

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA**

Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 8:00 AM  
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

- This meeting will be conducted in person and by using the online meeting platform, Zoom. The public may view the meeting online at [www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com) and click on “Join A Meeting” enter Meeting ID 816 1971 6338
- To listen to the meeting, please dial (646) 876-9923 and when prompted enter Meeting ID 816 1971 6338
- If you encounter issues accessing this meeting, please call (603) 757-1835 during the meeting

Members:

Arthur Winsor, Chair  
Ruzzel Zullo, Vice Chair  
Councilor Bettina Chadbourne  
Steve Hooper  
Paul Bocko  
Suzy Krautmann  
Dian Mathews

Staff:

Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

Alternate:

Thomas Haynes

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Acceptance of May 10, 2022 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum
5. Pollinator Event – June 21 1:00 – 3:00
6. Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation
  - a. Educational Signage
  - b. Book Walks
  - c. Public Art
7. New, Other Business
8. Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 8:00 AM

1 City of Keene  
2 New Hampshire

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5 ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD  
6 MEETING MINUTES  
7

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

8:00 AM

Room 22,  
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Ruzzel Zullo, Vice Chair  
Councilor Bettina Chadbourne  
Stephen Hooper  
Paul Bocko  
Dian Mathews  
Suzy Krautmann  
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation & Facilities

Members Not Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair

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10 1) Welcome and Call to Order

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12 Vice Chair Zullo called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.

13  
14 2) Acceptance of April 12, 2022 Minutes

15  
16 Mr. Haynes noted that on line 85 it should read “signs” and not “sings.”

17  
18 Ms. Krautmann made a motion to accept the minutes of April 12, 2022 with the aforementioned  
19 correction. Mr. Hooper seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

20  
21 Mr. Bocko joined via Zoom at 8:05 am.

22  
23 3) Finance Report

24  
25 Mr. Bohannon stated there is no change related to the finance report.

26 Ms. Mathews stated the Prairie Moon Nursery order does not come in until the end of May.

27  
28 4) Report From Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum  
29

30 Ms. Mathews and Ms. Casey presented their Friends of the Arboretum at Ashuelot River Park  
31 PowerPoint. Ms. Mathews noted that the aforementioned name is now the correct legal name  
32 since they became a 501c3 organization.

33 Ms. Casey began by giving a description of Ashuelot River Park, mentioning that it is 157 acres  
34 total with unique features including a river, mill dam/waterfall, woods, and bike trail. She stated  
35 the Master Plan is their guiding document as they move forward to try and refresh and rejuvenate  
36 the park. She reviewed some of the recommendations as denser plantings via shrubs and  
37 perennials, improving the park entrance and views, removing invasive species and planting  
38 natives to increase biodiversity, improving drainage, and increasing inclusivity by making sure  
39 the park is accessible and attractive to populations such as lower income families, families with  
40 children and visitors. She then briefly went over the responsibilities of The Friends. Ms.  
41 Mathews added that they might be up to 13 master gardeners.

42 Ms. Casey summarized the key takeaways they received from their master gardener course to  
43 apply to their park projects. These included seeking advice from trusted sources and experts,  
44 knowing that soil health is foundational, favoring non-chemical methods to manage weeds and  
45 pests, promoting biodiversity and balance for climate resilience, and educating others. She  
46 mentioned some of the experts they are tapping into such as Michael Nerrie, Samuel Jaffe,  
47 Steven LaMonde, the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee, and online resources like UNH  
48 Extension and Soak Up The Rain. She touched upon the fall migration bird walk that Ms.  
49 Mathews organized and stated structure is important for birds, noting that the tangle along the  
50 river bank is attractive to birds if they can recreate it with natives. Ms. Casey also mentioned that  
51 it's appropriate to connect with the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee because the  
52 watershed needs to be dealt with as far as invasive species.

53 Ms. Casey next explained soil health stating the soil sample testing was completed by UNH  
54 Extension and revealed that it was nutrient poor and has excess phosphorus. She explained that  
55 they will be fertilizing the beds based on the test results. Additionally, she stated leaving the  
56 leaves in the beds is a more sustainable practice and important for feeding the soil and creating a  
57 place for insects to over winter. She added that they are grateful Mr. Bohannon has been engaged  
58 and supportive of this practice implementation. Ms. Casey mentioned they will need to improve  
59 drainage in some areas and will depend on the City for that. She noted that the pollinator garden  
60 has plants that can actually feed the soil.

