

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD
APRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Waitsfield Town Office OR Remote via Zoom
Wednesday, September 7th, 2022
5:00 P.M. to 6:15 P.M

Please see note below for access

I. Call to Order: 5:00 P.M.

II. Regular Business.

1. Agenda additions, removals, or adjustments per 1 V.S.A. § 312 (d) (3) (A).
2. Review list of projects submitted through the Town website to date
3. Discuss overall project goals and prioritization
4. Review draft project intake form and discuss process
5. Updates on ARPA project administration
6. Review and approve minutes from August 24, 2022

III. Adjourn.

***PLEASE NOTE: Public access will be via Zoom. To watch and participate, please use the following link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84820601919>

Meeting ID: 848 2060 1919

By phone: 1 (929) 205-6099

ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE

Waitsfield Town Offices • 4144 Main Street • Waitsfield, VT 05673

*ARPA Committee: Charlie Goodman III, Vice Chair * Leo Laferriere * Mac Rood, Chair
Christine Sullivan (SB) * Brian Voigt (PC) * Jordan Gonda (SB alt.) * vacant * vacant*

Town Administrator: Annie Decker-Dell'Isola (802) 496-2218, x5 townadmin@gmavt.net

ARPA Committee Meeting 9/7/22 (includes responses received from Thurs, 9/1/22 through Tues, 9/6/22)

Response #	ARPA Funding Ideas	Category
1	We should use the money for big projects that would otherwise be difficult to fund.	town project leverage
2	Hello, I'm working with Mike Bransfield of Free Wheelin' to put together a proposal for an electric car (waiting for the all wheel drive Subaru) and charging station at Evergreen. We're looking into additional grants and would like to apply for town ARPA funds from the 4 towns that are served by Free Wheelin'.	transportation / energy infrastructure
3	A new Town Website with a Content Management System. More user friendly and easier for a user to navigate to topics. Essex VT has used ARPA monies for a new website created with the goal of better community access and engagement https://www.essexvt.org/ We vendor is https://www.civicplus.com/ . This is the website for Essex Junction https://www.essexjunction.org/ Vendor is https://www.ecopixel.com/ . Both Essex website are more vibrant and warm with interesting graphics and pictures. Waitsfield's website is a drab green throughout. Search capabilities are poor.	town website
4	Mad River Valley has Zero safe road bike riding for senior citizens, young riders & vacationing families. The Mad River Valley has first-class road biking for experienced riders. Ski areas cannot live without Green & Blue trails. We can expand our resort business as well as local exercise opportunities by spending money on safe road biking. Waitsfield to Warren is about 6 miles and not very hilly spending money to widen 100 & add a barrier on at least one side would give a 12-mile ride with a destination. There might be some other less hilly areas that could be made very safe with a barrier on East Warren road. This would make money Long-term.	transportation / biking
5a	Buy additional solar panels for town buildings	energy infrastructure
5b	Anything to reduce overall town budget so taxes can be reduced, if that's even possible	town project leverage / tax reduction
5c	Start affordable housing fund to provide incentive for real estate owners to create housing rather than AirB&Bs that are pricing people out of living here and reducing rental stock.	housing
5d	Buy an automatic camera to catch the [person] with the overly loud motorcycle as he rockets around town every morning and evening during fair weather... Sounds silly, but trust me, he's a local menace.	enforcement
5e	Use funds to help local eateries that are struggling to come back after the pandemic pay their staff a living wage.	workforce assistance
5f	In a similar vein: Use funds to motivate the out-of-state owners of the main shopping center parking lots to actually do a proper repaving of their lots. They are an embarrassment to the area and not good for business.	transportation
6	Build affordable housing!	housing
7	Broadband and cell coverage so there is coverage for everyone. Really holding the area back otherwise. You cant even get reception in most places.	broadband

8	Build affordable housing for locals. We poor people are getting priced-out of living here, and it's causing businesses to close down. Rich people need poor people to do the lay work. You know it's bad when teachers and postal workers cannot find housing. This valley is changing so fast. Airbnb should be banned. Workers need homes.	housing
9a	Please consider ways that ARPA funds can be used to assist sustainable and affordable daycare services and facilities, which are currently and significantly struggling to maintain qualified staffing levels and consistent operations and services for local families. Daycare is critical not only to children's early development, but is also an essential service for parents' ability to keep their jobs/earn an income, contribute to the community, and for families' mental health and well-being.	child care
9b	Please consider ways that ARPA funds can be used or leveraged to support sustainable efforts to promote low- to moderate-income housing, modest and efficient housing, and in-fill development in pedestrian-friendly homes. These options should look at efforts led solely by Waitsfield, and options that can be funded and coordinated by the Valley towns.	housing
9c	Please consider ways that ARPA funds can be used to support centralized wastewater and water utilities in downtown/pedestrian-friendly areas of Waitsfield to allow for sustainable development of housing in these areas.	utility infrastructure / housing
10	The town of Waitsfield ought to have a valley floor public swimming pool. There are so many funds available, including the half a million dollars ARPA has received from the FEDS (tax dollars), that it's time for us to have a public pool, similar to the one in Waterbury, VT, but it ought to be an indoor pool so it can be used year round. We have so many senior citizens in Waitsfield, who, like myself, would benefit from a swimming pool,. Let's do something for the elders in our communities for a change. The youngsters can run, walk, jump, and do all manner of exercises anywhere they live or go -- we older folks cannot do this so much any more and swimming is the best exercise, especially when it's difficult to do a simple thing as walking. And, of course, the pool would be open to the public. I think it's a swell idea. I believe a swimming pool should be a serious consideration for the funding by the committee	public space
11a	Subsidies for resident and business hookup to municipal water system. Need and/or benefits based.	utility infrastructure
11b	If supporting child care facilities, please spread the wealth; there are longer operating and more needy daycares in Waitsfield than NOW.	child care
12	I think you need to identify and tackle the most important problems holding the town back. In my opinion this would be housing costs that prevent people working here and / or being able to afford to live here. Another critical problem is childcare - that is, the lack of affordable childcare so that parents can work. Paying for new facilities or equipment for the town is not where this money should be spent.	town project leverage / housing / child care
13	Big picture projects such as infrastructure to accommodate infill development in Irasville and in the ag res district. Spend money on marketing the hamlet zoning that has been mired for several years since a couple of NIMBYs voiced concerns about having to look at clustered development. Urge planning commissioners to be less territorial.	utility infrastructure / housing / planning

