

## Meeting of the Westminster ARPA Committee

*Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.*

### Westminster Institute

**Committee Members Present:** Paul Banik (chair), Jim Matteau (Village Chair), Linda Fawcett, Chuck Lawrence (Road Foreman), Katrina Hamilton (clerk), Cole Streeter (fire chief).

Others present: Daniel Hoviss

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:** Jim Matteau made a motion to accept the minutes from September 21, 2022. Chuck Lawrence seconded, passed 4-0 voice vote.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:**
  - a. **Swap Shop at the Rockingham Transfer Station**– Daniel Hoviss provided an update on the status of the Swap Shop proposal. Mr. Hoviss has attended two meetings of the Rockingham Select board and they have since created a task force to further research the feasibility of this project. He provided the committee with updated funding proposals. Mr. Matteau stated that an employee of the Swap Shop would be an employee of Rockingham and that VLCT has confirmed that a town may transfer ARPA funds to another town, however the original recipient town would be responsible if the ARPA funds were misused by the receiving town. Mr. Banik suggested that given the ongoing status of this project that it should be a warned article presented at Town Meeting. Mr. Lawrence suggested that since there are multiple municipalities that are all users of the facility and they all received ARPA funds, such as Saxtons River and Bellows Falls, that they should also be solicited for funding beyond just Westminster and Rockingham. Mr. Matteau also suggested basing funding for the project on a towns per-capita use of the facility. Ms. Hamilton recommended that Mr. Hoviss continue to keep the committee updated on the progress of his project but that a presentation to the Select board would not be possible until Rockingham has approved the re-opening of the Swap Shop since they are the ultimate administrators of the program. Mr. Hoviss was encouraged by the committee to continue moving forward with his project.
5. **Unfinished Business:**
  - a. **Adoption of the Committee Statement:** Paul Banik notified the committee that the Select board had reviewed and approved the ARPA committee statement regarding the mission and the procedure for submitting proposals moving forward.
  - b. **Fund Balance and Expenditures:** Mr. Banik had requested an updated financial statement from Alison Bigwood, interim town manager, if any deposits or withdrawals had been made from the ARPA funds since it was last reviewed. He had not received any correspondence regarding an update on the ARPA funds prior to the meeting.

- c. **Ear Marking Funds:** Mr. Matteau and Mr. Banik had both contacted VLCT regarding ear marking funds for future use in a fund such as the Bridge Fund, specifically not a “rainy day fund”. Neither had received a response from VLCT at the time of this meeting.
- d. **Lighted speed limit signs proposal:** Susan Grabowski, the original proposal submitter, was unable to attend this meeting as well. Mr. Lawrence had contacted the state regarding placing signs along Route 5 and because it is a state road, the town cannot place these signs along Route 5 in the village. He noted that the State of Vermont has a speed limit trailer similar to the one that the Windham County Sherriff’s department uses. It is available for towns to request it for use, is free of charge and the state will be responsible for moving the trailer in and out and setting it up. The recommendation at this time is that the Select board consider this option, see what the response is to the use of this static deterrent before pursuing the purchase of our own static deterrents. He also noted that the lighted speed limit signs that are present at Kurn Hattin are out of order frequently and require a fair amount of maintenance to keep them functioning properly.

**6. New Business:**

**a. New Proposals received from the public:**

- **Hydrotherapy Center** – Mr. Banik presented a proposal submitted by Brian Austin for an indoor pool that did not include specific funding requirements or cost analysis although this project would likely require more funding than what would be available through ARPA. This proposal is also an ongoing / reoccurring expense with significant maintenance and would need to be an article that is warned for Town Meeting. Mr. Matteau made a motion to not recommend this project to the select board. Mr. Lawrence seconded, passed 4-0 voice vote.
- **Let’s Grow! Pollinator Play:** Mr. Banik presented a proposal submitted by Rebecca Saunders for a theater project and play that was written by herself to educate children on the importance of increasing the number of pollinators and native plants in our gardens and public spaces. The intent is to reach as many teachers as possible. Ms. Hamilton felt that this project would be better suited to be proposed to the local school systems citing that there are programs such as E.L.F (Environmental Learning for the Future) programs that are already very active in schools that may have more appropriate resources or suggestions for how to proceed with this project within the school system. She also noted that the Vermont Agency of Agriculture also has Pollinator Programs in place but she did not know specific details about what the programs may entail, whom they are directed at or available funding. Mr. Matteau made a motion to not recommend this proposal to the Select board citing that it would be best directed at the school. Linda Fawcett seconded. Passed 4-0 voice vote.

- 7. Other Business** – Paul Banik notified the committee that he had received an email from a Select board member regarding the actions of the ARPA committee and that he would be

addressing the Select board regarding this email at their next meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2022.

- 8. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 16, 2022
- 9. Adjournment:** Mr. Lawrence made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Linda Fawcett seconded. Paul Banik adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.
- 10. Call to order:** The Chair called the meeting back in order at 7:02 citing a skipped agenda item – Committee Members Report.
- 11. Committee Members Report** – Mr. Banik stated that Pauline O'Brien had stepped down from the ARPA committee via an email received on Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 that was read to the committee. Mrs. O'Brien stated that she would continue to be the contact person for residents to submit proposals and schedule presentations for ARPA committee meetings at this time. Mr. Lawrence made a motion to accept Mrs. O'Brien's resignation, Jim Matteau seconded. Passed 4-0 voice vote.
- 12. Adjournment:** Linda Fawcett made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Lawrence seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:18pm