

ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2022

In attendance: Chad Whitehead, Adam Kane, David Reynolds, Joe Kasprzak, Patrick Shattuck, Nick Anzalone, Jody Fried, Gillian Sewake, Jenna O'Farrell, Adam Kane,

Open meeting/ Agenda Amendments:

- None

Public Comment:

- None

Update on Final Rule:

- Final rule established an exemption where the town can declare total ARPA award as revenue loss. Funds become surplus funds and can be used for any governmental spending and no longer needs to fall within the previously established spending categories. Opens up flexibility.
- Previously infrastructure was only eligible for water, sewer and broad band, but now could be used for any infrastructure.
- ARPA Funds will be used to cover existing expenses already budgeted for, and the taxes gathered will result in a surplus in the General Fund. General Funds will then be considered local funds and can be used as matching funds in programs that require nonfederal match.

Prioritization Process Discussion:

- Discussion on short term needs, such as emergency funding to assist businesses in need. Suggest that technical assistance for businesses, such as the NCIC technical assistance program be looked at in the long term.
- Micro Business Development Program has funds available for emergency business needs.
- Previous list included short term emergency needs, to include the Cherry Street/Railroad Street Buildings in the amount of \$150,000 and the Main Street Fire Site project in the amount of \$50,000.
- Reviewed the current priority list to identify short term/emergency needs.

Armory Project	Town
Accessory Unit Improvement Grant Program	Town, St J Chamber
Fire Site	Rural Edge
Public Meeting/ AV Improvements at Welcome Center	Town, KATV
LVRT, Riverfront Expansion	Town
Housing Redevelopment- Affordable Housing	Rural Edge
Market Rate/ Workforce Housing	Private Sector, Northern Forest Center

Mental Health Support	NKHS, HEKCA, SASH
Small Business Assistance	RuralEdge, NCIC, St J Chamber
Sidewalk/Pedestrian Infrastructure	Town
Warming Shelter (Feasibility Analysis)	RuralEdge, NEKCA, NKHS, NVRH, Town
Educational Stipends	NVU, CCV, STJA
Housing Vouchers	RuralEdge,
Child Care Subsidies	Privately Owned Daycare Centers
Legion Field Rennovation	St J Baseball
Kiwanis Pool upgrade	Kiwanis
Roads	Town
Water and Sewer Projects	Town
Downtown Beautification	Town, St J Chamber
Bay Street Revitalization	Town, Private property owners
Broadband	CUD
Building Improvements/ Façade Improvement Program	Town, St J Chamber
Tourism Marketing	St J Chamber
Downtown Banners	St J Chamber
Neighborhood Associations	St J Chamber, Hub, CRJC
VITA Tax program	NEKCA
Support of Bicycle Economy	Town, Caledonia Trail Collective
Creative Economy	Catamount Arts
Business Start up	NVDA, NCIC
Meals on Wheels	Meals on Wheels
Creation of Growth Centers and Neighborhood Development Areas	Town, NVDA
Knob, Town Forest Development	Town, St J Rec

- Group discussed \$200,000 of funding for Rural Edge to support redevelopment of Cherry Street and Railroad Street vacant and blighted properties as well as \$50,000 towards the Main Street Fire Site, both of which address priorities within the Town Plan, VRCD Community Visit and leverage approximately \$10M of additional funds.
- Warming Shelter and dealing with Homelessness have also been prioritized in the VRCD document and has immediate impacts on St Johnsbury's downtown.
- Group discussion to identify what emergency needs are and to set up a process to identify emergencies and make a recommendation to the select board to address these items. The group discussed that all requests for the use of ARPA funds should come through the ARPA Committee to prevent requests popping up without Committee involvement.

- Group had consensus that these two projects have immediacy and meet priorities established by the Town Plan and the VRCD Community Visit and felt that they should be treated separately and outside of the new process currently under development and should be presented to the Select Board with recommendations to move forward.

Public Input & Committee Process Discussion

- Next steps to gather public input are to release an RFP for Facilitators.

Meeting adjourned at 4:06 PM