

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 19, 2015

8:00 AM

Rm 12, Recreation Center

Members Present:

Arthur (Bud) Winsor, Chair
Peter Wright, Vice Chair
George Foskett
Jenna Spear-O'Mara
Susan Thielen (arrived at 8:17 AM)

Staff Present:

Andrew Bohannon, Parks & Recreation
Director

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

Bettina Chadbourne, Councilor
Jamie White, Alternate
Judy Sadoski

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

2. Approval of Minutes – April 14, 2015

A correction to the minutes: the correct spelling of Peter's last name is "Hansel." (page 2, fourth bullet). Mr. Foskett made a motion to approve the minutes of April 14, 2015 as amended. Mr. Wright seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

3. Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon stated that there are no changes, but the good news is that they finally have their landscaper in place, M. Johnson Landscaping. He continued that he will have the arboretum and other City facilities. He gave more information about him. The City will be saving money.

4. Report From Friends of the Arboretum at Ashuelot River Park

Mr. Foskett reported the following:

- The State had been questioning the Friends about the money situation, but they are now in good shape with that.
- The Friends are discussing establishing rules of use of the arboretum, and rules of use regarding the cobblestones. He thought there was a written document about the latter, but staff in the Parks & Recreation Office could not find it.
- He has noticed many students having their picture taken in the arboretum, maybe for graduation.

- Last year at Art in the Park the Friends purchased a piece of art of the gazebo, to give to Jeanna Hamblet to thank her for her many years of service. He gave it to her recently on behalf of the Friends and she was very moved.

Mr. Foskett asked if the sprinkler system is working. Mr. Bohannon replied that it should be but is not on yet. Mr. Foskett continued that the other day the trash bins were overflowing. Mr. Bohannon replied that they should have been emptied yesterday.

Mr. Foskett distributed copies of a rough map of the arboretum that Tom Flavin created. He continued that they intend to divide the areas and designate people or organizations to take care of them. Some of the areas already have people. The area that was designated in honor of Dave Putnam, one of the founders, has become a cut-through for people coming to and from the parking lot, which the Friends will discuss at their meeting today.

Mr. Foskett continued that he noticed in the tree inventory that Bartlett Tree indicated that half of the trees in the arboretum are in decline and need thinning out. It will be expensive but needs to be done. He wonders if he could go to the trustees and get money to hire an arborist. He spoke more in support of the trees getting this work done.

Mr. Bohannon replied that that would be above and beyond the pruning line in the budget. He continued that they could highlight this recommendation in the report, and seek out arborists. Chair Winsor replied that Bartlett Tree would be interested. Mr. Bohannon replied that they could talk about that. He continued that he thinks there is a way to do what Mr. Foskett is asking. Ms. Spear-O'Mara asked if they would have to seek competitive bids. Mr. Bohannon replied that they might be able to use the pre-existing relationship; they would have to explore it with the Purchasing Department. He continued that it depends on cost, too. Ms. Spear-O'Mara asked when the best time of year is to do those things. Chair Winsor replied that some trees could be done at any time. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Thielen arrived at 8:17 AM.

Mr. Foskett continued that he got a copy of the site plan for the shopping center where the bank is and it shows where the snow storage is supposed to occur. Much of the snow storage happened where the handicapped parking is and got into the flower beds. He spoke with Sue Silver who is on the Friends board and a bank employee, and the facilities person. The facilities person wants to get together with Mr. Bohannon, Chair Winsor, and Mr. Foskett to discuss what they can do about that. Mr. Bohannon asked if Mr. Foskett can set that meeting up sometime after the first week of June. Discussion ensued about whose property it is and where the lines are. Mr. Bohannon stated that they are putting the snow on City property. Ms. Thielen spoke of the dangers of snow and ice in the area of handicapped parking. Chair Winsor stated that putting snow in handicapped parking spaces is illegal. Mr. Foskett asked who is responsible for striping and the handicapped sign; they are pretty faded. Mr. Bohannon replied that he does not know when the last time they did that is.

