

**Windham ARPA Committee
Meeting Minutes ~ August 17, 2022**

Via Zoom

Bill Dunkel
George Dutton
Cathy Edgerly
David Lewis
Michael Simonds
Jan Wyman
Mary McCoy (Mac), clerk

1. Call to Order

Mac called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM, and Bill started the Zoom recording.

2. Minute Approval

There were no changes to the minutes. Jan moved to accept them, and all agreed.

3. Agenda

There was one change to the agenda. Item #7 will be discussed in two sections – the committee's process, and the buy-in of the town's folks.

4. Public Comments

No one but committee members was present.

5. Committee Oaths

Once the three selectboard members have signed the appointment papers, each committee member needs to go to the Town Office and take their oaths. George will see that he and Michael Pelton sign the papers.

6. Shared Vision

Each of us commented on what we hope to see change in Windham by the end of 2026 when the ARPA funds have been spent. Most named a particular project they hope to see completed, and two named more unity among the town's folks.

7a. Committee's Process

Mac reported that she asked the selectboard for guidance on whether they wanted us to use the funds for immediate needs or focus on longer-range goals, and the selectboard said that was up to the committee to decide. She suggested that we could do both – identify immediate needs for funding and designate an amount for a long-range plan and pursuit of other available grants. Mac also reported that she asked the selectboard to tell us how much of the \$118,000 is already pledged, so we know how much we have to work with. She will work with Kord Scott on this.

In general, the committee members felt that we should identify the immediate needs and set some funds aside to pursue future funding possibilities. Yet, the difficulty of securing appropriate grants was recognized. In terms of the Meeting House, its being on the National Registry of Historic Buildings is a plus and a minus – there are grants for such buildings, but some changes/upgrades are prohibited.

We discussed other possible projects. We won't know how much is needed for AV equipment until we try out the donated equipment Becky Eliastam has arranged. We need to find out how much funding would be needed to connect everyone to DVFiber. David will contact David Cherry to get an estimate. We have to find out how much of the \$118,000 we have to work with. Mac will get that figure from Kathy Scott. We need other cost figures too.

7b. Town Involvement

Cathy commented and others agreed that we don't want to build false expectations. Bill added that we need accurate figures and analysis before involving the town's people for their opinions.

8. New Information on Cost

This was shared as part of the next agenda item.

9. Prioritize Projects

We went through the current list of 16 possible projects and decided if they were an immediate priority or not. Those we designated as immediate are in bold.

1. **Audio-visual Equipment** –the selectboard has already pledged funding for this, and additional equipment, beyond what was donated, may be needed.
2. Beautify Windham – we do not see this as an immediate need for ARPA funds.
3. Bike/Riding/Walking Paths – we do not see this as an immediate need for ARPA funds.
4. **Broadband Lines** –the committee supports this.
5. Elderly Support – we do not see this as an immediate need for ARPA funds.
6. Energy Grants/Loans – this is not a priority as these loans are available thru the CAC.
7. **Fire-fighters' Gear** – the committee supports this.
8. **Grant-writing** – the committee supports this.
9. **Meeting House Renovations** – the committee supports this; a bid has been received of \$27,000 to insulate the main floor, and a second bid is being pursued.
10. Meeting House Event Center – the committee thinks this could happen with the renovations; of lower priority are additional changes that would make the Meeting House more attractive to those who might rent it for events.
11. **Solar Array** – Michael offered more details about the funding for this, which could be received through VT's Act 172. An array on the Town Office roof would pay the electric bill for the Town Office, Meeting House, and Garage, with a third of the generated power left that could be sold as income for the town. The committee supports funding a portion of this if it is required for the 172 grant.
12. Summer Camp – this is not seen as appropriate for ARPA funding.
13. Town Garage – this would use up all the ARPA funds and more, and the committee does not see it as a priority for ARPA funds.
14. **Town Office Building and Equipment** – Some funds are already in the town's budget for this. We have one bid of \$12,000 for the insulation, and a second bid is in the works. George will find out what an air-exchange system would cost. Mac will ask Ellen about the cost for the digital index for the land records, of which \$1200 has been pledged already by the selectboard from the ARPA funds.
15. Town Properties as Affordable Homes – the committee does not see this as an immediate need, as the three properties for sale are not good sites for homes; we support affordable homes as a longer-range goal.

16. Windham Elementary School Capital Fund – this is not seen as appropriate for ARPA funding.

Cathy questioned what grant funding the town has received in the past and will contact Kord and/or Kathy Scott to find out.

10. Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 14 at 5:30 PM by Zoom.

11. Adjournment

Mac moved to adjourn the meeting and all agreed. The Zoom recording was ended and the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy, clerk for the
Selectboard and ARPA Committee
Minutes approved 9/14/22