

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ASHUELOT RIVER PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

8:15 AM

**Room 22,
Recreation Center**

Members Present:

Arthur Winsor, Chair
Paul Bocko, Vice Chair
Dian Mathews
Ruzzel Zullo
Suzanne Krautmann
Kelly Cook
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,
Recreation & Facilities

Members Not Present:

Stephen Hooper

1) Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Winsor called the meeting to order at 8:24 AM. The committee welcomed their new member, Kelly Cook, and roll call ensued.

2) Approval of May 7, 2024 Minutes

Ruzzel Zullo stated that the header of the May 7, 2024 meeting minutes should state that the meeting begins at 8:15 AM rather than 8:00 AM. With the aforementioned change, Vice Chair Bocko motioned to adopt the minutes which was duly seconded by Suzanne Krautmann. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Finance Report

Chair Winsor stated that they had almost \$20,000 in the budget for the current year.

Mr. Bohannon stated that he contacted Mark Johnson, a landscaper who he'd worked with in the past, for a quote to remove, mulch, and reapply the leaves in the garden beds. He was still waiting to receive the quote.

4) Report from the Friends of Ashuelot River Park Arboretum

Dian Mathews presented a report that stated the Friends were recipients of \$15,000 from Dorothy Arwe when she passed last year. The final papers had been signed and money deposited into The Friends' bank account. This money would be used to pay for their insurance and provide funds for the Pollinator Garden in the future.

Ms. Mathews continued with The Friends' current projects. The Pollinator Palooza would be held on June 25 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The number of vendors had increased from the previous year and it was expected to be a fun event with activities for children to enjoy. The Friends' had also worked on clearing the river bank of invasive knotweed and only had a small section left to complete. They would then monitor the area regularly. Ms. Mathews reported that the Rain Garden was working and water was seeping into the planted area from the tarmac. However, the entrance to the garden had been impacted by vehicles causing a puddle of water to form on the pathway. The committee agreed that remediation was necessary to stop the water from gathering, causing people to walk around the puddle and into the garden. They discussed putting stepping stones down to help level the walking area.

Ms. Mathews stated that they were still trying to figure out a practical way to use the leaves as mulch for the beds in the Fall. They had also hoped to begin the Pollinator Garden in the back the coming Fall.

The Friends' had found that meeting every Friday and second Saturday of the month wasn't working and, therefore, they would go back to meeting every Friday at 8:00 AM. The Friends' also planned to take out an ad in the Monadnock Shopper for volunteers. Mr. Bohannon suggested advertising at the Pollinator Palooza as well.

5) Project Tracking

A. Bird Ecology Project

Jen Hlivko gave Vice Chair Bocko a thumb drive containing information on her Bird Ecology Project. They would use it as a blueprint for the Rachel Marshall Outdoor Laboratory. Steven Hooper would build bird boxes from her project with help from Mr. Haynes. They would discuss what materials needed to be provided the next time Mr. Hooper was present at a meeting. Vice Chair Bocko stated the online story map and bird call sounds were both ready and that they would just need to have the physical signs made.

B. Potential Public Art Installation - Take Flight

Ms. Mathews stated that the new art installation looks wonderful in the park. Mr. Bohannon said they would put a mulch bed around it soon.

C. Master Plan Implementation Discussion

Chair Winsor stated that he spoke with Peter Poanessa from Keene Signworx about the sign for the park. Mr. Poanessa requested photos for the sign and would like to have the wording formatted differently, to which Ms. Mathews said she would do. She also stated she had many photos to be considered for the sign. Chair Winsor and Ms. Mathews would meet at the Keene Recreation Center on June 19 to go over the sign contents. Chair Winsor stated that the sign would be two-sided and Ms. Mathews questioned if they should move the stones near the sign so people can walk on either side of it.

Ms. Krautmann stated Forrest Bencivenga had replacements for the clay sculptures that went missing. Ms. Mathews moved to give Ms. Bencivenga \$100.00 to pay for the replacement of sculpture pieces which was duly seconded by Vice Chair Bocko. The motion passed unanimously.

6) **Upcoming Events**

A. Pollinator Palooza - June 25, 2024 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM

B. Art in the Park-August 31-September 1, 2024

Mr. Bohannon thought it would be a great event to exhibit the new art installation in the park.

C. Monadnock Conservancy Anniversary - October 5, 2024

The Monadnock Conservancy would like to hold an event in the park in October 2024.

7) **New/Other Business**

Ms. Krautmann stated she walked through the park with Mr. Bohannon and staff from the library to discuss the flow of the Book Walk. Amy Kraemer, a staff member at the Keene Public Library, brought up making the signs more handicap accessible. Mr. Bohannon would meet with people from the Parks Department to discuss ways to ensure people in wheelchairs could access the storyboards. Mr. Bohannon said they may cut the books back from 20 to be closer to 15 stories. Ms. Krautmann said they should consider putting numbers on the signs to help the flow as well.

Ms. Mathews reported that there had been presence of houseless people, as there have been makeshift beds found at the park. There was a metal box that had been once used as a treasure box that should be removed.

Mr. Bohannon stated Carrah Fisk Hennessey would be the new Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities. He said her passion for the community showed throughout the entire interview process and everyone is excited to have her on board. Chair Winsor stated he had worked with her in the past and looked forward to working with her again. Ms. Hennessey would start on July 1, 2024.

Chair Winsor stated they would vote for a new Chair at the next meeting, as his term had expired.

8) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Winsor adjourned the meeting at 9:24 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Melissa Danneker, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Andy Bohannon, City Deputy Manager

