

## Chester ARPA Committee Minutes for 3/22/22 Special Zoom Meeting

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM

### 2. Seating of Members

Committee members present: Charlene Janacek, Bill Bernhart, Steve Cline, Andrew Gardner, Michael Cressman, Kim Megrath, Jon Joslow, Susan Wright. Mike Jordan joined the meeting later. Ed Meehan and Rick Nygard were also present.

### 3. Audience of Citizens

There was no discussion.

### 4. New Business

#### A. Approval of ARPA Funding Proposal for Police Body & Car Cameras (NTE \$40,750)

- The Police Camera proposals have been approved by BoS and BoF to go to town meeting contingent upon ARPA Committee approval.
- There was discussion about concerns of Committee members regarding the urgent and emergency proposals processed at the March 8 meeting and for the current meeting. One concern was regarding use of ARPA funds versus use of Capital or Surplus to fund these proposals. The Board of Finance position was that ARPA funds had been identified early in the process as a possible source as other towns were using ARPA funds for this same purpose. Capital is not available in the current budget and surplus could be available to the town indefinitely while ARPA funds have a 4 year window for spending. ARPA funds are the preferred source of funding to comply with this government mandate.
- Concern was also expressed that these urgent and emergency proposals did not provide the ARPA Committee with sufficient opportunity to exercise their Process. But it was also noted in prior communications that our Process needed to be more robust, leading to agenda item 4D.
- The BoS and BoF stated that they are not aware of any other emergency or urgent situations on the horizon.
- Mike Jordan expressed concern about the cost of the supporting infrastructure, specifically onsite vs a cloud-based, hosted solution. Charlene Janacek said that other towns that had implemented a cloud-based storage solution were switching back to on-site infrastructure. It was decided to proceed with the current on-site approach.
- Motion to Approve made by Jon Joslow , seconded by Andrew Gardner. Motion was approved with no Nays.

#### B. Approval of ARPA Funding Proposal for Police Camera IT Infrastructure (NTE \$83,000)

- Discussion was covered under the previous agenda item.
- Motion to Approve made by Jon Joslow, seconded by Michael Cressman. Motion was approved with no Nays.

#### C. Develop ARPA Proposal to fund ARPA Committee Administrative Needs

- Bill Bernhart has created a proposal for funding Committee administrative expenses with Communications Plan input from Susan Wright. The following are included in the total NTE \$5,250 for period ending 12/31/24:
- Postcard mailings for 3 town meetings, flyers, and banners (\$2,000). The town will cover postcard mailing for April 7 town meeting.
- Meeting minutes transcription, average \$75 per meeting for 30 regular and special meetings as required (\$2,250).

- Other expenses, if required (\$1,000).
- Any ARPA audit expenses would be covered by the Board of Finance (\$2-3,000?)
- Bill will distribute to the Committee for the 4/12/22 regular meeting.

D. Discuss strategy for processing and approving ARPA funding requests/proposals received by the ARPA Committee to best meet the needs of Chester with available funding. Formation of a subcommittee to develop recommendations to the ARPA Committee.

- A subcommittee was formed to develop recommendations for supplements to our Proposal Process - considering a rough cut assessment of Chester needs, possible estimates of funding percentage allocations to eligible use categories/subcategories, appropriate criteria for evaluating eligibility and comparing proposals should that be necessary.
- Steve Cline and Susan Wright agreed to serve on the subcommittee. Kris Pollack and Allison Abramson were also invited by email and accepted. Kris Pollock will take the lead on organizing the group meetings. It is intended to be a short assignment, with the group reporting their recommendations at the April 12 meeting.
- It was noted by Bill that a proposal was received from the Chester Public Library for creation of a concrete pad for the new outdoor seating area (\$6,000). Funding received through other ARPA channels has covered purchase of the solar powered seating/charging table and umbrella. Installation work will be performed by town personnel. Bill will distribute the proposal for the next meeting on 4/12/22. This is the first new submission from outside of the Committee.

#### 5. Audience of Citizens

Informational Meeting on call items for Town meeting will be by Zoom on March 31 to allow participation. The town meeting will be April 7 in person at the Meetinghouse. The call will include the dredging and 4 ARPA proposals approved to date.

#### 6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.