

**TOWN OF RUTLAND PUBLIC MEETING
ARPA FUNDS DISCUSSION
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
JUNE 29TH, 2020**

Out of an abundance of caution around the covid-19 virus, this meeting was held with a conference line available for anyone to call into.

- Meeting opened at 6:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft and Don Chioffi
- Members of the public present Barbara Pulling, Jim Scholtz, Keith Whitcomb, Mike Rowe, Edwina Austin, Dan and Esther Swett

This meeting was held to allow department head, and public input into projects which could be funded with anticipated funds from ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act).

The amount of money expected is \$430,000 over 2 installments. There is a possibility of additional funds, but it is not known yet if the Town will receive any of that, or when. The funds need to be allocated by December 31st, 2024 and must be spent prior to December 31st, 2026.

Ms. Ashcroft discussed some of the allowable uses, and restrictions placed on the funds.

Ms. Austin discussed the possibility of using a portion of the funds to rehabilitate the meeting room and kitchen space downstairs at Town Hall. This could be used as a single meeting place for Town Seniors to be able to come instead of traveling to various locations.

Mr. Chioffi commented on the ability to use these funds with liberal restrictions and encouraged residents with ideas to bring them up.

Barbara Pulling suggested expanding water and sewer infrastructure to help support development.

Discussed the possibility of using funds to replace tax revenue that was abated as a result of covid. Delinquent Tax Collector Jim Scholtz said he has been working with some residents but does not have any candidates yet.

Discussed the possibility of surveying residents and business owners to see if or what the need is.

Mike Rowe discussed the possibility of expanding broadband infrastructure into Northwood Park to all the public use of Wi-Fi while there and adding it to Dewey Field and possibly the proposed Pocket Park as well. They could be used for hot spots. There is Wi-Fi at Town Hall, but it is not currently available for regular open public use. Discussed adding a way for people using the proposed walking trail to be able to call for help in an emergency, such as a call box or similar device.

6/29/2021

Esther Swett asked about the possibility of using the funds to cover costs of projects completed which could be related. Ms. Ashcroft said this is not allowed under the guidelines. Discussed whether or not this could be used for safety projects, such as adding street lighting.

Discussed establishing a small revolving loan fund or microgrants for residents or town business owners.

Discussed establishing a shelter area, which could be used for a cooling center, the homeless, a storm shelter or other groups which may be in needs. Some of these are already address with our emergency management plan.

Discussed asking the Town Fire Chief and Police Chief if any additional costs have been incurred which may need eligible for reimbursement.

Mr. Chioffi brought up being able to use some of these funds as part of a capital project when looking at a new public safety building.

There will be an additional listening and idea session on July 20th.

Mr. Chioffi would like to include the purchase of air purifiers for Town Hall in these funds.

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Bill Sweet