

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

**ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 8:15 AM  
Room 22 Upstairs, Recreation Center

**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. Approval of August 8, 2023 Minutes
3. Finance Report
4. Report from Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum
5. Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation
  - a. Rachel Marshall Area
  - b. Kiosk Information
  - c. Bartlett Tree
6. Upcoming Events
7. New, Other Business
8. Adjourn – Next Meeting Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 8:15 AM

1 City of Keene  
2 New Hampshire

3  
4 ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD  
5 MEETING MINUTES  
6  
7

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

8:15 AM

Room 22,  
Recreation Center

**Members Present:**

Arthur Winsor, Chair  
Ruzzel Zullo, Vice Chair  
Dian Matthews  
Thomas Haynes, Alternate (Voting)

**Staff Present:**

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation, & Facilities

**Members Not Present:**

Councilor Bettina Chadbourne  
Steve Hooper  
Paul Bocko  
Suzy Krautmann

8  
9  
10 **1) Welcome & Call to Order**

11  
12 Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:22 AM.

13  
14 **2) Approval of July 11, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

15  
16 Revisions: Line 99 should identify Mr. Bocko as having been present for the walk, not Steven  
17 Lamonde. Line 47, the woman's name should be spelled as "Leigh Kamm." Line 93, strike the  
18 sentence about installing stones. Lastly, Line 116 should read as, "... but Mr. Bohannon cannot  
19 supervise..."

20  
21 A motion by Mr. Haynes to adopt the July 11, 2023, minutes as amended was duly seconded by  
22 Ms. Matthews. The motion carried unanimously.

23  
24 **3) Finance Report**

25  
26 Mr. Bohannon reported that everything was up-to-date, and nothing had been spent since the last  
27 meeting. Ms. Matthews had just provided an invoice to Mr. Bohannon. Mr. Bohannon had not  
28 yet received an invoice from Bartlett Tree Experts, but they had completed the work; Ms.  
29 Matthews was in the park when Bartlett was fertilizing, and she knew they had pruned. She had  
30 asked Julie Barrett not to cut anything down if it had a tag on it. Ms. Matthews said that Julie  
31 Barrett cut something dead in the bed next to the pergola, but Ms. Matthews had not visited to

32 check on it yet. Ms. Matthews asked if Bartlett was supposed to cut dead things. She also  
33 mentioned a tree in the hosta bed that is badly girdled, and she wondered if someone should look  
34 at that. Mr. Bohannon replied that he could bring that to Bartlett's attention. He shared the  
35 example of a tree to be removed on the bank side this year, stating that it is best to do those with  
36 the City's local contractor. Mr. Bohannon thought that Bartlett would do it, noting that Frank  
37 Grano is very honest about charges to remove trees and whether a local vendor could do the  
38 work at a lower rate. Beyond pruning, Ms. Matthews asked who was supposed to be "doctoring"  
39 these trees. She mentioned two other trees that were girdled but she did not remember where.  
40 Chair Winsor noted that many girdled trees continue living despite struggling. Ms. Matthews  
41 would visit the park again to make note of those tree numbers.

42  
43 Chair Winsor proposed a line item in the budget for \$5,000 for replanting/replacing trees. In the  
44 park or Rachel Marshall area, Chair Winsor proposed planting a dawn redwood (*Metasequoia*),  
45 which he thought would be a good addition to the tree collection. Dawn redwoods can reach 80  
46 feet tall; there is one at Keene State College (KSC) as an example. He called them graceful,  
47 beautiful trees that can grow in the Keene area. September or October would be ideal times to  
48 plant. Chair Winsor thought that Millican Nursery might have them (3-inch caliper), and he  
49 agreed to research that possibility. Mr. Bohannon noted that with \$5,000 he was able to purchase  
50 four trees for Pat Russell Park.

51  
52 **4) Report from Friends of the Ashuelot Park Arboretum**

53  
54 Ms. Matthews reported that the week before this meeting, she visited the Bagley Pond nursery in  
55 Warner, NH, to pick-up the last eight St. John's wort shrubs, which were heeled into the bridge  
56 bed. However, she said they were not yet in hedge formation because all the rain garden plants  
57 were in the bridge bed. Once plants are ready to move into the rain garden, the St. John's wort  
58 shrubs would be arranged in hedge formation to fit them in with the New Jersey teas.

