

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

8:00 AM

Recreation Center, Room 12

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Dave Whaley
Paul Bocko
Councilor Steve Hooper

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation, &
Facilities Director

Members Not Present:

Judy Sadoski
George Foskett

1) Call to Order

Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.

2) Approval of Minutes – October 9, 2018

Mr. Bohannon noted the first line of the minutes on page four of six should be stricken;
Mr. Foskett mentioned that jokingly.

Mr. Bocko moved to approve the minutes of October 9, 2018 as amended, which Mr.
Whaley seconded and the Ashuelot River Park Advisory Board carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon reported the budget has not changed since the October meeting, but he
provided two updates. First, the Board and Mr. Bohannon evaluated the pin oak work.
The Trustees meeting was canceled in November so he could not request the additional
funds. To avoid accruing excess fees from Bartlett Tree, Mr. Bohannon paid the pin oak
invoice from his operating budget. The Funds Manager felt this was an appropriate
course of action and Mr. Bohannon will request reimbursement from the Trustees in
December. Chair Winsor added that Mr. Bohannon met with Frank from Bartlett Tree to
remind him to communicate any changes in the future.

Mr. Bohannon continued that the landscape group, AGM, has yet to begin fall clean-up.
He believes they have waited for the irrigation project to be complete this week. Mr.
Bohannon added he will have a conversation with Chuck Simpson about work on the bed
next to Starbucks. Mr. Bohannon has not seen him in the park recently and the bed does

not look improved since June; he is reluctant to pay for incomplete service. Chair Winsor said Mr. Simpson is well intentioned but overextended sometimes.

Mr. Bohannon continued reporting that the irrigation work will be complete this week. There were fewer difficulties completing this project than at Wheelock Park because they only had to pull pipe. He demanded a full crew for work at Ashuelot River Park because Wheelock Park is behind schedule because a full work crew was not utilized. Councilor Hooper noted the contractor for this work, Knott's Lawn Care, did tree work at the airport that he was dissatisfied with. Mr. Bohannon said they have been very good to work with regarding irrigation; they are knowledgeable about irrigation, communicative, and he would recommend them for irrigation work.

4) Friends of Asheulot River Park Report

Mr. Bohannon shared an update from Mr. Foskett. The Friends are revising their bylaws and constitutions currently. This should be complete in November and will allow the Friends to reapply for 501(c)(3) non-profit status before the end of the year.

5) Park Discussion

a. Irrigation System Update

See above.

b. Simpson Landscaping

See above.

c. Bartlett Tree

i. Pin Oak Tree Work

Mr. Bohannon thanked members who came to the walkthrough with Frank; it was beneficial.

ii. Software Update

Mr. Bohannon reported the Bartlett Tree software, ArborScope, the City purchased is up for renewal. The City paid \$1,500 for a three-year period of software access; however, there were transitions in the City at the time and the software was not utilized. Mr. Bohannon asked Frank to hold the renewal until the next calendar year so it can be placed in the budget appropriately. Mr. Bohannon thinks someone in his front office can take on the task of getting the software ready for public use. He wants to know if the Board is interested in adding this to the budget and if they feel it is valuable for \$500 per year.

Mr. Bocko asked about other ways the software can be used. Mr. Bohannon said the next step is individual signs in the park with QR codes that highlight each tree; if someone scans that code on their phone, they will receive information about that specific tree. He

hopes the signs will be an educational tool for the public, will encourage more positive activity in the park, and will encourage kids to use their phones productively.

Chair Winsor noted the QR codes are prominent at Keene State College; now that students understand what they do, he sees them utilized more often. Mr. Bocko said he would direct Antioch students to utilize a tool like this and he would welcome learning more about it. Mr. Bohannon will contact Frank to see if he could give a demonstration of the software at a future meeting. Councilor Hooper said the educational aspect is worth the annual cost from his perspective; he agreed he would like to see a demonstration. Mr. Whaley agreed.

Moving forward, Mr. Bohannon will send a link for the City's ArborScope to the board; he will also send a link to a demonstration if available. The next meeting will be a good time to review the budget as well.

d. West Street Dam Discussion

Mr. Bohannon reported that staff presented the current status of the West Street Dam to Council. There is a research collaboration through the Rhode Island School of Design; the research team approached the City to facilitate (free of charge) public forums to gauge preferred alternatives for the dam. Public discussions will begin in spring 2019. This research team has studied hundreds of dam removal processes; it is interesting work that staff hope will benefit all involved. He hopes this Board will participate in the public forums.

6) New Business

Mr. Bohannon noted that Mr. Foskett requested further discussion about replacing the gazebo with a pergola to reduce negative activity that has begun in the gazebo. He said a preliminary design will be necessary if the Board wants to explore this option. There might be funds remaining from the irrigation project, which could be used for a pergola.

Chair Winsor noted some hesitation because the gazebo has been a symbol of the park since it was established. Mr. Bohannon agreed it is an iconic symbol of the park and he is unsure if it should be altered to deter behavior that could change in the future. He will request a preliminary drawing from a landscape architect for a minimal fee.

7) Board Membership

Mr. Bohannon shared copies of the Boards purpose and membership requirements. He has requested that Chair Winsor be able to continue on the Board despite the end of his term having past; he is awaiting confirmation from the Mayor. Ms. Sadoski's term also ends in December, but she has expressed desire to continue and Mr. Bohannon hopes that will be possible as well. There is also the opportunity to incorporate some alternate members on the Board. Chair Winsor agreed there is a purpose for term limits, but in some situations quality participation is also important.

Mr. Bocko noted there is no representative on the Board from the Conservation Commission currently. Mr. Bohannon will consult with the Community Development Director to see if someone from the Commission is interested.

8) Next Meeting – December 11, 2018

The Board agreed that if the budget is finalized in December, there is no need for a meeting in January.

9) Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker