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**By Linda Amerighi at 9:10 am, Oct 12, 2021**

Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee  
October 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes  
Draft until approved at the next regular meeting

A regular meeting of the Sharon ARPA Advisory Committee was held on Zoom at 6:30PM.

Present

Doug Cahill  
Meghan Flanagan  
Donna DiMartino  
Mary O'Reilly  
Barbara Prindle

Gretchen Hachmeister  
Jill Drew  
Carol Flaton  
Tom Casey  
Selectman Dale Jones  
Tom Bartram

1. Call to order at 6:30 pm
2. Approval of the proposed agenda for the 10/6/21 meeting
3. Review and unanimous approval of the 9/20/21 minutes
4. Discussion of proper committee procedure. The group unanimously agreed to voluntarily follow FOIA standards, even though it is not clear that the ARPA Committee (and its subcommittees) need to observe these standards. Carol Flaton said she would be interested in investigating requirements for a committee construct such as ARPA.
5. Status of the ARPA recording secretary/administrator: The position was posted on the Town website and advertised in the Lakeville Journal for 2 weeks. One person applied. The applicant will be interviewed tomorrow at a special Board of Selectmen meeting.
6. Jill Drew reported to the Committee that administrative expenses of up to \$11,236 were approved by the BOS, to be paid for from the town's ARPA allocation.
7. Report of the Survey Subcommittee:
  - Meghan Flanagan guided the group through the mock-up website she developed, showing what has been imbedded and how some of the website functionality is set up;
  - Mary O'Reilly suggested that we consider having certain parts of the website and the applications available in Spanish. Meghan suggested that online translation tools can be used to do that. Jill asked Mary to review printed forms in Spanish for accuracy.
  - Jill reviewed the draft information card to be mailed to all residents (1,611 households, according to the Post Office). The total cost of printing and mailing will be \$825. The group concluded that the card is simple, effective and will be an excellent way to canvass the entire community. After discussion, the card will be revised to note that a community meeting on Dec. 1 be both in-person and on Zoom. Donna DiMartino and Dale Jones both supported the idea of the community meeting with an emphasis on an in-person session with some Zoom capabilities. Doug Cahill offered suggestions for who to contact to get guidance on how an optimal hybrid meeting could be organized. Jill volunteered to research that and will report back at the next regular meeting.

- Turning to the survey, Jill discussed that the subcommittee was focused on making the survey and application very simple with clear questions so that residents would be able to respond easily. There was discussion about how to better distinguish between the information being solicited in the survey and the application. Meghan revised the survey during the meeting to reflect the input. Gretchen Hachmeister noted that the assistance application needed a question about how much funding was being requested. Jill said she would include it in the revision.
  - In order to finalize the survey, application and info card drafts so they would be ready to present to the Board of Selectmen at its next regular meeting on Oct. 12, the Committee agreed to have a special meeting on Friday, Oct. 8 at 4 pm so that, if approved by the BOS, the survey can be sent out in early November, before the holidays. Meghan will finalize the website (including the changes to the survey) for the ARPA Committee to review, approve and propose to the BoS. Meghan asked that Committee members take the survey before the Oct. 8 meeting so there will be data entered that will enable her to show how reports will be generated.
  - Turning to the assistance application, Jill asked if it was the correct procedure to have all applications from individuals and business owners go through the Sharon Social Service Agent, to maintain confidentiality to the extent allowed by U.S. Treasury rules. Donna proposed that there be an ARPA Advisory subcommittee of three who will vet the personal applications on a confidential basis. That subcommittee would evaluate each application using the Treasury interim guidelines for eligibility as a first step to be forwarded to the BoS for final consideration (allocation). Donna, Jill and Tom Bartram agreed to be on the three-person application review subcommittee.
8. The Committee voted unanimously to accept, with regret, the resignation of member Michele Pastre. The Committee thanks Michele for her service and looks forward to hearing her thoughts as a Sharon resident.
  9. There were no members of the public attending for public comment.
  10. In reviewing funding applications, Tom Casey asked whether there would be a way to expedite an approval of urgent needs of ARPA funds. Members of the Committee agreed that if a request has been received, it is urgent, and it clearly fits the Treasury guidelines, the Committee should expedite it to the Board of Selectmen. The Committee agreed that a pending request from the Sharon Fire Department Ambulance Squad to purchase additional PPE (masks, gloves and gowns) could be expedited. Tom said he would inform the Ambulance Squad to finalize its pending application. The Committee agreed to add to the agenda for the Oct. 8 special meeting consideration of that request.
  11. Jill updated the group on what other local towns are doing with ARPA funding.
  12. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Flaton and Jill Drew