59  
60 Next, Ms. Matthews talked about the remaining Dame's rocket, which look like beautiful phlox  
61 near Mascoma Savings Bank. She called it a gorgeous bank of invasive flowers. She had helped  
62 to take a lot of it out, and before they went to seed, the Friends got rid of the rest of it and  
63 addressed more Japanese knotweed in that area.

64  
65 The Friends had also started weeding the various garden beds, including cleaning-up the  
66 pokeweed on the west side of the pergola (this requires more discussion), the front bed near the  
67 arts sculptures, and the side bed near the parking lot. The same week as this meeting, the Friends  
68 intended to also address the Jerusalem artichoke along the east parking lot fence so people can  
69 walk there; then, they would start on the Starbucks side so that everything will look better for Art  
70 in the Park. The Old Homestead Garden Club had budgeted \$200 for the park and asked the  
71 Friends to get some mulch and plants for the area that the Club considers theirs.

72  
73 Ms. Matthews continued noting that the Friends had intended to use the compost. She referred to  
74 the triangle bed and said that the shrub that the Friends bought from Maple Hill three years ago

75 should have had a good year this year, but the snowplow knocked it over. Ms. Matthews would  
76 consider replacing it with something from her home garden. The grass in that area was tall,  
77 almost as if it had been seeded. She learned that the Friends considered one of their beds and had  
78 used compost that was completely full of seeds; it took him three hours because it was so bad.

79  
80 Ms. Matthews shared that she was approached by The Samaritans (Safer at Home) and she talked  
81 to Mr. Bohannon about it. Ms. Matthews said the group had put a lot of things in the park that  
82 were not approved of by Ms. Matthews or Mr. Bohannon. Considering stones are needed, Ms.  
83 Matthews was trying to be conciliatory to work with them and see what happens monetarily; she  
84 is trying to get the 16 stones back. Ms. Matthews thinks the more people involved in the park,  
85 the better. She needed the rest of the Board to support the Friends in educating the public that  
86 they cannot come and plant things in the arboretum. Mr. Bohannon said this was a very  
87 unfortunate situation with someone taking liberties and sharing untruths about having permission  
88 from him or Ms. Matthews. Chair Winsor noted that people used to buy trees and try to plant  
89 them at KSC.

90  
91 Ms. Matthews said the past month had been difficult with the rain and they had to change a lot of  
92 workdays, which was challenging given that it is always unclear how many volunteers are  
93 coming. Still, five Friends managed 41 hours of gardening with the help of three volunteers.  
94 Workdays were still tentatively scheduled for the first Saturday of the month and every Friday  
95 after that (not the first Friday of the month). She said this was the initial schedule because the  
96 Friends were trying to work with the Monadnock Garden Club, who were showing up on the first  
97 Saturday of the month for some planting and mulching. Ms. Matthews was not content with  
98 mulch being laid in random areas of the park due to aesthetics. She added that the Monadnock  
99 Garden Club was supposed to be in charge of the beds on each side of the pergola, but they had  
100 only laid mulch on one side. Ms. Matthews thought this was another instance of the Board  
101 needing to step in and ensure everything conforms with the rest of the arboretum. Mr. Bohannon  
102 thought there used to be larger dark brown mulch on the beds on either side of the pergola. Ms.  
103 Matthews would send photos to Mr. Bohannon. Ms. Matthews spoke to someone from the  
104 Monadnock Garden Club, whose members are required to do some work.

105

106 **5) Park Discussion – Master Plan Implementation**

107 **A) Rachel Marshall Area**

108

109 Chair Winsor recalled a lot of discussion at the last meeting about the Rachel Marshall area  
110 already being a bird sanctuary that the Board wants to help people appreciate. He wondered  
111 whether additional interpretive signage on what birds to expect to see would help draw people  
112 across the bridge; he thought this could build upon Kyle Bradford's successful interpretive  
113 signage. Ms. Matthews thought clearer signage was needed to direct people along the small  
114 footpath. Mr. Bohannon said the City owns the land down to the granite post, it just needs to be  
115 delineated better. When taking the path toward Melanson's and to the right going toward behind  
116 Hannaford, there is a path that essentially marks the property line; the property line cannot be  
117 truly defined because of the Eversource power lines (grassy area under the lines is Eversource

118 property). All of the woods to the right of the path Mr. Bohannon mentioned are a part of the  
119 park. Ms. Matthews said that is harder to tell when coming from the other end of the park. A  
120 different trail is needed closer to the trees. Chair Winsor knew that Mr. Bocko intended to work  
121 on some of the interpretive signage with the student. He said that if the Board wants the Rachel  
122 Marshall area to be used in a good way, people need a reason to go there.

