

ARPA Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 19, 2023 in the Cavendish Town Office Meeting Room, 6:00 pm

Present: George Timko (Chairman), Wendy Regier, Peter LaBelle, Julia Gignoux, Jennifer Leak, Rick Chambers (Town Manager)

Absent: Betty McEnaney, Stephen Plunkard

1. Call Meeting to Order

George Timko, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

Jen Leak moved/George Timko seconded a motion to approve the minutes of June 20, 2023, as written. All voted in favor.

3. Extending Application Deadline

George suggested that the application deadline be postponed since people had been busy repairing damages from the floods in July. Wendy asked what the deadline for spending the money was. Peter said that the money needs to be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. George suggested adding one month to the application deadline.

The Committee discussed extending the deadline and decided to keep September 30th as the deadline for the first round of applications and to set October 31th as the deadline for the final round of applications.

Peter Labelle moved/Julia Gignoux seconded a motion to publicize a final round of applications to be concluded on October 31st, 2023. All voted in favor.

Peter said that he will put out a press release stating that the Committee is reviewing applications received to date, and that the deadline for the final round is October 31st, 2023.

4. Hear Preliminary Requests for ARPA Funds

George said that Barbara Dickey has submitted an application for converting the Gethsemane Church into a community center but that she had few details on the budget or amount of funds requested. Wendy said that she had spoken with Barbara. Wendy said that the diocese doesn't want to repair the flood damage to the grounds and wants to sell it, but she didn't know the asking price. Wendy said that the insurance will cover the costs to clean the gravel out of the basement but that was all. Jen commented that there were no details on who would run the community center or the operating costs. Wendy said that she thought Barbara hoped the CCCA or another organization already in town might absorb it. Peter commented that it is in a flood zone and will flood again, and a non-profit organization will have an especially difficult time raising funds to repair future damage. He said that he thought a different property with better parking and less prone to flood damage would be a better option for a community center.

George said that Tim Calabrese has submitted an application for the trail project which he had presented to the Committee at the June meeting. He said that they have a well-organized group working on this project. Wendy commented that most of the trails are in Ludlow although they may eventually construct trails which lead into Proctorsville Village. Rick said that the \$1000 they are asking for is to construct a trail kiosk.

Jen said that the Town Clerk is working on an application to digitize the parcel maps and have them available online. Rick said that he is writing an application for the purchase of virtual meeting equipment, including an amplifier system for Town Meeting.

Rick said that he had other Town projects in mind, including a sidewalk study, sewer pump station evaluation, and water meter replacement. Peter mentioned having battery backups for the Town Office phones and computers.

Julia said that the Streetscapes Committee would like to add more benches in town. George asked if they could include bicycle racks in their proposal. Julia said that she thought they could.

5. Other Business/Next Meeting Date

Peter said that three new uses for ARPA funds have been approved: surface transportation, community development, and emergency relief from natural disasters. He said that the July flood damages would qualify under the third usage as long as other funds weren't also covering the same repairs, i.e. FEMA. Rick said that there has been talk about having a watershed wide flood mitigation study, especially looking at the five dams in Ludlow which could impact other towns, which might qualify. Peter asked whether the two dams on Knapp Ponds needed repairs. Rick said that he hadn't looked at them.

George asked if making any changes to the culvert under the railroad tracks behind Singleton's might mitigate the flooding in Proctorsville. Rick said that he and regional planning had a site visit there and felt most of the flood water came from farther upstream.

Wendy asked if the Town needs money for projects that FEMA won't fully cover. Rick said that FEMA is a reimbursement agency and won't commit to any spending until the projects are done, so it's difficult to say.

George said that the next meeting will be October 17th at 6:00 pm. Jen said that as applications are received, she will scan and email them to the Committee.

6. Adjourn

Wendy Regier moved/Pete Labelle seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:02 pm. All voted in favor.

Approved: _____

Date: _____