

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
ARPA COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes
July 21, 2022**

Members Present: Dave Baczewski, Nanette Rogers, Bill Hill, George Lamphere, Bree Drapa, Greg Barrows, Martha Heath

Also Present: Callie Hamdy (Minute Clerk), Lori Johnson, Maura O'Brien, Pat Haller, Amber Haller, Ben Bornstein, Seth Jensen

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Additional application was added as well as administrative items.

MINUTES

Greg Barrows made a motion to approve the May 18, 2022 Minutes as written. Bree Drapa seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

George Lamphere made a motion to approve the June 14, 2022 Minutes as amended. Greg Barrows seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

ADMIN

The next meeting schedule will depend on the arrival of more applications.

REVIEW/APPROVAL DETERMINATION PHASE I APPLICATIONS

Dave explained the Phase I process and how it is a discussion on if the project moves forward to Phase II. It is not a determination if we should we spend ARPA money on a project as that is Phase II. If the application goes to Phase II then the project will be assigned a facilitator from the committee. The facilitator will work with the project owner on Phase II, which will sell the "should we" aspect of the application. The Committee then makes a recommendation to the Selectboard and the Selectboard decides on final funding.

The first ARPA funding Phase I Application was from Lori Johnson which she calls "Risk Mitigation Plan". It is a proposal for an engineering and design study for a septic system/wastewater system for just the town office and the library in case the Community Wastewater System does not go through. The project duration is three to twelve months, and the estimated cost was \$5,000-\$8,000. ARPA funds can be used for this.

George Lamphere recused himself from voting due to his involvement with the Planning Commission. 6-0 approved the application. Bill Hill was appointed as the facilitator.

The second application was also from Lori Johnson and was related to her first application. It breaks down that if the Selectboard decided that they wanted to fund her first project and there was a feasible plan that some funds be ear marked to pay for the project if it were needed. ARPA money can be spend on this.

Bree asked about the timeline for spending the earmarked money as there are so many “ifs” in the request. Because we had taken our ARPA funds from lost revenue we need to be expending this money by December 31 2026. George Lamphere asked on the one year after plan approval part of the application. Is it tied to the plan approval? The Bond vote? State approval? Town Approval? Lori explained it’s tied to the first application. They’d need to have the engineering study approved by the Selectboard and done by the state first. Greg asked if we got the 6-12 months for the first part and a year after that for part 2. Are those hard and fast times? Because this all depends on what’s happening with wastewater. That’s something that should be addressed in Phase II. The cost would be \$50,000-\$70,000.

George Lamphere recused himself from voting due to his involvement with the Planning Commission. 6-0 Approved the application. Bill Hill will be the facilitator.

The third application was for the Town of Westford and applied for by Nanette. The request was to build a new town website that would be more accessible and ADA compliant. Our current website does not currently meet the needs of a modern municipality. Project duration is 6-12 months and would go out to bid. The price range is estimated at \$12,000-\$15,000. ARPA funding could be used for this.

7-0 voted to move forward with the website application. Dave will be the facilitator.

The fourth application was from Melissa Manka on behalf of the Town of Westford and is an engineering design for the town Wastewater System. This is to add to the funding stack for the Wastewater System that’s already being built on. It is a \$300,000 request and would be part of the funding stack voted on by the voters in a bond vote. The project is currently very viable, the funding stack is well within reach for the community, and they feel it would be an excellent use of ARPA dollars to put towards the project. If this makes it through Phase II and is approved by the Selectboard it does not preclude or replace the Planning Commission’s intent to pursue a bond vote. The Wastewater Project is big enough that the Planning Commission would recommend the Community still vote on whether to move forward or not. ARPA dollars could be used on this.

George Lamphere recused himself. The committee voted 6-0 to move the project forward. The project facilitator will be George Lamphere.

The fifth application was submitted by George Lamphere via Selectboard request. This is a project towards planning a new and/or renovated town office. The application is to contract for a service that could give a feasibility study on the building of a new building or renovation of the current building. The Planning Commission had requested a three person board be appointed to help facilitate the project. The estimated cost is \$10,000 - \$12,000 for sketches or \$20,000 for renderings or \$30,000 - \$40,000 for bond bank documentation. Nanette and Martha volunteered to be the Phase II sponsors. Dave recommended that if it goes to Phase II that the number of facilitators be increased. ARPA money can be used on this.

Nanette recused herself. 6-0 voted to move the project forward. Martha and Nanette will be the facilitators.

The sixth application was from the Westford Common Hall. The sponsor is the Westford Common Hall Board of Directors with Amber Haller as the contact. The project includes critical upgrades to the Westford Common Hall building that will allow it to continue as an assembly building for the community. Sustainable upgrades include heat pumps, solar panels, and switch from fossil fuels, video conferencing capability. \$130,000 is the cost. It would be 24 months from project start to completion. Most of the work would be completed in 2023 however the heat pumps lead-time is close to a year for ordering for the type they will need. This is something we can spend ARPA dollars on as the Westford Common Hall is a non-profit organization and is no longer a religious institution.

7-0 voted to move the project forward. Dave will be the facilitator.

The seventh application was from the Library, which is a request for gutters and gutter covers for the Library building. The sponsor is Pat Hechmer from the Library Trustees Board. It is only on the long sides of the building and the downspouts would be on the back of the building and match the fascia. The request and quote are for commercial grade gutters. ARPA money can be used on this project.

7-0 voted to move the project forward. Bree will be the facilitator.

The eighth application was also from the Library. This is for the installation of fire and personnel safety system that will provide alerts. The building does not currently have the infrastructure of such. The library serves as a community hub and is often staffed during the evening by one person. This would give an alert in case of fire or personnel emergency. \$6,300 was the request. Bree explained that the Westford Fire Chief recommended that the library get this system. There were also some grant opportunities the library could go after.

6-0 voted to move the project forward (Martha had to leave meeting) Bree will be the facilitator.

The ninth application was from Ben Bornstein and is for the Town at Large and future health and safety of the town. Project duration is 4-6 months. Estimated costs is \$4,000-\$6,000 and would be to organize a training schedule for high school students from Westford to get EMT/EMS training. The goal would be to engage high school aged teens with training to aid and help in emergencies. We can spend ARPA dollars on this.

6-0 voted to move the project forward. Greg will be the facilitator.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.