61 With regards to pest management, Ms. Casey stated they have had some good groups of people  
62 to help with the work such as hand weeding of beds. They have a lot of bittersweet and knotweed  
63 they are pulling out so they are being careful of how they dispose of that. She mentioned they are  
64 also tarping and using buckthorn baggies as mechanisms to kill the invasives.

65 Next, Ms. Casey covered native plants with regards to climate resilience. She explained that it's  
66 difficult to find quality native plants but they did find the Nasami Farm Nursery as a good source  
67 as well as Wild Seed Project. She stated fundraising efforts give them opportunities to obtain the  
68 plants they need. Ms. Mathews stated they were awarded \$1,500 from the National Garden Club  
69 for plants, which means they have now fundraised \$2,500. Ms. Casey went on to state that

70 volunteers are important for plantings as well as a reliable water source, and they are thankful  
71 they now have a spigot installed at the park.

72 Lastly, Ms. Casey mentioned future plans for the park. One of them is to add a rain garden and a  
73 picture garden. She mentioned the pergola as a potential picturesque spot. Education is another  
74 focus, especially the signage they have in the works to help teach the public about invasives and  
75 how to control and remove them. Organized “walk and talks,” bird walks, and coordinating with  
76 ARPAB and Antioch University are other ways she mentioned they can increase education. With  
77 regards to raising funds and awareness, she mentioned seed bombs, tabling at the Art in the Park  
78 event, starting an Ashuelot River Park blog, and being proactive about media coverage.

79 Ms. Mathews stated on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> they had a site visit to look at the rain garden site.  
80 They chose an area by Starbucks right where the gate is. She stated the parks crew will be  
81 moving the granite stiles that the chain goes on to the edge of the Starbucks parking lot, in an  
82 attempt to keep the plows from putting snow in the rain garden area during the winter months.  
83 She further explained that the rain garden comes off of the parking section and the land goes  
84 down; however, they will have to dig it out a little more so the rain water will drain  
85 appropriately. They will need to leave a space to potentially add a small bridge over the wet area.  
86 She stated the area may need to be 7 or 8 feet wide and they were directed to create a berm using  
87 some of the bricks with no names on them. She noted this will be quite a big project.

88 Ms. Mathews reported that they had their first Saturday of the month workday and cut back  
89 knotweed on the far side of the bridge, filled up 6 giant garbage bags, and then double layered  
90 tarps over the area. The next step is for wood chips to be dumped over the tarps and that set up  
91 will sit for 4 or 5 years. She mentioned that they may extend to do the same practice with the  
92 bittersweet. Councilor Chadbourne asked how effective that would be on the bittersweet. Ms.  
93 Mathews stated they cut the invasives down as much as they can and the process will work on  
94 whatever they are tarping.

95 Ms. Mathews stated as soon as they get volunteers organized they will begin moving the  
96 shredded leaves into the beds. She explained that the leaves came from the grass in the fall. She  
97 added that they are working on adding perennials to hold the leaves through the winter because  
98 there are currently no perennials to do so.

99 Next, Ms. Mathews stated an ongoing issue is someone bringing poison into the shed. She stated  
100 she will be putting up a sign up that notes it’s illegal to use poison in NH.

101 Ms. Mathews reported that she has been talking to Elf to try and get an article on The Friends.

102 Ms. Mathews stated she plans to do a mapping of everything they’ve planted in the park, but will  
103 need to arrange for someone to specifically be doing that job when they are out at the park  
104 working.

105 Next, Ms. Mathews stated they are trying to get Mr. LaMonde back to do a spring bird walk. Mr.  
106 Bohannon suggested she follow the process Mr. Haynes uses for marketing and outreach, and to  
107 do it at least one month ahead of time.

108 Lastly, she stated the first day of summer is going to be a pollinator celebration at the park run by  
109 CCCD. They have the Harris Center, Keene Library, and other organizations coming in to do  
110 activities with kids and families. The Friends will discuss what they will be doing at their next  
111 meeting and she will report back.

112 Ms. Mathews mentioned peaked interest in the Cork Tree.

113 Mr. Hooper offered to help out taking pictures for The Friends to showcase their work.

114 Mr. Haynes suggested Ms. Mathews get in touch with John Therriault from the Conservation  
115 Commission with regards to pollinators and Bee City.

