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[Home](#) > American Rescue Plan (ARP) Committee Meeting Minutes 2/16/2022

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Committee Meeting Minutes 2/16/2022

Meeting date:

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Minutes:

Meeting of the Old Lyme American Rescue Plan (ARP) Committee

Meeting Date: February 16, 2022 @ 12:00

Location: Old Lyme Town Hall – Meeting Hall

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by the Chairman, Tom Gotowka.

Present: Jennifer Datum, Mary Jo Nosal, Dennis Powers, Dave Roberge, Mary Seidner, Martha Shoemaker, Nicole Leger, Cheryl Poirier, Rick Stout, Ross Higgins and Phil Parcak.

Absent: Ed Adanti and Ralph Wood

Guests: Frist Selectman Tim Griswold and Stephanie Gould

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Rick motioned to approve the February 2, 2022 minutes and Mary Jo seconded. The motion was approved. There were no abstentions or nays.

2. **Guests:**

Stephanie Gould, Director of the Senior Center (Mental Health projects at the Senior Center)

Stephanie attended to recommend three programs that would be very beneficial to seniors that have experienced isolation during the pandemic. There is a program that pays for the cost of internet access that includes training. She believes 20 seniors would meet the income eligibility requirement. Stephanie will provide Cheryl more details and an estimated cost. Program two is called PAWS, they match seniors with a cat or dog needing a home and pay all the expenses involved with pet ownership. It is a long term foster care, if the match isn't successful, the pet is returned to the town shelter. Program three entails monthly home visits to isolated seniors that include a special treat i.e., gourmet cupcake. Senior Center volunteers would make the rounds monthly at a cost of \$1,000 a year.

The committee encouraged Stephanie to apply for ARPA funds when the application becomes available.

Frist Selectman Tim Griswold (to provide update on our progress and confirm our thoughts moving forward. Are there pre-existing commitments?)

Tim confirmed the ARPA application request spreadsheet is up to date. He also reported that the town attorney confirmed all ARPA funds disbursement would need a Town Meeting vote. There is a Town Meeting scheduled for February 28, 2022 and again in May.

Tim suggested that the ARPC consider making allocation recommendations at the “bucket level”; e.g., “25 percent of ARPA funds will be reserved for Old Lyme infrastructure projects”. Note that the infrastructure example is presented only to illustrate a hypothetical “bucket”.

Tim introduced John Levy, Captain of the Old Lyme Volunteer Fire Department. John gave an overview of his request to purchase a new heavy duty washer and dryer to clean turn out gear. The new machines would wash and dry 6 sets of turn out gear at a time, drastically reducing the current wash/dry cycle time and putting the department back in compliance. Up to \$24,000 is being requested via the annual budget process or ARPA funds. Nicole Leger thought there may be a third option which is Capital Funds disbursement. She will be emailing the committee when her research is complete.

1. **New Business:** Should we break out a sub-group dedicated to developing the ARPA funds request application? Mary Jo opened with giving examples of high level allocations by categories. There was a lively discussion around how the committee will recommend fund allocation that included the concept of two buckets, Government Services and the six ARPA defined categories. Tom asked whether we would be able to make that recommendation at the town meeting on the 28th; but Dave felt very strongly that it was too early. There was some discussion regarding whether it was possible or prudent to include the requests from LLHD, OLVA, and OLVFD on that agenda.

Mary Jo also shared her favorite sample applications, one very simple and another very detailed.

After some discussion, the committee decided that, in order to move the application process forward in a more expeditious manner, to meet weekly through March of 2022; starting with the next meeting at noon on Wednesday, February 23rd. Jenn will confirm availability of the meeting hall.

1. **Old Business**

Dave Roberge – Update from Sam Gold (RiverCog) on their RFPs and what services will be available to us moving forward).

RiverCog has completed their RFP's, 9 consultants responded. Many towns are confused about the process and RiverCog cannot contract out the applications. The committee decided to seek quotes to assist with creating & reviewing applications, writing a contract, and tracking recipient expenditures. Martha, and Dave will be contacting consultants from various sources for quotes.

Martha Shoemaker — a. Update from discussion with Town Attorney regarding procedures that must be followed when approving the suggested allocated amounts.

First Selectman Griswold confirmed all ARPA funds disbursement would need a Town Meeting vote.

b. Any update yet regarding a legal opinion on storm water mitigation versus flooding? There is no opinion to date, but Martha will be reaching out to Town Counsel and Cheryl will be contacting the CCM for their input. Mary Jo will be forwarding the Treasury Dept. YouTube video link regarding the final rule.

1. **Public Comment:** None

7-Adjournment: a motion to adjourn was made by Phil and seconded by Dave. There was no discussion. The motion passed with all attending in favor. There were no abstentions or nays. The meeting adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne McAuliffe, Clerk

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