



# City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

## ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES 6/28/22

### **Attendance:**

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

**Excused:** J. Tillotson

### **I. Mayors Update**

The Mayor reported that he didn't have a formal update but shared that he had formally allocated the \$3.5million for the former Central Library redevelopment. He questioned if the City had received our allocations from both the City and the proportional share of County funds. S. Riley and M. Laflamme responded that the City had received all funds that were anticipated at this point.

The Mayor shared a desire to prioritize a review of options to assist Chicopee businesses; K. Lingenberg responded that Economic Development had been included on the agenda and she would be presenting some options.

### **II. Minutes Approval**

Motion by M. Laflamme, 2<sup>nd</sup> by K. Lingenberg to accept the minutes as presented in the meeting packet. All in favor.

### **III. ARPA Administrative Requirements**

M. Laflamme reported that the ARPA website and email was up and running. She would begin to monitor activity on the site but that we had received a number of emails, predominately from businesses inquiring about funding.

M. Laflamme reviewed the funded projects and reported that a few projects including Municipal Revenue and VOC's Center St were completed and that all other projects has been initiated.

### **IV. Non- Profit Program**

K. Lingenberg thank members who had sent in comments on the Impacted Non-Profit program and stated that she hoped she had caught all the comments within the draft program and application. She overviewed the program that in keeping with the initial recommendation would have a starting ARPA allocation of \$250,000 with individual awards anticipated to not exceed \$25,000.

Comments on additional changes needed to the certifications to reflect non-profit organizations.

K. Lingenberg stated that while Community Development could certainly receive applications and review for completeness, she hoped a sub-committee could be established to review and make funding recommendations. L. Sanders and M. Pise expressed willingness to serve on Review Sub-Committee; M. Laflamme stated she would assist as an alternate.

## **V. Proposals/ requests**

### **DPW Matching Funds-**

The project was identified as potentially in need of local ARPA as matching funds to a federal earmark. E. Batista reported no update on need for matching funds. Consensus to keep project on agenda pending clarification and funding decision.

L. Batista and the Mayor shared the information on the "Forward Act" which would potentially make available additional resources for infrastructure projects. L. Batista has recently testified as to the City's need; the Mayor has been monitoring the availability of funds, which currently appeared to be \$1.5 billion in bond funds.

### **Bellamy House-**

The project was requested to be discussed by Councilor Tillotson. As he had an excused absence, K. Lingenberg presented the status. She has walked the property with the current Executive Director and discussed federal eligibility for both CDBG and ARPA. A 2020 basic building assessment with a total cost of exceeding \$1.3 million had been included within the packet. K. Lingenberg shared that she had reached out to the firm, Dietz and Co., which had performed that assessment as a courtesy to the City, and had asked for a proposal to conduct a more thorough assessment and detailed current cost estimate. She anticipated that proposal could be as much as \$20,000 and that the overall project cost would likely exceed \$2 million. While CDBG funds had been allocated to undertake the assessment, the anticipated cost would far exceed CDBG ability to fund. There was discussion that a nearby property owner was willing to lead a capital campaign. Acknowledgement that the use of public money to redevelop would require not only a public purpose but also a plan to maintain the property for public use.

## **VI: Funded Project- Status Update**

Summary was included within the Committee's packet. \$22,726,660 of ARPA commitments have 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. K. Lingenberg stated that she would seek to get more detailed updates in future packets.

## **VII: New Business**

### **Economic Development-**

The Mayor reiterated his desire to evaluate the use of ARPA for business assistance. K. Lingenberg reported that she had reached out to an expert in Economic Development with extensive experience in public funding programs and requirements. The result was a proposal from Greylock Management Consultants – a minority and woman owned business, whose owner was formerly with MassDevelopment's Office of Small Business Development at STCC. The scope

of services would include engagement with the Chamber, the Latino Chamber, which had received a \$100,000 earmark for Chicopee, and with the TDI. Each organization would then have an opportunity to sponsor a focus group. Once that input was received, Greylock Management Consultants would present a summary of their findings and programmatic recommendations to the ARPA Committee. K. Lingenberg reported the CBDG funds would be utilized for this first phase as the information gathered would be useful for CBDG Economic Development programming.

### **Other Demands: Infrastructure**

General discussion on the significant need for infrastructure improvements with cost that exceed the full amount of ARPA funding.

### **Non-Profit Program Application process**

Discussion of opportunity to process and review Non-profit applications if the Committee did not meet in July. Decision that the Review Sub-committee could send recommendation to all members electronically for electronic vote, which would be ratified at the August meeting.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 9AM