

For Immediate Release

Garden Club of Norfolk Receives large donation for Hydration Station at Jeff Robertson Park

Norfolk, VA (June 12, 2023)

The Garden Club of Norfolk (GCN) received a \$4,000 grant from Serco, Inc, towards the installation of a tri-level hydration station at Jeff Robertson Park. The GCN, in partnership with the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation, has been raising funds for this much-needed water station. Kindra Greene, Executive Director of The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation stated, "It has always been the vision of our Foundation to have hydration stations for people and pets at each Trailhead along the Elizabeth River Trail. Access to water is the most requested amenity by trail users."

The proposed hydration station will offer a place to refill water bottles as well as provide a pet fountain for the many dogs that travel with their owners to the park. Being midway along the 10.5-mile trail, Jeff Robertson Park is the perfect location. The hydration station will be positioned near the recently planted 10,000 square foot native garden that the GCN spearheaded as part of its Olmsted Initiative: *to reclaim and beautify blighted land for public wellbeing*. "It is also our goal, stated Mary Beth Horton and Liz Paiste, co-chairs of the Olmsted Initiative, "to use this garden as a place to inspire and educate the community on the value of planting native plants in their yards. We need to restore our ecology one yard at a time. A water station would be a perfect reason for trail users to stop along the trail and read about the benefits of our native plants."

Donation signs were placed at Jeff Robertson Park in mid-April 2023 offering trail users an opportunity to make donations for the hydration station. "Many donations have been placed in memory of beloved family or pets, which is so endearing," stated Mary Beth Horton.

"The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation is grateful for the work the Garden Club of Norfolk has put into beautifying this section on the trail and their help in raising funds for the installation of the hydration station." said Kindra Greene. "We are grateful to Serco, Inc. for this grant and for all the overwhelming support from local businesses and individuals towards enhancing Jeff Robertson Park," stated Liz Paiste. "This has been a great partnership and group effort," added Mary Beth Horton.

The Garden Club of Norfolk also donated \$4,000 towards the hydration station. With their current contributions, the Garden Club of Norfolk raised \$8,556.77, which is close to 35% towards reaching their goal.

Please consider making a donation in support of the Olmsted Initiative:

<https://thegardenclubofnorfolk.org/olmsted/>