123  
124 Ms. Matthews said she visited a few sites in the past month, and she was interested in the types  
125 of seeding. She said a few trees could be felled and moved to form a sort of outdoor classroom.  
126 Mr. Bohannon said those learning circles could be created and defined through the educational  
127 process. The concern is for those areas becoming campfire rings at night, so the Board needs to  
128 be cautious. Mr. Haynes recalled spreading a lot of wood chips to create pathways but noted that  
129 the vegetation would likely grow back through that. Mr. Bohannon thought that signage would  
130 be essential to establishing the outdoor learning areas. He thought that as long as the park is kept  
131 as open as possible for viewing, there should be less negative activities, though those activities  
132 can never be dissuaded entirely. The Board agreed.

133  
134 **B) Kiosk Information**

135  
136 Ms. Matthews gave Chair Winsor a timeline and the Chair was awaiting more creating writing  
137 on the history from Mr. Bocko. Chair Winsor would provide the timeline to Peter Poanessa for  
138 the sign before the history is completed. Ms. Matthews shared copies of proposed rules. Mr.  
139 Bohannon reviewed the rules and would add some other things, like no smoking, as well as other  
140 language edits to clarify things like no camping in City parks. The Board agreed that these  
141 should be posted in multiple areas. Ms. Matthews would resend the document to Mr. Bohannon  
142 with sign language for the work on the pergola two years ago and the local Interact Club's events  
143 during Covid. Chair Winsor agreed to visit the Cheshire County Historical Society and try to get  
144 more historical information, which he would share with Ms. Matthews for the signs. Discussion  
145 ensued about when Art in the Park began, which Mr. Bohannon thought was in the early 1990s,  
146 after the park opened in 1986; likely before 1998.

147  
148 **C) Bartlett Tree**

149  
150 Discussed earlier in the meeting under Finance Report.

151  
152 **6) New, Other Business**

153  
154 Chair Winsor mentioned that Ms. Matthews wanted to have leaves shredded. The Chair  
155 suggested a workday and renting a shredder, which would be less complicated than buying one  
156 with maintenance and storage challenges. Mr. Bohannon thought renting a shredder could be  
157 worked out in terms of insurance. The discussion was to have this workday in September or  
158 October. Chair Winsor will research the rental options. This should be on the September agenda  
159 to finalize.

160

161 Chair Winsor shared that he would give a presentation on the history of the park at the Keene  
162 Senior Center on September 8. He could share the presentation with the Board after.

163  
164 Chair Winsor asked Ms. Matthews if she wanted him to work on organic foliage fertilization.  
165 Ms. Matthews thought the rain had been making the weeds grow too much. Chair Winsor  
166 clarified that this treatment would not go on weeds, but foliage of plants. Ms. Matthews thought  
167 it might be a good thing for the shrubs. Chair Winsor and Ms. Matthews agreed that this  
168 treatment could help things look good for Art in the Park. Chair Winsor would try to do this  
169 work on a Friday when Ms. Matthews would likely already be at the park. Ms. Matthews  
170 mentioned that the Friends were deciding whether to use tape or stakes to mark the shrubs to  
171 keep an eye on; the original marking on the plants had disappeared.

172  
173 Chair Winsor recommended that the Board get ahead of the snow dump issue, noting that the  
174 snow was being piled in the handicapped parking spaces, which is illegal. The snow had pushed  
175 over some trees and damaged some plants. Mr. Bohannon recommended having signs made. Ms.  
176 Matthews shared the example of an area with two granite posts and asked if those are expensive;  
177 she thought that two posts with the handicapped sign and a no snow dumping sign could work.  
178 Chair Winsor said there is a NH Statute, and that language could be included on the signs.

179  
180 7) **Adjournment – Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 8:15 AM**

181  
182 Chair Winsor will not be at the September meeting. There being no further business, Chair  
183 Winsor adjourned the meeting at 8:58 AM.

184  
185 Respectfully submitted by,  
186 Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker  
187 August 14, 2023

188  
189 Reviewed and edited by,  
190 Andy Bohannon, PRF Director



**Ashuelot River Park Advisory Board  
2023**

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual To Date</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Landscaping	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Replanting Program			
shrubs	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00
trees	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00
Bartlett Tree - Pruning	\$ 2,385.00	\$ -	\$ 2,385.00
Miscellaneous (not contract)	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
Total*	<u>\$ 10,885.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 10,885.00</u>

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**TOTAL**



