

**Town of Richmond ARPA Committee  
Minutes for the meeting of March 22, 2023**

**Members Present:** Cara LaBounty, Eric Svensson, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, Mary Houle, Molly Dugan, Thomas Lyle

**Members Absent:** Josh Arneson, Rachel Lohia

**Others Present:** Duncan Wardwell (Assistant to the Town Manager)

**Call or Order:** 7:00pm

**Welcome:** Furr

**Public Comment:** None

**Additions or Deletions to Agenda:** None

**Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

**Review minutes of the 2/22/23 meeting**

*Houle moved to approve the 2/22/23 minutes. Seconded by LaBounty.*

*Roll Call Vote: Furr, Forward, Houle, LaBounty, Lyle in favor. Svensson, Dugan abstain. Motion approved.*

**Discussion of request for \$100,000 as matching funds for Bruhn Grant for library repairs**

Furr: An email from Laurie Dana of the Library Trustees said the request was for \$150,000 not \$100,000.

Forward: This is from the Library Trustees. The Bruhn Grant is about historic preservation. These are annual grants and the Library Trustees are applying for work on the exterior which has a lot of deferred maintenance. The Library is asking to put aside funds for a match of grant.

Dugan: The FAQs say that a match is not required although having one strengthens the application. (<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/application-tips-faqs.htm>)

Furr: We should prioritize grant matching when we can.

LaBounty: The Selectboard has made a motion to endorse the Bruhn Grant.

Forward: I do not think we authorized the use of any ARPA funds. If we get the grant, then we still have to vote to accept it. We probably wouldn't hear about getting this grant for months.

*LaBounty moved to recommend to the Selectboard that we approve up to \$150,000 to match the Bruhn Grant. Houle seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote follows discussion*

Furr: If we get this money then we must apply for the Library to be included in the National Historic Register. Any planned changes to the exterior of the building must be approved and conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation and Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings.

Lyle: It seems to me we are getting ahead of ourselves. Why didn't it come to us earlier? Do we line up all the different projects and tabulate all the amount of funds?

Furr: We have not released any money and there is no current urgency. Right now if we show a total of \$792,000 but that does include if get the TAP grant for Bridge St. East Sidewalks. There is nothing more up in the air than sidewalks.

Dugan: I would like to look at the criteria before we vote. There is an urgency for this request. We should look at the ARPA criteria. This was very helpful.

LaBounty: We can make some recommendations and see where they go.

Furr: We would be making a recommendation to the Selectboard. The Selectboard can change its mind. Is this worth it even though we may not get it and we may not know for awhile?

*Roll Call Vote: Roll Call Vote: Dugan, Furr, Forward, Houle, LaBounty, Svensson in favor. Lyle not in favor. Motion approved.*

### **Discussion of digitizing land records**

Furr: This is a discussion point. People have been positive about this topic.

LaBounty: I asked for estimates for digitizing land records and Zoning records. I think we have to table this until we know if Linda was planning on using any Reserves and what different Departments are involved. Are we digitizing land records, assessor's records, and Zoning records?

Forward: The process should be to put together a Request for Proposal. We do you have \$169,000 in Reserves for Land Record Restoration.

Furr: Linda was one of the first to ask for ARPA money.

### **Discussion of Volunteers' Green projects**

LaBounty: The Recreation Committee was presented a different design from a UVM student. The Recreation Committee like the plan but there is mis-communication about how much they could ask for. The Zoning Administrator said they couldn't do anything. I am aware of flood plain regulations and we can do things in the park but it is a process. I am asking if this is a project we would like to be moved forward? It might help alleviate some of the issues on Cochran Rd.

Furr: I am very much behind it.

LaBounty: There are a lot of details with flood mitigation measures.

Houle: Improvements at Volunteers Green are extremely important. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

LaBounty: There will still be a proposal to review with dollar amounts along with changes.

Forward: I would like to see the new proposal. The current one does not really fit our guidelines. A lot of them are consumables.

Furr: There are health and safety benefits of getting people recreating off of Cochran Rd. I think it is a great use of ARPA money.

LaBounty: Public comment will be provided at a Selectboard public meeting. I 100% agree there needs to be public input.

Lyle: I would like to see the proposal, it sounds great. Is there a deadline for proposals so we can make coherent decisions?

LaBounty: I agree but I wonder if any of the projects would be a bond vote?

Forward: The Town Center Committee was hoping a significant chunk of the ARPA money would be available, but we are not prepared to make a request yet.

#### **Discussion of Bridge St. sidewalk request**

Furr: The next Selectboard meeting is going to be seeking input on sidewalks. I think we can discuss this after the Selectboard meeting.

Forward: We will not have answers to any of the engineering questions related to the grant. At the next ARPA meeting, we discuss process questions about when are we going to have a full slate of projects.

#### **Discuss Items for Next Agenda**

- \*Process for Accepting & Reviewing Projects
- \*VG Updated Request
- \*Next meeting on April 12th

#### **Adjourn**

*Forward moved to adjourn. Houle seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Dugan, Furr, Forward, Houle, LaBounty, Lyle, Svensson in favor. Motion approved.*

**Meeting adjourned at: 8:02 pm**