Mr. Foskett stated that Antioch had their 50th Anniversary celebration, which Cindy Rodenhauser-Stewart spoke to the ARPAB about. He continued that he went and found the tree

half-planted and filled in the necessary dirt himself. The City protected the tree with wire so the beaver does not chew it.

Mr. Foskett continued that the Friends talked a bit about signage but that is a big topic. Mr. Bohannon stated that he has a letter for the Friends that came to him.

5. Park Discussion

Mr. Bohannon stated that he talked with the City Attorney. He continued that it is a park, and they need to create language that is inviting but educational at the same time. Last weekend on the cover of the Keene Sentinel was a photo of a yoga class in the park, and there are some other activities happening, too. It is a popular destination for “bootcamps” and workout classes, which are okay as long as they are not commercial entities. The instructor of the yoga class that was in the paper is not taking in revenue. They may want to say if you are using this property for this purpose, you need to provide a certificate of insurance to the City. He is asking other people about this. Yoga in parks is a huge trend now and he can understand why people would want to use this location. He is still researching this and hopes to have recommendations for the ARPAB at the June meeting. The last time this group got into policy was regarding dogs in the park.

Chair Winsor asked if free get-togethers are okay and Mr. Bohannon is just looking into whether people should be insured. Mr. Bohannon replied that if someone calls someone else and says “Let’s go play Frisbee at the park,” he cannot require them to have insurance, but if it is a publicized, organized activity, that is where they get into the details. Advertising and scheduling make a difference. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bohannon will get recommendations. They do not want to be too rigid. Chair Winsor replied yes, and enforcement would be an issue. Mr. Bohannon stated that maybe awareness of the arboretum would lead to more volunteers, or awareness about the planting of pollinators to help the bee population, and so on and so forth.

6. Bartlett Tree Inventory Web Update

Mr. Bohannon reported that Chair Winsor sent the contract; he has to get that done and sent up to the City Attorney for him to review. Chair Winsor replied that it is a contract for Bartlett Tree to maintain the website for the City. It is \$1,500 for three years, but it is where they can have all of the information about the trees and it is beneficial. It will be a site that is continually updated with more resources. He can see the value of it. They are responsive if there is a problem with a link, for example; they have employees who fix it quickly. Mr. Foskett asked how they would pay for it. Mr. Bohannon replied through the \$4,000 the Friends just gave to the City.

Chair Winsor stated that for this year’s Earth Day, instead of planting a tree, there is a group at KSC that put QR codes on trees for people to see how it works and it was very successful. He continued that that they can work towards doing this in the arboretum, too.

7. New Business

Mr. Bohannon reported that the 50th anniversary of Jonathan Daniels’ death is this year and there is a committee that has purchased a sign about him and is working with Mr. Foskett on this. He continued that he will meet with Christine Weeks today in the park to determine the location. Peter Poanessa from Keene Sign Works did a beautiful sign. He described what it will look like with a photo and written history of Jonathan Daniels. It will go near the Jonathan Daniels trail

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entrance at the park. Mr. Foskett described a location they had been talking about, and discussion ensued. The ARPAB discussed where the trail actually starts. Mr. Bohannon replied that he and Ms. Weeks will talk about it today when they meet in the park. Discussion continued about the contents of the sign.

Mr. Foskett stated that youth from the YMCA will do planting on May 30, and Home Healthcare and Community Services has their big plant sale in June, and Art in the Park happens on Labor Day Weekend. Mr. Bohannon stated that Prospect Place is no longer having their event in the park. He continued that the Links program from KSC is looking to come back in July, and he will have more information about that at the June meeting. Mr. Foskett asked about the Church of Latter Day Saints. Mr. Bohannon replied that they are having a big convention here in town this summer, and on July 9 and/or July 10 they are looking to do community service, spreading approximately 100 kids throughout the community. He may contact them and see if they can do some work on the trail. Mr. Foskett replied that he can always use people to do cobbles. Mr. Bohannon replied that he will send an update when he has more information.

8. Adjournment

Chair Winsor stated that the next meeting is June 9, 2015. Ms. Spear-O'Mara stated that she cannot come to a meeting in June on any Tuesday, due to work, but may be able to come for a portion of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker