

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

8:00 AM

**Room 22,
Recreation Center**

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
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:

All Present

1) Welcome and Call to Order

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

2) Elections

Ms. Mathews nominated Mr. Winsor as Chair and Mr. Zullo as Vice Chair. Mr. Hooper seconded the nomination, which passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Winsor and Mr. Zullo accepted.

3) Approval of December 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Krautmann made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 13, 2022. Mr. Hooper seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

4) Finance Report

Mr. Bohannon stated that at the last meeting, he realized something was amiss – the signage by Kyle (Bradford) was not placed within the budget. He continued that he updated that. The next step for the ARPAB is to develop that and make a proposal for him to go to the Trustees to request that funding for next year. The process is for the ARPAB to create a budget, and then he takes it to the Trustees for the Trustees' approval.

Ms. Krautmann asked if that includes the corrections they had discussed for the signs. Mr. Bohannon replied no, just the actual signs that they paid Peter Poanessa for. Ms. Krautmann asked if the corrections would be from this upcoming budget. Mr. Bohannon replied yes, whenever the bill comes to them.

Chair Winsor stated that tree replacement is something that will come up in the next year. He continued that some trees need to be replaced in kind, while others would be replaced with something different. Their goal should be one or two trees a year. That is something for the ARPAB to take into consideration in their budget, which they have never done before. Brief discussion ensued. Chair Winsor clarified that they do not need to create the budget today. They have another month. These are just things to think about. Ms. Mathews asked if they are thinking at least \$3,000. Chair Winsor replied yes, he thinks so. Discussion continued about the costs and the trees needing replacement. Ms. Mathews proposed looking at ArborScope to see what the values of the trees are, and coming up with a budget next month. Mr. Bohannon replied that they can do the budget as late as March, as long as they are not spending money before a budget is approved. He continued that he has not even talked to Frank yet related to the maintenance of this year, and the HRC really needs that number to help them set the tone. He can ask Frank related to if there are specific trees the HRC wants to replace and what that would cost. Discussion continued about how there are two trees they have talked about that will need replacing.

Chair Winsor asked if the Friends have anything else related to the budget. Ms. Mathews replied that she wants to increase the shrub number to \$1,500, from \$1,000. Discussion continued. Chair Winsor asked Mr. Bohannon if it would be possible to meet with Frank, go over some of the trees, and get a rough estimate for what replacement would cost. Mr. Bohannon replied yes, he might be able to set up a Zoom call with the three of them, and Ms. Mathews could join if she wants.

Chair Winsor asked if there was anything else about the budget. Ms. Mathews replied that at some point she would like to start talking about what they are going to do with the Rachel Marshall area; she thinks they should bring it back to life. She asked if that could be on the master plan section of the agenda. Discussion ensued about the Rachel Marshall area and the changes it has seen already.

Chair Winsor stated that going back to tree replacement, they should think about what species they want to have, beyond just replacing what is there. Maybe there are certain species they want to plant.

Mr. Bocko stated that he wants to note for the minutes, to discuss in the future, that he advocates that as part of renewing or revisiting the Rachel Marshall area they consider an intentional connection with classrooms. Others agreed and discussion ensued.

Chair Winsor thanked everyone for their good ideas and discussion. He continued that they will do a little bit of research on the trees, and come back next month with a budget. If anyone has ideas before they set this in stone that would be great. They will have to increase the budget to do what they need to do. Mr. Bohannon replied that the ARPAB budgeted \$10,500 and only spent \$8,800, so that \$1,600 carries over. He continued that the Trustees very much appreciate everything that the ARPAB does.

5) **Report From Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum**

Ms. Mathews reported the following:

- The Friends officially changed their meeting schedule to the first Monday of the month at 4:00 PM, via Zoom during the off months and at the park, weather permitting, during garden season.

Mr. Bohannon asked her to send him the Zoom link.

- The Friends contacted Mascoma Bank. She continued that they want to begin by talking about the fact that the knotweed behind the bank is now gone, but if they do not do something, it will come back. The Friends want Mascoma Bank to be aware of what is happening and want their help with it. Maybe they would donate time or tarps. Then perhaps they can have a real talk about the snow pile that happens on top of the garden right by the handicapped parking every year.
- When the Friends update the ARPAB, they will continue to let the ARPAB know how many volunteer hours the Friends have been putting in. Currently the three of them have been putting in a lot of time on the rain garden and barberry replacement.
- Ms. Mathews put in a call to Matt Kelly (from the Cooperative Extension in Keene) and Tom Murarty (from UNH) and has put the two of them in touch. She will let the ARPAB know what happens.
- Ms. Mathews has been looking at the data and criteria for the DES (Department of Environmental Services) permit for the rain garden and she does not think they need to do one.

