try again next year. He suggested a greater variety of advertisement platforms next year. Mr. Bohannon agreed that earlier planning will allow for that. Councilor Hooper said it was an approximately two hour event: the first hour was spent talking and discussing, followed by 45 minutes of taking photos, and 15 minutes to wrap-up. The feedback from participants was very positive. May or September may be better times for this event next year because people's schedules are so busy in the summer months.

Chair Winsor suggested reviewing the program calendar of Tower Hill Park; he will bring that information to the next meeting because they make good use of the park.

d. **Revisit Bartlett QR Codes**

Mr. Bohannon will have an update at the September meeting.

e. **Art in the Park – September 1-3**

Everything is well-prepared for this event and it is the same time as the Downtown Music Festival so it should be busy.

6) **New Business**

Mr. Bohannon encouraged Board members to think of possibilities to replace Ms. Thielen, who has resigned.

Mr. Bohannon reported that he met with the Community Kitchen and Interfaith Group who is supporting members of the homeless community discussing with the City to reopen public bathrooms; ultimately this is something the City Council will be addressing. The group also inquired about reopening the bathroom in the park. Mr. Bohannon explained to them why the bathroom was closed – there was an overdose in the bathroom, sexual activity, and heavy drug and alcohol abuse. The group was receptive to the reasons Mr. Bohannon provided. Mr. Bohannon recognized there are only a select few who abuse it and he is torn on the matter because it serves a need. Still, there has been no negative feedback since it was closed and he wanted the Board to know this conversation is taking place. Mr. Foskett said it was abused and the reasons for closing it are justified. Chair Winsor agreed it should not be reopened if unsupervised; he went to a meeting on river clean-up and some people asserted they would not bring children to the park for river clean-up because there are too many needles. Ms. Sadoski said she has never seen a needle problem. Ms. Sadoski suggested and the Board agreed the bathroom should just be removed entirely because it is a draw; there are other restrooms outside the park nearby that can be utilized. Councilor Hooper said if people want safe places like this to utilize, the City will have to spend money on it; the real base of the problem is addiction and money will have to be spent on that from the federal to City level.

Councilor Hooper asked if there is enough stone dust for an area he and Mr. Redfern will be working on. Mr. Bohannon replied yes and more will probably be brought in for the LINKS program.

7) **Next Meeting Date – September 12, 2017**

Chair Winsor will not be at this meeting.

8) **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:45 AM.

ARPAB Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2017

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker

Edits submitted by,
Andy Bohannon