



City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES 3/22/22

Attendance:

J. Vieau, M. Pise, J. Tillotson, E. Batista, K. Donahue, S. Kulig, M. Laflamme K. Lingenberg, S. Riley, L. Sanders

Excused: G. Balakier

I. Mayors Update:

The Mayor provided an update on the Retention Bonus program that would be before City Council. The source of funding for that program would be "Free Cash" General Fund. \$10,000,000 in ARPA funds had been allocated to the General fund as permitted under the Final Rules guidelines for Municipal Lost Revenue.

II. Minutes Approval

Motion by K. Lingenberg, 2nd by Mayor to accept the minutes as presented in the meeting packet. All in favor.

III. ARPA Administrative Requirements

Kathleen shared that since the release of the ARPA final rule, she and Marie had been reviewing regulations and guidance to ensure the City's practices were compliant. The review covered the areas of Citizen Input/engagement, Transparency, and Compliance and Reporting. Kathleen reported that our initial engagement was compliant with Citizen Input requirements and that we continue to get input on ARPA priorities. A website is in development which will aid us in providing information to the public on ARPA priorities and projects. Marie shared that IT was developing the ARPA webpage with her guidance and that due to a requirement that our next quarterly report provide the ARPA web link, she was very focused on getting a practical, if not perfect, format. Marie stated that once site was "live" she hoped the Advisory Committee would provide feedback on potential enhancements.

Kathleen shared that reporting templates had been created for each of the approved projects. That the next quarterly for period ending 3.31.2022 was due mid-April. Marie stated that her office would require submittal of quarterly reports by the 10th of each month following the applicable quarter. Marie stated that this deadline would allow for review and also give her office enough time to scan and upload reports to both the City ARPA web page and to the Treasury's reporting system. Both of which are ARPA requirements.

The Committee then engaged in discussion around the volume of calls/submittals from businesses seeking ARPA funding. Kathleen overviewed the obligation for the City to have a process that provided equal access to funds for ARPA eligible projects and that equal access minimally required a formally notices process, application/RFP, and review criteria upon which awards would be made. Discussion that to date ARPA had responded to only Capital projects and City initiated efforts. Moving outside those initial priorities would take time and effort to ensure compliance with an "open and fair process". The inquires had been from both for-profit and non-profit organization. Kathleen stressed the need to create a unified response as the Advisory Committee worked through various potential projects/eligible uses.

IV. Proposals/ requests:

Assistance to Non-Profit: As an extension of the "open and fair" process discussion, K. Lingenberg shared numerous funding requests that been received since the last meeting. These requests led Kathleen to broaden her research to evaluate a range of ARPA eligible uses involving non-profits. Kathleen referenced the material included within the packets when discussing three potential non-profit eligibilities. Specifically, 1. Impacted Industries- loss of revenue to non-profits within tourism, travel industries; 2. Negative Economic Impacts- operating support to non-profits that had negative economic impacts due to the pandemic; and 3. Equity-focused Services to Disproportionately Impacted persons. Liz asked about Qualified Census (QC) tracts; Kathleen responded that QCs were utilized in CDBG and that in Chicopee the QC areas were Willimansett, Chicopee Center, and Chicopee Falls. After discussion on non-profit programs, there was general agreement that the discussion would continue at the next meeting.

IV: Projects under Consideration:

- a. **Chicopee Library Redevelopment:** K. Lingenberg reported the architectural investigation were ongoing and that the project would likely be seeking a \$3.5 million ARPA commitment, once funds were available.

V: Funded Project- Status Update

Summary was submitted in packet. \$19,226,660 of ARPA commitments has been recommend by the Advisory committee. The 30 Center St project has expended \$750,000; the balance of projects included within the spreadsheet are moving forward.

VI: New Business

- a. **Housing Resiliency Program** will launch on April 1.
- b. **Tax ADE-** Marie discussed the program need. Discussion of opportunities to fund outside the ARPA process.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at 9AM