

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 8, 2015

8:00 AM

Rm 12, Recreation Center

Members Present:

Arthur (Bud) Winsor, Chair
Jenna Spear-O'Mara
Susan Thielen

Staff Present:

Andrew Bohannon, Parks & Recreation
Director

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

Jamie White, Alternate
Judy Sadoski
George Foskett

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

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

2. Approval of Minutes – July 14, 2015

Ms. Spear-O'Mara made a motion to approve the minutes of July 14, 2015, which was seconded by Ms. Thielen, and passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

3. Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon reported that they have not received a bill. He continued that he checked in with the contractor prior to Art in the Park to find out if he had been weeding. He did weed prior to Art in the Park but not to the extent that had been done in the past. On Friday the sections Mr. Bohannon had asked him to do had been done. They have not received any bill since June. The bid that he put in was significantly lower than what was budgeted. Chair Winsor questioned whether he is performing the work necessary. Ms. Thielen spoke of how this group views it as the arboretum that it is, but the public sees it as just another park which is reinforced when it is not weeded enough. Mr. Bohannon agreed.

Chair Winsor asked about bills from Bartlett Tree for tree trimming. Mr. Bohannon replied that that came from the \$4,000 donation that the Friends of the Arboretum at Ashuelot River Park gave to the City.

Chair Winsor stated that the ARPAB accepts the Finance Report as informational.

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

Mr. Bohannon reported that they have not met for a couple months. Chair Winsor stated that he, Mr. Foskett, and Mr. Bohannon went to the park the other day to discuss the issue of snow removal. Sue Silver from the bank was there, and she took notes, such as the fact that they are

not allowed to put snow in handicapped spots. She will come back with a plan for how they will handle snow removal – they might even truck it away. Brief discussion ensued.

5. Park Discussion

a. Irrigation System

Mr. Bohannon stated that he did not get pricing and information about irrigation systems like he had been charged with doing, and he apologizes. He continued that they are in the ballpark of \$30,000 and that is the connection to City water. It might be best to have conversations with Nancy Burridge who oversees the Trust funds and get a feel from her about what the Trustees would say about using the trust funds for water. Or it would have to be part of the operating budget. He will have something for the ARPAB at the next meeting.

b. Signage

Mr. Bohannon stated that they had talked about improving all of the signage in the arboretum. He continued that in the cemeteries they put a granite post. He is thinking of something smaller that says “Please stay out of the gardens.” He does not know if that would help. He never sees people in the gardens, but it could just be the time of day – he is not there in the late afternoons or weekends when there are more likely to be children and families.

Ms. Spear-O’Mara asked how many signs he recommends. Mr. Bohannon replied about ten. Ms. Spear-O’Mara spoke of a garden she saw elsewhere that says all the way around the base of the wall “Do not climb,” but there were children all over the place ignoring the signs. Discussion ensued about whether signs are effective or not. Chair Winsor gave an example of how signs are ineffective and how people ignore signs. He stated that it does not help to have too many signs, if people do not pay attention to them. Discussion ensued about the size of the signs in the arboretum. The group agreed that small signs are better. Mr. Bohannon stated that he was thinking of a granite post about a foot tall. Others agreed.

Mr. Bohannon reported that Keene State College’s (KSC’s) Community Service Day is October 9. He continued that students will come to Ashuelot River Park and do some clean up, and raise some of the bricks. The other day when he, Mr. Foskett, and Chair Winsor walked, they talked again about expanding the trail and making it wider. In the beginning it is nice and wide. He was thinking about cutting it back and making that way all the way down through. He will arrange for his staff to be part of that day and do that work.

Chair Winsor asked if the river clean up day is a different day than the Community Service Day. Discussion ensued. Chair Winsor will check. Mr. Bohannon stated that someone from the LINKS program contacted him about October 9. Discussion ensued about the frustrations of shopping carts in the river.

Mr. Bohannon stated that he had two complaints come in regarding someone using a motorboat in the river. He continued that this person was putting in at the kayak launch. It is perfectly legal. The person lives near the park and can thus easily get his motorboat into the river. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bohannon stated that he checked with the ordinance and the City Attorney and was assured that this is not part of his jurisdiction. He had a conversation with the

man to tell him yes, he is allowed to do this. He cannot go too far in his motorboat but he likes to go there to fish.

Chair Winsor asked if there were any other complaints. Mr. Bohannon replied no, other than someone who walks on the trail complaining about a part of it that is not City property.

Chair Winsor asked about Art in the Park – as far as they know it went really well. Ms. Spear-O'Mara replied that she went and it was great, and well-attended. Mr. Bohannon replied that he informed the Art in the Park folks that their banner can only be up for ten days or less. He continued that this year there was someone new running the event and she did not know and had it up for about two weeks. Chair Winsor asked about the music. Mr. Bohannon replied that it has had music for a few years, organized mainly by Kevin Dremel of Keene Music Festival.

6. New Business

Ms. Spear-O'Mara stated that she is working full time at the Harris Center, not at KSC anymore, and she will try to schedule her work so that she can come here every month but if there is a snow date that requires her to make up a day of work, it might not work out.

Mr. Bohannon stated that they should be on the search for some new members. He continued that they do have some openings to fill. He encouraged ARPAB members who know anyone who is interested, to bring those names forward. Ms. Spear-O'Mara replied that she will go through her email list and see. Ms. Thielen asked if all members have to be from Keene. Mr. Bohannon replied that past members have been from other towns. Discussion ensued about possible people, and about asking Emily Hague again. Mr. Bohannon suggested the professor at KSC whose students are doing a project right now putting cameras along Ashuelot River on both sides to attract wildlife. Brief discussion ensued.

7. Next Meeting date – October 13, 2015

8. Adjournment

Hearing no other business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted by
Britta Reida, Minute-taker