



City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES 5/24/22

Attendance:

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

Excused: G. Balakier, K. Donahue, J. Tillotson

I. Mayors Update:

The Mayor shared information from various MA. Municipal Association events and discussion with colleagues. Specifically, 1. Most communities are focused on one time investment rather than programming that lacked non-ARPA funding; 2. Sentiment that ARPA regulations would loosen making ARPA-eligible project that was any project that was CDBG- eligible; and 3. A universal tension between spending quickly vs waiting for regulatory revisions and/or guidance.

The Mayor also spoke of direct inquires, and specifically Bluebird Acres seeking assistance. His response continues to be that all proposed projects must be selected through a process overseen by the Advisory Committee.

II. Minutes Approval

Motion by M. Laflamme, 2nd by S. Kulig to accept the minutes as presented in the meeting packet. All in favor.

III. ARPA Administrative Requirements

Quarterly Report: M. Laflamme reported that the ARPA quarterly report had been submitted. Although a reporting extension had been granted as many communities struggled with the process, Chicopee had submitted in accordance with the original deadline. The level of detail around awards, sub-awards, and contractor is extremely detailed and must be required of all projects.

Website: She then provided an overview of the ARPA web-page as she navigated through the page components on a projection screen. Responses were universally positive with special praise for the visuals on each of the funded projects. M. Laflamme encouraged members to provide any feedback that would make the site more useful.

IV. Non- Profit Eligible Uses

K. Lingenberg overviewed her research with a recommendation that the Committee focus the initial funding on "Impacted Non-profits". The ARPA guidance defines as those non-profit organizations that have experienced a decrease in revenue, financial insecurity, increased operating cost, and/or challenges covering payroll, rent or other operating cost as "Impacted Non-profits". Committee Agreement with that prioritization and discussion on funding thresholds and overall demand. Agreement that the City would release an RFP that stated the funding was anticipated not to exceed \$25,000 per organization and funds would be awarded based upon severity of impact. The application, was finalized would be accepted on a rolling basis, and that a subcommittee would need to be created to review applications and determine

amount of awards. Further discussion about requirement to have a Chicopee location- final resolution that non-profit must demonstrate a history and current capacity to serve Chicopee residents. Final recommendation to allocate \$250,000 towards this effort. Motion by L. Sanders, 2nd y S. Riley. All in favor.

K. Lingenberg also shared that during her research on ARPA funding to support non-profits, she found an interesting program in New Bedford that targeted funding to Capital Investments for privately owned cultural facilities. The program seemed to target investment in properties utilized for arts, culture, and tourism with a focus on economic impact. K. Lingenberg shared as the Bellamy House had been one of the projects identified during the Community Engagement and Outreach process.

V. Proposals/ requests:

Fire Department – Committee had been holding this item as a place holder. The initial proposal related to expanded staffing but general consensus that any expansion would be through conventional departmental funding.

DPW Matching Funds- The funds were requested as matching funds to a federal earmark. M. Pise relayed that federal funds (ARPA) might not be an eligible match if project was to receive a federal earmark. Consensus to keep project on agenda pending clarification and funding decision.

VI: Funded Project- Status Update

Summary was submitted in packet. \$22,726,660 of ARPA commitments has been recommend by the Advisory committee. As M. Laflamme had included a project update within the website overview, members were asked to review the spreadsheet within their packets.

VII: New Business

Economic Development: The Mayor shared a summary of the Chamber-sponsored event at Koffee Kup bakery. The Mayor felt that updates on the ARPA- funded projects was well-received; he had instructed meeting attendees that any concepts they might have should be submitted through to the ARPA email so that they could be considered as the Committee determined various funding pools. K. Lingenberg questioned if the ARPA email was still live as she had not received any emails; agreed that test emails would be sent and corrective action taken if needed.

Further consensus that the committee would begin to evaluate Economic Investment eligibilities at the next meeting.

Other: K. Lingenberg shared that as she was researching Non-profit program uses from various communities, she has come across an ARPA funded program focused on Environmental Health and Open Space. Discussion if the Committee had interest in exploring potential one-time investments- such as canoe launch, walking trails, environmental education site(s) ; Consensus that additional information would be valued.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 28, 2022 at 9AM