

**Town of Richmond ARPA Committee
Minutes for the meeting of April 13, 2022
Town Center Meeting Room and via Zoom**

Members Present: Josh Arneson, Rebecca Starks, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, Connie Bona, Molly Dugan, Sacha Mailloux, Linda Donovan

Members Absent: Ellen Kane,

Others Present: Kendall Chamberlin Water and Wastewater Superintendent,

Call or Order: 5:00pm

Welcome by Furr.

Welcome new committee member Sacha Mailloux

Furr: Welcome to Sacha.

Mailloux: Moved to Richmond about two years ago with my family. Want to start giving back to the community. We really love Richmond. Spend time in the military and went to school at Champlain College with a graduate certificate in healthcare administration.

Furr: A reminder that if you want to stay on the Committee you need to reapply.

Update on filing for the Lost Revenue Standard Allowance and review of the APRA portal

Furr: We have to claim the lost revenue standard allowance by April 30 if we want to use this. The Selectboard approved this. We have claimed the lost revenue allowance. We are still going to follow the guidance for spending as if we did not claim the revenue option but claiming it as lost revenue does reduce the reporting requirements.

Arneson shared his screen and showed the group the ARPA Portal.

Review next draft of survey and discussion of groups to reach out to for feedback

Starks: Shared an updated draft of the survey.

Mailloux: Can I look at this in more detail?

Starks: If it is hard to read I can just present a clean version without the tracked changes.

Furr: I like what I'm seeing so far on the survey.

Bona: Can we provide an option to have people pick between different options?

Starks: We have lost something by not allowing people to weight their preferences between all the options.

Dugan: I think we can infer that information from the survey as it is presented and reach out to the community if we needed more clarification.

Mailloux: I understand that this does allow for people to provide input on what is important to them.

Starks: We could ask people to rank the options, but we also want to make it easy to fill out.

Dugan: I agree.

Bona: In the last training I learned that we don't have to get any public input. But I am glad that we are getting the input.

Donovan: You would have a lot of negative public comment if you didn't get feedback.

Forward: I think we should have public hearings, especially at the Riverview Commons.

Furr: We had talked about focus groups.

Dugan: I think the results of the survey will be helpful to provide to the focus groups.

Mailloux: Who is the survey going out to?

Starks: Everybody.

Mailloux: We could start a public forum by sharing the results of the survey to get feedback.

Donovan: It seems to be hard to reach more people in Richmond and people don't take advantage of the opportunity to attend these types of forums.

Forward: One of the items I have been thinking is to start sketching out a timeline. I see it as relief and legacy projects, and I think going directly to parts of the community which has been directly impacted by COVID would be helpful to get feedback on the relief option for this money.

Donovan: I have had a public meeting at Riverview Common. You get very few people initially but you do get some more people over time, so it would take more than one gathering to get more people to share opinions.

Furr: We should have a tent or booth at the July 4th celebration and at the Farmers Market.

Dugan: We should also get feedback from older groups.

Arneson: The Senior Center would be a good group to reach out to.

Donovan: Our store is the center for Meals On Wheels and there may be a way to work with them to help get the word out.

Discussion on having Mailloux, Furr, and Dugan work with Starks on updating the survey.

Discuss/review statistics

Furr: We have discussed gathering more statistics. The datausa.io site has a lot of detailed information. This site may be helpful when scoring the projects. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/richmond-vt#economy>

Starks: How can we summarize this?

Furr: We can each try to pull out numbers that we each feel are most pertinent to the Town. Please review this and make notes on what you think are the most important numbers.

Forward: Some of these numbers don't look right. It says we only have about 300 people in Richmond.

Furr: That is a good observation. There may be a better site to get numbers from.

Forward: CCRPC has said it is hard to get numbers on just Richmond.

Dugan: I can check the Department of Health to see if they have better statistics.

Forward: I will ask the school district if they have statistics.

Bona: We have to keep in mind that ARPA money is already being used for things outside of Richmond for specific demographic groups. We need to be sure we know which groups are already getting money so we don't overlap

Forward: A lot of Towns wanted to use it for Water and Sewer, but there may be other money coming that can address these issues.

Mailloux shared a link to more data: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Richmond-Vermont.html>

Starks: Schools are getting their own money from ARPA too?

Forward: Yes, they have their own money and it has a different acronym.

Furr: We should see what the school is spending on because we may be able to supplement.

Discussion of return to in person meetings with option to attend virtually

Furr: We can offer a hybrid option for the meetings, or we can stay 100% virtual.

Bona: I am home with COVID right now, so my thoughts on in person meetings are not good. We may want to wait for a while before we jump into public meetings.

Donavan: Virtual is easier for me.

Furr: In person is the only way that some people can attend meetings, so even if just a few of us attend in person it is helpful.

Furr: The sub team will work on the survey. If people would please look at the statistics site that Sacha shared and bring the statistics you feel are most useful. Please think about the groups we should reach out to.

Forward: Maybe we should do something at the school before summer break?

Bona: We should look into programs that care for kids that may need money.

Discussion of how to reach out to Richmond Elementary and Camels Hump and Mount Mansfield United High School.

Donovan: We may want to work with other communities when it comes to the kids.

Forward: Maybe we do a meeting with other towns at the high school.

Mailloux: Have we reached out to the daycare.

Donovan: I spoke with them a couple of weeks ago and they have a big waiting list.