

MINUTES

SHARON ARPA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Hybrid meeting: In person at Town Hall and on Zoom

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm
 - a. The agenda was approved with one change, to move the Town employee application IIIc. to New Business as the application was withdrawn.
 - b. The minutes of Oct. 17 meeting were approved.

- II. Public Comment
 - a. Pamela Peeters asked why she has not heard back on her application. She said she had submitted it via email in January and has not heard from us. We will investigate and will entertain her proposal at our next meeting.

- III. New Applications
 - a. Cody O’Kelly on behalf of Town of Sharon – \$240,000 (or remaining balance of town ARPA funds) to offset cost of Comcast \$1.6 million broadband contract.
(See meeting recording here, TC 4:00 – 29:00) There was much discussion on this application, including the upcoming town meeting Nov. 10 which will determine how the town moves forward. Whether or not all remaining ARPA funds should be allocated to this project, if approved, was weighed and different members had different opinions, though all agreed that if the town approves the Comcast deal, using these ARPA funds for part of that cost would be permissible under the ARPA rules. There was discussion that the Sharon Connect Task Force was planning to apply for state/federal grants and whether committing these town funds now could wait until after it was known whether other grants were available. It was decided to send the application to the Selectman to determine whether it be tabled or acted upon at this time.
 - b. American Legion Hall – \$8,000 for air conditioning unit.
(See meeting recording here, TC 33:30 – 40:00) Bob Loucks was present and apologized that this should have been included in the heating application that the Selectmen approved earlier, as installing the A/C unit at the same time as the heater was more cost-effective. The heater won’t be installed until after the Library moves back to its building. He noted the dwindling number of active veterans and suggested this building might be used by the town as an emergency shelter or place of refuge in the future as it is all on one level and more handicapped accessible than the firehouse. It also has a fully functional kitchen. The group agreed to move this on to the selectman.

- IV. Review Board of Selectmen Actions: Jill noted the \$25,000 allocation for a Comcast contract performance manager will be officially acted upon at the next BOS meeting Nov 9.

V. Administration

- a. Meeting schedule for 2023 – meet once a month on second or third Tuesday at 5pm. The members discussed holding our ARPA meetings next year on the third Tuesday of every month at 5 pm due to the constraints of meeting space at the Town Hall. This would mean the group would meet once a month in 2023, not twice a month. The group agreed to this.

VI. Other new business

- a. Town employee – \$1,500 for one-time payment for working in-person during Covid shutdown

Discussion: ([See meeting recording here, TC 43:55 – 55:50](#)) This application was withdrawn. There was discussion of whether ARPA funds should be used for one-time payments to all town employees who worked regular hours at Town Hall, in-person, keeping the town running in the early months of Covid, when there were no masks, no vaccines, and little understanding of how to protect one's self from getting infected. There was a question of how broadly to apply this criteria. There was a question regarding the volunteer EMT's and would they also be included. The group suggested that an application from the interested parties should be submitted.

- b. 4 new reports have been submitted by those receiving funds. Jill will get them out to the group by the next meeting.
- c. Jill has a self-imposed deadline of Dec. 31 for the federal report on ARPA allocations in 2022 to be submitted. It is not due until later.

VII. Adjourn at 7:25 PM

NEXT MEETING: Monday, Nov. 21, 2022 at 4:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Donna DiMartino