

**Board of Selectmen
ARPA Subcommittee
Special Meeting
Town Hall/Zoom
February 22, 2022 — 5:00 PM
MINUTES**

Members Present: First Selectman Kevin Cwikla, Selectman Kathleen Smith

Others Present: Robin Chesmer and Mark DeCaprio (Selectmen); Bernard Dennler (Office Manager); Hayley Wagner (Finance Director); Shelly Ashcom (Social Services Administrator); Phil Chester (Town Planner)

1.0 Call to Order

K. Cwikla called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2.0 Discuss and act on Social Services request

S. Ashcom discussed provisions of the American Rescue Plan which address social services needs including assistance to address housing security, food resources, household assistance, senior services including training with technology, and scholarships for children's summer programs. S. Ashcom also noted increasing issues with addiction and mental health in the region.

S. Ashcom said her biggest concern is helping people secure housing. UniteCT is suspended for new applicants. This program had helped several clients during the pandemic. She said assistance could be used for housing rental deposits and/or first and last month's rent. She said many people facing housing insecurity struggle to come up with the upfront costs to pay for a rental. She said some residents who have benefited from UniteCT to get caught up on their rent have had their rent raised significantly. She said she is looking for between \$20,000 to \$25,000.

K. Cwikla asked how these additional programs would be managed. She said they would need to be looked at by a case-by-case basis but the goal of housing assistance is to help people with the ability to continue following through and maintain payments themselves once they receive some initial support.

K. Cwikla asked her to present again at the March 1 Board of Selectmen meeting.

NO ACTION TAKEN

3.0 Discuss and act on Farmers Market request from EDC

P. Chester said because ARPA funds can be used through 2026. This would give five years' total funding coverage. H. Wagner said funds must be obligated before 2024 but can be spent until 2026. K. Smith asked what the plan is going forward once ARPA funds run out. P. Chester said it used to be funded by a grant but the Town is no longer receiving that grant. She said it might make more sense to make sure it gets into the Town budget rather than expending more ARPA funds. K. Cwikla suggested asking the full Board which approach to take.

NO ACTION TAKEN

4.0 Discuss and act on other ARPA priorities

P. Chester presented an additional request for ARPA funding to help build additional affordable senior housing units on Imogene Lane. He thinks they need an additional \$10,000 for putting together an RFP including specs for the potential building. R. Chesmer said he is worried the Town is boxing itself in with specific dimensions for a two-story building. He said a two-story box may not be the thing best suited for life in Lebanon. P. Chester said the proposal can still be amended in line with R. Chesmer's vision, but he said they want to prioritize being able to build enough units to make it desirable for a developer. Additional expenses could include payment for attorneys to review development agreements and potential leases.

P. Chester will get an amended proposal for the next regular Board of Selectmen meeting.

NO ACTION TAKEN

5.0 Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard W. Dennler III
Office Manager to the First Selectman