116 Councilor Chadbourne mentioned “No Mow May” as a mechanism to help pollinators and noted  
117 that the City Manager has agreed to start promoting the concept on the City website and  
118 Facebook page. Mr. Bohannon stated it would be a major culture shift, mentioning the fact that if  
119 he does not have the cemeteries mowed the public will not be happy. Ms. Mathews stated people  
120 have been trained to mow the grass and kill the bugs so it could make a difference if they begin  
121 promoting not mowing coupled with educating the public on the reasons why this practice is  
122 important. Mr. Bohannon agreed, stating it’s all about perception and they can identify sections  
123 that don’t need to be mowed and start there. He mentioned one large section in Monadnock View  
124 Cemetery that they used to contract out for someone to hay. He stated it would be a great place to  
125 have a giant pollinator garden in the almost 4 acres there, but it will take a lot of work and they  
126 aren’t quite equipped for that yet. Mr. Haynes stated if people do what they can to help promote  
127 the idea and help the pollinators that’s the general goal, for everyone to do a little bit.

128 There was short discussion about an invasive dandelion and Mr. Bohannon stated it hasn’t  
129 escalated enough to become a level of concern yet but has been identified at Drummer Hill.

130 Ms. Chadbourne asked about jumping worms in the park and if there’s anything that can be  
131 done. Ms. Mathews stated they are in the park in the evergreen bed. She explained that they over  
132 winter as eggs and are too tiny to see, so you have to take them out of the ground when you see  
133 them and either dry them out or drown them. Ms. Casey stated they should confirm where they  
134 are in the park. Ms. Mathews mentioned that potted plants are spreading invasives and some  
135 states are now recommending that if you purchase plants from non-local nurseries that you put  
136 all the soil in the garbage and plant the bare root.

137 **5) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation**  
138

139 **A) Educational Signage** – Mr. Bohannon stated the signage has been completed and  
140 is on order at Keene Signworx. The final piece of the project is the website that should be  
141 wrapped up within the next week. Their goal is to have the signs installed by June 21<sup>st</sup> for  
142 the pollinator event.  
143

144 **B) Book Walks** – Mr. Bohannon stated they need to order the bases for the book  
145 walk and need to meet to decide exactly where to place it. The group decided to do a  
146 walk around on May 24<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm.

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**C) Public Art** – Ms. Krautmann stated she hasn't heard an update recently but will reach out and report back. Ms. Mathews reminded everyone that they previously discussed putting the 3 grouped sculptures at the fence along West Street so you can see them from the sidewalk and the park. Mr. Bohannon stated that way they will be visible and have eyes on them in case of any damage.

**6) New, Other Business**

George Foskett asked if the sprinkler box could be repainted and Mr. Bohannon stated they will take care of that.

Mr. Bohannon asked if there were specifics on what The Friends could use their grant money on, wondering if it could assist with some of the signage. Ms. Mathews stated she will reach out to her grant contacts and report back. There was mention of getting a rain garden sign as well.

Mr. Haynes reported that on June 4<sup>th</sup> they are having a trail maintenance workshop with Lou Shelley and on May 21<sup>st</sup> they have a Spring Bird Walk with Steve LaMonde.

**7) Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 8:00 AM**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Zullo adjourned the meeting at 8:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Andy Bohannon, PRF Director

**Ashuelot River Park Advisory Board  
2022**

Updated 6/7/22

	Budget	Actual To Date	Difference
Landscaping	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Replanting Program			
shrubs	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
bulbs	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
invasives	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Bartlett Tree - Pruning	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00
Miscellaneous (not contract)	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
<b>Total*</b>	<b>\$ 10,500.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b><u>\$ 10,500.00</u></b>

Bartlett Tree Contract	\$ 4,995.00		\$ -
Friends - Praire Moon Nursery	\$ 59.00		\$ -
			\$ -
			\$ -
			\$ -
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			\$ -
			\$ -
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b><u>\$ -</u></b>

# POLLINATOR PALOOZA!

When:

Tuesday, June 21st,  
1:00PM-3:00PM

Where:

Ashuelot River Park  
Keene, NH

Join us for an  
afternoon of learning  
and celebration of  
pollinators!

Learn more and register  
here:

[pollinator-  
palooza.evenbrite.com](http://pollinator-palooza.evenbrite.com)



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