

**Town of Richmond ARPA Committee
Minutes for the meeting of May 11, 2022**

Members Present: Rebecca Starks, Jeff Forward, Connie Bona, Molly Dugan, Sacha Mailloux,

Members Absent: Josh Arneson, Jay Furr, Linda Donovan, Ellen Kane

Others Present: Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager, Kendall Chamberlin Water and Wastewater Superintendent,

Call or Order: 4:00pm

Welcome by Forward

Public Comment: None

Additions or Deletions to Agenda: None

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Review Draft of Survey

Forward: Some of these options might be difficult to implement. A lot of government programs are going away, and some people might need some immediate relief. I think we should take this in two different steps. One for relief and one for legacy. I feel that legacy projects might be capital projects like the Town Center or something people could touch or see. Our property tax receipts have been okay over many years.

Dugan: Those are probably property owners. I am more worried about renters and the lack of renters.

Bona: Is it possible to do two rounds of a survey. Can we determine if that need is out there?

Mailloux: Some people may need more immediate relief. How do we split up that money and qualify those people?

Starks: I feel like the survey asked some of those questions. I feel like we need to hear from the community. We should be getting community feedback before we split things half and half.

Dugan: I feel the same way. I thought the survey was a good way to ask people what they need.

Starks: I think we can use question 1 in the survey. We should verify the percentage of people who rent in Richmond.

Mailloux: Can't we lure more to answer if we do a one-page info graphic that gets people to fill out survey?

Bona: A survey should be in the 10-minute range, and this is really close.

Starks: I think if we took out some of the examples it would read quicker.

Dugan: I think we can shorten to a few examples that are most obvious. We don't know what we want to do with the money until we implement a survey.

Forward: Can we ask, "do you have any medical bills you haven't been able to pay?" I think we can ask how you are hurting so we can help provide resources. I would hate to have a million dollars in the bank if people are hurting

Dugan: Or unable to pay the rent.

Mailloux: We can set criteria to establish those grant options.

Bona: We can add Yes or No questions about the state of their bills, rent, utilities, health, etc.

Forward: We can ask the Selectboard to support 25 people by putting aside a portion of our ARPA money to support people who need help with their bills.

Bona: We may be able to piggyback off of the Salvation Army or other organizations. Can we assist those other organizations?

Dugan: You can transfer money to an organization that provides those out-reach programs.

Mailloux: Can we set a date to disperse those funds so we can work back from that?

Forward: We could talk to the Food Shelf, the Pastors, Our Community Cares Camp and take it to the Selectboard quicker. I think we could talk to those people. I think we should meet more than once a month. We could do informal out-reach quickly.

Bona: I think we should be doing things consistently and I worry about making judgement calls. These are all great ideas; I just think there is a reason for the survey.

Dugan: The survey provides the whole town an opportunity to weigh in.

Mailloux: How about we prioritize dates for when we will compile the data for the survey so we can make a decision. We have a lot of great ideas but not on a timeline. I can build a calendar in Google docs to help assign tasks and timelines.

Starks: I think we need to give people two weeks to fill out the survey

Mailloux: I will work on an info graphic.

Starks: I can help edit the survey. I think we wanted to get a general sense of the Town and then reach out to different groups.

Forward: I suggest we meet more frequently if we want to get money out quickly. Can we meet the week of the 23rd?

Dugan: I support meeting frequently.

Mailloux: I can have the calendar and info graphic done and share it with the group to review.

Forward: Does Wednesday May 25th work?

Bona: I can do Wednesday the 25th but until the Audit season is over in September, I will have a hard time making extra meetings.

Discuss/review statistics – moved to May 25th meeting

Discussion of groups to reach out to for feedback – moved to May 25th meeting

Adjourn at 5:00 pm