Discussion ensued about the DES permit. Mr. Bohannon replied that it just should be a standard permit, not anything significant. They have done this before. When they do work on the Jonathan Daniels Trail, they notify (DES). Discussion continued. Mr. Bohannon stated that he can follow up with the DES if the Friends want him to, and look into this.

- The Friends received a grant from the CCCD for \$1,500. They requested and received an extension of time to do the work that the grant is for, because there was a higher learning curve than they had anticipated. They need to buy plants, which they have done a lot of research about. Ms. Mathews will order and pay for them, and the grant will pay her

back (for the rain garden plants), and she will submit to the ARPAB for the ones at the barberry hedge.

Ms. Mathews asked if the ARPAB wants to know which plants the Friends pick for the hedge by the bridge. She continued that so far they are looking at itea/Sweetspire, which only grows two or three feet; American Beautyberry/callicarpa, which is three to six feet; shrubby St. John's Wort/hypericum, three to four feet; or New Jersey Tea, three feet. She gave information about the rain garden plants as well, stating that someday when it is warm and the Friends' meeting is at the park, the ARPAB members can come and see what they are thinking. Discussion ensued about the proposed plants.

Raynee Carlson stated that regarding the invasives project, Mike Bald, who does invasive removal work, came to look at the whole project. She continued that he was pleased by how it was looking and thinks that the Friends have done a good job. He was pleased they were not using pesticides. He was very upset about how dangerous the chain link fence is, because it is in such disrepair. It also makes it difficult to manage the knotweed that is in and on the other side of the fence. She does not know what the plans are for the fence (which is not owned by the City or the Friends). Ms. Mathews suggested Mr. Bohannon inform the owners of the fence about the dangers noted by Mr. Bald. Mr. Bohannon replied that he has mentioned the gaps in the fence to them. Discussion continued.

Mr. Bohannon asked if the plants the Friends put in that area, once they decide on which ones, will be part of the ARPAB's budget. Ms. Mathews replied yes, and they will have the numbers for the ARPAB next month.

6) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation

A) Ashuelot Green Space

Mr. Bohannon stated that there is nothing to report.

B) Kiosk Information

Chair Winsor asked if the ARPAB had given Mr. Bohannon enough direction on this and where things were at. Mr. Bohannon replied that due to being out sick for several days and then having a lot to catch up on, he did not get the kiosk information done. They can go over it right now. Using a marker and whiteboard, he showed the size of the kiosk. Discussion ensued about content. The ARPAB determined the following should be included:

- Rules and regulations
- Map of the trees, on the back, with a QR code
- Trail map, on the front, with info about the app for trail maps
- A rotating space for classrooms to share information/displays

- Table of contents/note on front, at the bottom of the rules and regulations, so people know to look on the back
- Position the sign so that people naturally know to look at both sides (e.g. angle it)
- Educational information (on the side) about arboretums, and the history of this one
- Nearby to the information on arboretums, information about the Friends, including contact information
- Invasive species information, on the back
- A space to list upcoming events
- Information about the storyboards/story walk

Mr. Bohannon asked if someone could help him write a history. Ms. Mathews replied that she would be glad to. Mr. Bohannon replied that he will send her something showing how much space the history should take up on the sign. Discussion continued. Mr. Bohannon stated that he will put all this in digital form and send it around with the next agenda packet.

Discussion ensued about the story walk in the park, and whether it has been updated – the first story was about the fall. Mr. Bohannon replied that he does not know. He continued that he needs to have a conversation with the Library about communicating with the Parks Department about when they will update it, so the two departments can jointly promote it. Ms. Krautmann stated that she was wondering if plantings could go on either side of the post. Ms. Mathews replied yes, eventually. Discussion continued about the location.

Chair Winsor stated that regarding the signs that Mr. Bradford did, what really needs to be corrected is the “connected world” part, because the spacing of the words is off. He talked with Mike Johnson about trying to fix that. Mr. Johnson suggested that if the signs cannot be removed, he could do a raised piece of the same dimensions, with the corrected spacing, and put it on top. He asked what the ARPAB thinks. Discussion ensued. Mr. Bocko suggested first checking to see if the sign is removable, because having Mr. Johnson correct the sign that way would be preferable. Chair Winsor and Mr. Bocko stated that they will go look at the sign to see if it is removable. Mr. Bocko stated that once they decide, he can follow up with Mr. Bradford.

7) New, Other Business
A) 2023 Meeting Dates

Discussion ensued about the ARPAB’s 2023 meeting dates and whether any of them need to be changed.

8) Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 8:00 AM

There being no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by, Andy Bohannon,
Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director