

Meeting Minutes
Windham ARPA Advisors Committee
By Zoom Only
Wednesday, April 12, 2023

ARPA Committee	Jan Wyman
George Dutton	Mary McCoy (Mac), clerk
Cathy Edgerly Fales	
Michael Simonds	Guest
Tom Widger	Gail Wyman

1. **Call meeting to order** – Mac called the meeting to order and started the recording at 5:35 PM.
2. **Quick check-in** – Those present shared comments on signs of spring they have seen.
3. **Act on the minutes of the past two meetings**
Motion: To approve the minutes from the March 16, 2023 ARPA meeting. Jan moved, Cathy seconded, and all agreed
Motion: To approve the minutes from the April 1, 2023 ARPA meeting. Tom moved, Michael seconded, and all agreed.
4. **Make changes (if any) to the agenda** – There were no changes to the agenda.
5. **Hear public comments on items not on the agenda** – There were no comments.
6. **Comments on the April 1 gathering at the Meeting House** – There were 18 people there and the tours were well presented. Everyone felt good about the meeting. Tom mentioned the plans for town meeting at the Meeting House. He also reported that Imme has the numbers on oil usage at the Meeting House from 2018 to 2022. We're burning about 1000 gallons a year, costing about \$300 a month. In the summer, that is just to maintain hot water.
7. **Explain idea for FAPP Steering Committee for Meeting House** – FAPP stands for Facility Assessment Priority Plan. Cathy explained her idea. She asked that we image a Chinese checker board with various Windham groups as pods on the board. We would ask each pod to select one person to serve on the steering committee to advise Meg Staloff. Meg would then take us through three townwide meetings focused on the Meeting House and how to use funding from various sources to complete the work identified. At the end, we would have a road map with everyone knowing what their responsibilities are. Meg's process would involve all the town folks who want to be involved. Meg envisions that at Town Meeting, we have a board where people can begin to put their ideas for the Meeting House. Mac added that this is a natural outgrowth of ARPA, but will not be overseen by ARPA. There were no questions.
- 8) **Update on report to U.S. Dept of Treasurer due 4/30** – Mac said that the requirements for this are not difficult at this point, and she and Kord will take care of it. She also said that Cathy learned from another town that we can move the ARPA funds into the town's general budget. This would be a one-time move, and it would mean we would have only one more reporting requirement. It is too late to make this move this year, but we can do it next year.

9) Review spreadsheet about possible distribution of ARPA funds and make adjustments –

a. Fire Company – Jan said the Fire Company met, and they cannot apply for any grants until May. Knowing that and the fact that they have applied before unsuccessfully, as well as the fact that they need to move forward with ordering the needed gear, they ask that the ARPA Committee act now to recommend giving the Fire Company the funds they requested. They will apply for other grants when they can. Gail added that Bill Casey has researched grants, but it is taking a while. Gail looked too. Bill hopes to make applications by May. Jan explained that some of the CBA masks are not working as they should be. These need to be replaced as soon as possible. The masks are included in the amount requested for gear.

Motion: To recommend to the selectboard that they approve \$10,000 for Fire Company gear, with the understanding that if they get a grant for this, they will reimburse the town. Tom moved, and Jan seconded. Tom amended his motion to approve to \$10,894, Jan seconded. The motion to recommend \$10,894 for the Fire Company was agreed to by all.

b) Grant writer – Cathy reported on three ways to get grant writing services: (1) The VLCT can help with planning. (2) Grant writers can be provided by the state for towns rated 75 and above, with support given when possible to towns rated 50 and above. Windham is rated 61, but we might be able to increase our rating. Mike McConnell from WRC is looking into this for us. (3) Funds from ARPA can be used to hire someone, like an experienced grant writer from Tunbridge. There is more willingness by the state to fund grant writers, if we partner with another town. We would be smart to begin working with the VLCT, while we explore the other options. There is also possible help from the WRC and the Rural Economic Development Initiatives. Margaret Mazer, a new full-time resident, has also asked to do grant writing, but it doesn't seem that she has the kinds of experience we need.

c) Town Office Equipment – Ellen was not present to provide an update.

d) Audio-visual Equipment – George said the selectboard will determine what is needed when they begin having hybrid meetings. Also, at town meeting, we might be able to better understand the needs. George will talk with Becky Eliastam about this.

e) Solar Array – Michael reported that we received an estimate from Integrated Solar for \$54,000. Southern Vermont Solar's estimate was \$39,000. We need to get one more estimate. Mac said there is still confusion about how much support we can receive from the federal government. Tom asked how much power the array would produce. Michael said it would provide enough power to offset bills for the Town Office, the Meeting House, and the Town Garage. If that is more than the town can use, we can sell the excess to Green Mt. Power.

10) Schedule meeting – We will meet again in a month and move to Tuesday, as that works better for George. May 9 at 5:30 worked for everyone.

11) Adjourn meeting and stop recording

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:10. Michael moved, Tom seconded, and all agreed.

The next ARPA Committee meeting is Tuesday, May 9 at 5:30 PM.

Respectively submitted,
Mary McCoy, ARPA Clerk
Approved 5-9-2023