

ARPA Committee Minutes
Tuesday, October 4, 2022
5:30pm via Zoom &
Clifford B. Green Memorial Center

Present: Austin Tanner, Lou Brodeur, Joe Voccio, David Lee, Lyn LaCharite and Sara Deshaies, Recording Secretary
K. Dystra - 5:39pm

Also Present: Sandy Brodeur, Sandra Ahola, Sara Ropee, **Patricia Buell** and other members of the public

1. Call to Order: A. Tanner called the meeting to order at 5:32pm
2. Approve Minutes: 9/6/22: L. Brodeur made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. L. LaCharite seconded. No discussion. Motion passed 5-0-0.
3. Public Comment: S. Ahola, treasurer for the Windham County 4H Foundation, stated that they submitted a request for ARPA funds and wanted to follow up on the status and ask the Committee if they had any questions or needed any additional information. Also, introduced the new Camp director, Sara Ropee. S. Ropee stated the first order of business is repair some damage to the dam which is part of a larger project. The cost is approximately \$150,000 and that the State is considering it an urgent repair. The larger part of the project, to repair the value pipes, etc., is approximately \$1,000,000. If they lose their bond, they also lose significant funding. They are working with all towns within Windham County. A. Tanner thanked them for their input. L. LaCharite asked what effect State funds would have and what the Town would provide. S. Ropee said it would be on top of what the State provides. S. Ahola clarified that there is no commitment from the State. The State in the past has provided grant funds.

S. Brodeur expressed that the ARPA meeting agendas and minutes are difficult to locate. She also said that she doesn't believe most of the Town know that ARPA resides under the Board of Selectmen. A. Tanner will work with M. Bradley to try to make those more visible. Another member of the public suggested making sure it is on the BOS calendar as well.

4. Discussion on HVAC Request: A. Tanner stated that they do not know if ARPA funds can be used for a large portion of the upgrade. He suggested that APRA funds could be used for engineering schematics. **P. Buell** stated that they could use the funds for HVAC project but not for local reimbursement. She stated they are moving forward to develop a committee and submit a grant to the State. If no State approval, school would be liable. Submission is due December 1, 2022. L. Brodeur asked if there was more than one grant cycle. **P. Buell** stated that a second application cycle hasn't been announced, but the fact that it's a program would lend to there being more than one cycle. J. Voccio asked how much time vendors need to prepare proposals. **P. Buell** stated that submissions would be swift. Turnaround would be about a ten day timeline, which is stated on the advertisement. J. Voccio stated that the residents would have to approve of the expenditure and there doesn't seem to be time for that. **P. Buell** stated that submittals are due by the second week of November. A Town meeting could be held immediately after so that the school could meet the State's deadline of December 1, 2022. If they are turned down by the Town or State, the liability is \$150,000 for

schematics and prep work. They are hoping for a vendor that will sign a letter of intent to have all preapproval work folded into the project and not have to pay up front for it. Discussion ongoing.

5. Continue discussion on BEMHS radio request; EBFD SCRA request; Tennis Courts request:
 - a. BEMHS radio request of \$264,845: L. LaCharite made a motion to move forward. L. Brodeur seconded. D. Lee had concerns about the coordination, management, and reporting of the project. L. Brodeur and A. Tanner stated there are processes in place for that. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
 - b. EBFS SCRA request of \$99,239: J. Voccio mentioned that the discussion prior was about vendors, units, and life cycles. J. Voccio made a motion to move forward. L. Brodeur seconded. D. Lee has a concern about alternative funding for this. Also, this will be a continual need every fifteen years or so. J. Voccio stated there is no good way to stagger the replacements. Working closely with the departments may help. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
 - c. Tennis Courts request of \$260,000: A. Tanner states that he believes the request includes lighting. L. Brodeur asked if removal of old courts is part of the proposal. J. Voccio stated there was discussion about repurposing the old asphalt but did not think specific removal was included. J. Voccio made a motion to move forward. L. LaCharite seconded. Discussion took place about whether or not the courts rise to the level of using ARPA funds rather than Capital funds. Also, how dilapidated there are in their current state. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
6. Discussion on Requests: Catch basins, paving, Mortlake ambulance, and Mortlake ladder truck:
 - a. Catch basins request of \$50,000: J. Voccio asked how many are being considered. A. Tanner isn't sure. Additional discussion took place around cost of materials and prioritization. J. Voccio made a motion to move this request forward. L. Brodeur seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
 - b. Paving request of \$1,000,000: J. Voccio made a motion to move this request forward. L. Brodeur seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
 - c. Mortlake ambulance request of \$260,000: Discussion took place about the cost of the ambulance and its upkeep. Also, discussion took place on the need by the Town. L. Brodeur made a motion to move this request forward. J. Voccio seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dykstra did not vote.
 - d. Mortlake ladder truck request of \$1,500,000: J. Voccio made a motion to move this request forward. L. LaCharite seconded. Discussion took place on whether it is appropriate to use ARPA funds instead of Capital funds for this request. Motion passed 4-1-1. D. Lee voted nay, and K. Dykstra did not vote.
7. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Monday, October 24 at 5:30pm.
8. Public Comment:

S. Brodeur stated the catch basins and paving come under **LOICP**.

She also stated that there are projects that some members have more information about than is in the ARPA request. In allowing that for some she feels 4H and Library projects should be able to resubmit their proposals. Discussion took place on the fairness of accepting and declining.

She then requested the proposals being considered should be put on the website for public comment, possibly having physical copies at Town Hall. D. Lee requested that happens after the meeting on October 24th after the Committee has had a chance to narrow the requests to move for a Town vote.

S. Ahola seconded what S. Brodeur had said about meetings not being advertised or meeting information not being easily available. She stated she only found out about this meeting by calling the First Selectman's office to ask.

9. Adjourn: L. LaCharite made a motion to adjourn. L. Brodeur seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1. K. Dystra did not vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Deshaies,
Recording Secretary