

Meeting of the Westminster ARPA Committee

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Westminster Institute

Committee Members Present: Paul Banik (chair), Jim Matteau (Village Chair), Chuck Lawrence (Road Foreman) and Pauline O'Brien (Town Clerk)

1. **Call to Order:** The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda** – none
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Minutes from May 24, 2022 meeting were unavailable in printed form. Jim Matteau read the notes from May 24 and would ensure a written published copy would be available for approval at the next meeting.
4. **Communications and Public comments** – none
5. **Unfinished Business:**
 - a. **Public Input** – Paul Banik has been in contact with Donna with Westminster Cares. Pauline O'Brien is going to work on getting information regarding the ARPA committee visible on the website and a written piece regarding a request for public participation and input would be placed into the Westminster Gazette. Mrs. O'Brien suggested printing a postcard to invite public participation to a future ARPA meeting or public forum and discussed possibly holding it at another location depending upon the response to the postcards. A discussion about the information to be included on the postcards concluded that it should contain information about when and where ARPA meetings are held and a brief synopsis of what ARPA is. Mrs. O'Brien thought that the estimated cost for the postcards to be printed and mailed to registered voters in Westminster would be approximately \$1500 at this time. She will try to prepare information regarding the postcards to present at the next selectboard meeting.
 - b. **Project submitted and not yet approved** – Chuck Lawrence stated that the paving of Grout Avenue with as an ARPA project has been put on hold. There are other project that he would like to discuss under new business that may take priority over the paving of Grout Ave.
The Village ARPA funds are being returned to the U.S Treasury as the Village did not have an operating budget or expenses. ARPA funds that are received are based upon 75% of a towns operating budget and the Village has an operating budget of \$0.00. Efforts to dissolve the Village have begun in order to avoid this type of confusion going forward.
 - c. **Committee members or volunteers that could run a zoom meeting or the owl equipment** – It was discussed and decided that the committee is not obligated to provide zoom access at meetings, masks can be worn and there is plenty of spacing within the Institute to accommodate more attendees.
6. **New Business:**
 - a. **New Projects:**

- Mr. Lawrence stated that the bridge over Putney Brook will not be a state funded project and that bridge will need to be repaired or replaced soon. He is just beginning the process of meeting with engineers, contractors and getting information together.
- Should ARPA meetings continue to be held each month? The topic was discussed and it was recommended that a meeting occur in August if postcards, promotional or informational pieces were going to be published between now and the next meeting. At that point the committee would discuss whether or not to meet monthly or wait until there was an ARPA fund request.
- Mr. Lawrence also noted that the salt shed at the Town Garage is currently on land that the State of Vermont owns. He has been in contact with the State of Vermont regarding this issue and how to resolve it and is still awaiting a reply.
- Mr. Matteau suggested using a portion of the ARPA funds to help produce a decent presentation on the proposal to build a new highway garage rather than rehabilitate the existing structure and holding a public discussion regarding the highway garage project.

7. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 17, 2022

8. Adjournment: Paul Banik adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.