



City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES 5/16/2023

Attendance:

J. Vieau, G. Balakier, Liz Batista, K. Donahue, S. Kulig, M. Laflamme, K. Lingenberg, M. Pise, S. Riley, L. Sanders,

Excused: J. Tillotson

I. Mayors Update

The Mayor stated that he had attended a Mayor's Association conference where concerns regarding an anticipated "claw back" of ARPA funds were a consistent topic. Even though the regulations speak to 12.31.2024 as the commitment deadline and 12.31.2026 as the expenditure deadline, there is concern that the federal government will sweep accounts prior to those dates.

The Mayor asked Chief of Staff Mike Pise to speak to the other ARPA issues. M. Pise stated that the Office is regularly contacted by persons who read of Springfield's direct assistance funds and want to know how to apply. As Chicopee has committed funded to eligible projects that benefit the majority of residents, there is not a direct assistance program.

II. Minutes Approval

Motion by L. Sanders, 2nd by K. Lingenberg to accept the minutes as presented in the meeting packet. All in favor.

III. ARPA Administration

M. Laflamme reported that the ARPA quarterly report for 3.30.23 was not able to be submitted due to challenges with the online reporting system. A detailed request for technical assistance has been submitted and we are awaiting a response.

M. Laflamme also reported that updated spreadsheet reports of project status had been included within the Board packets.

IV. Projects/Proposals

South Fairview Projects - Request within the packet from DPW for funding. After some discussion, it was determined that DPW was requesting funding for two distinct projects. The

first was a request to increase the amount awarded to the South Fairview Sewer Project. The project had been awarded \$5,000,000 in ARPA funds but the final bid amounts had come in significantly over budget. The project now faced a \$3,486,848 shortfall. Motion by K. Lingenberg, 2nd by L. Sanders to allocate \$3,486,848 in additional funds to the project. All in favor.

The second project was a new request for funding for the South Fairview Water Project. The project had also been bid and had a shortfall of \$1,463,430. Motion by L. Sanders, 2nd by S. Riley. All in favor.

Delta Park Infrastructure- K. Lingenberg explained that although the Planning Department had submitted the funding request, she has spoken to the Department Director who had agreed to have the proposal tabled while an assessment of ARPA fund's availability was undertaken.

Library Outdoor Improvements- K. Lingenberg shared that this project was eligible under the CDBG program so if there was no objection, we could shift the request to Community Development to fund the project. No objection was raised.

Southwick St School Redevelopment- K. Lingenberg presented that the sale and redevelopment of the former Belcher School was delayed due to a \$650,000 shortfall. The shortfall was created by the need to incorporate new energy code. K. Lingenberg advocated for ARPA funding as a loan to the project that would enable the Valley Opportunity Council to move forward, would result in the City receiving sales proceeds, and put a property on the tax rolls. Motion by M. Laflamme, 2nd by K. Donahue. All in favor.

V. Prior Proposal Update

Bellamy House- K. Lingenberg reported that testing both structural and environmental had been completed and the needed improvements were significant. She had spoken with Bellamy House leadership regarding the need to create a redevelopment plan and budget but for now the project was not ready to proceed.

VI. New Business

Project Status- S. Riley questioned the status of research on the utilization of ARPA funds as match for the Nitrogen Removal Project. M. Pise had shared guidance that the project could not use ARPA for match. E. Batista stated that her department was still researching and would have a definitive response shortly. S. Riley requested a written determination of eligibility.

K. Lingenberg suggest that before the next meeting an evaluation of each project's spending be undertaken. The goal would be to determine if some projects didn't need the full funding allocation.

VII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 9AM