



# City of Chicopee, Massachusetts

## ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES 2/22/22

### **Attendance:**

J. Vieau, M. Pise, S. Riley, J. Tillotson, G. Balakier, K. Lingenberg, L. Sanders, S. Kulig, E. Batista

**Excused:** M. Laflamme, K. Donahue

**Guest:** Chicopee Fire Department Rep.

### **I. Mayors Update:**

The Mayor shared his interest in evaluating a Business Assistance program as he was receiving inquiries based upon Springfield's promotional material. Mayor expressed concern that community might not fully understand that ARPA was tied to COVID impact and that people were unaware that Chicopee had assisted over 70 businesses with our CDBG-CV funding.

Mayor stated that the \$10,000,000 had move to the City's General Fund and without the constraints of the ARPA- Essential Worker Bonus regulations he was exploring Employee Retention bonuses. Discussion on various options and impacted employees.

Sharyn reminded the Committee that the City had only received its first allocation of \$14,000,000 and could not commit more than that amount. She was tracking the funds.

### **II. Minutes Approval**

Motion by J. Tillotson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by G. Balakier to accept the minutes as presented in the meeting packet. All in favor.

### **III. Proposals/ requests:**

- a. **Fire Department Staffing 3<sup>rd</sup> shift:** Mayor reminded members that he would keep this as a placeholder during the pilot project's 6 month of operations.
- b. **Economic Development:** K. Lingenberg shared that she had included ARPA guidance and Economic Development information in the packets. Discussion on interest in assisting business to respond to a post-pandemic reality. Kathleen shared that there were some interesting programs that provided for machinery and equipment that increased efficiencies. Discussion focused on programs that supported new operational models rather than operating support.
- c. **Workforce Development:** K. Lingenberg repeated that like Economic Development, she had included ARPA eligibility material in the packets. Per the Committee's earlier request, she had obtained information on VOC's Holyoke program. From discussion, Kathleen said it was clear that there were ample training opportunities but that young adults and underemployed persons might need assistance and ongoing support to complete. Liz shared that mirrored her experience where STCC had a program but it was under-enrolled despite immediate employment opportunities. Discussion on how to assist Chicopee residents and Chicopee businesses. Agreement that more research was needed.
- d. **Assistance to Non-Profits/Non-Profit Facilities:** K. Lingenberg reported that she had followed up with the non-profits that had sought ARPA funding. Specifically,

- i. Polish Center: K. Lingenberg stated that their request had documented lost revenue of \$42,000. Discussion specific to capping lost revenue at \$25,000. Agreement that in fairness to all non-profits, an ARPA compliant program and application should be created.
- ii. Bellamy House: K. Lingenberg shared she had a detailed rehab budget of \$1.2 million and was now concern regarding the structural integrity of the building and roof. While the project was eligible for CDBG, she was not confident that CDBG alone could fund the project due to cost but without programming she was not sure how it could be ARPA eligible. Kathleen was awaiting the CDBG application and would keep the Committee updated.
- iii. Lorraine's Soup Kitchen: Kathleen had pulled Lorraine's submissions during the Community Input process. Lorraine's had requested funding for a truck/mobile pantry operation. New reports indicate that was already funded privately. The second request was for improvement to the Soup Kitchen- commercial freezer, dishwasher, and tables. Kathleen had follow-up with Lorraine's Executive Director and request that they submit a CBDG application. Kathleen will update committee upon receipt of that application.

Further discussion of need to create a process for non-profits seeking assistance. Kathleen shared that CDBG had been funding Non-profit capital improvement for the past 3-4 years and with the Mayor's blessing intended to continue that program but agreed that there should be a path for Non-profits to access ARPA funding.

#### **IV: Projects Under Consideration:**

- a. **South Fairview Sewer Separation:** Liz presented her department's request for \$5,000,000 to support the expanded scope of the project. Material had been included within the packet. Kathleen shared that the project narrative included the ARPA Safe Harbor details. Motion by J. Tillotson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by G. Balakier to recommend funding of \$5,000,000. All in favor.
- b. **Boys and Girls Club Site and Infrastructure Improvements:** K. Lingenberg shared that the project was indeed more in line with Liz's expectations at \$500,000. Material included within packet. Motion by Mayor, 2<sup>nd</sup> by J. Tillotson to recommend funding of \$500,000. All in favor.
- c. **Chicopee Library Redevelopment:** K. Lingenberg reported the preliminary architectural were within the packet but warned the committee that the likely rehab number was 3-3.5 million. She had begun to determine services that could be provided there – in addition the Center Fresh- as the project would only be ARPA eligible under "Equity focused Services"

#### **V: Funded Project- Status Update**

Summary was submitted in packet. Kathleen also shared that a draft of the Elderly Homeowner Resiliency program was included.

**Next Meeting:** March 22, 2022 at 9AM

#### **Action Items:**

- Research ARPA Workforce programs ( kl)
- Research ARPA Business Assistance Program
- Design Nonprofit program and application
- Determine appx date of next ARPA receipt