14	I believe that renovation and extension of the Valley Players Theater building meets the above criteria. This old building serves the public in many ways: live plays featuring numerous local actors, directors and other stage related activities, live musical performances, educational and political events, debates, film, dances. With needed improvements and expansion it could be even more integral to valley life e.g. a theater school (possibly connected to local educational offerings), a shelter in the event of a local catastrophe, a meeting hall for innumerable civic gatherings. The range of options for this building would coordinate quite well with many important town functions and needs.	public space
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Waitsfield Municipal ARPA Request Application Form

Project Overview

1. Organization requesting funds: _____
2. Primary applicant/point of contact: _____
3. Applicant phone number: _____
4. Applicant email address: _____
5. Organization mailing address: _____
6. Award amount requested: \$_____
7. Description of project (*a project narrative can be attached to this form if more space is needed*):

Project Funding

1. Total Project Cost: \$_____
2. Percent of project to be funded by ARPA award: _____
3. Have other potential funding sources been identified? (i.e. state funds, grant opportunities, etc.):
 Yes No Not aware of other funding sources
If yes, from where?:_____
4. Has an application been made for other funding?
 Yes No Not aware of other funding sources
If yes, from where?:_____
5. Has additional funding been awarded for the project?
 Yes No Applied but not yet heard back
If yes, from where:_____

The ARPA Committee may ask that a detailed project budget be submitted if additional information is needed.

Project Location

1. Address of project: _____

2. Property owner: _____

3. If different than the entity requesting funding, have you received property owner permission?:

- Yes No The requesting entity owns the property

The ARPA Committee may request that proof that owner permission has been granted.

4. Will local, state, or federal permits be needed to complete the project as proposed? Check all that apply:

VT environmental permits (as determined by the [ANR Permit Navigator](#))

Municipal zoning permit State Building/Fire Permit Other: _____

I'm not aware what other permits may be needed for my project

The ARPA Committee may request additional detail on permits that may be required for a specific project.

Project Administration

1. Proposed project start date: _____

2. Proposed project end date: _____

3. Does the requesting organization have the capacity to manage the project throughout the duration?:

- Yes No Cannot commit at this time

4. What kind of ongoing maintenance will be required upon completion of the initial project?

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 24, 2022

Members Present: Charlie Goodman, Leo Laferriere, Mac Rood, Christine Sullivan, Brian Voigt

Staff Present: Annie Decker-Dell'Isola, Town Administrator

Others Present: None

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola. The meeting was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

II. Regular Business.

1. Agenda additions, removals, or adjustments per 1 V.S.A. § 312 (d) (3) (A)

No modifications were made to the agenda.

2. Introductions and committee goals

Committee members introduced themselves, provided some background information, and explained their interest in helping to determine the best dissemination of Waitsfield's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding award. In general, there was interest expressed in addressing projects that need to be taken care of but that are not customarily included in tax expenditures.

3. Appoint Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary

Annie explained that Jordan Gonda will be serving as the Selectboard alternate, and reminded the group that there are still two positions to be filled.

Mac was elected to the Chairperson position.

Charlie was elected to the Vice Chairperson position.

4. Conflict of Interest Policy and Open Meeting Law review

All of those presently on the Committee either currently serve on local government boards or have done so in the past, and have prior knowledge of these policies and requirements/restrictions. Annie provided a couple of reminders regarding email conversations and interactions when a quorum happens be present at other venues.

5. Review Waitsfield ARPA Advisory Committee Guidelines

Annie reviewed the guidelines for this committee which had been approved by the Selectboard, noting that the charge to the group is to make recommendations to that Board after reaching out to the community and soliciting input regarding potential projects. It was confirmed that the Selectboard will make the final spending decisions, and does not need further approval for the dissemination of these funds.

Dates included in the process include:

- A mid-November goal of providing an initial list of potential projects to the Selectboard; it was discussed that it might be decided to request that this be pushed back due to the later than anticipated onset of this Committee's meetings.
- Funds must be obligated by December 2024.
- Funds must be expended by December 2026.

6. Review summary of Waitsfield ARPA award and process

It was confirmed that the amount provided to Waitsfield through ARPA is approximately \$506,000. Some of these funds have been received; the other portion will be provided to the town at a later date.

Some of the logistics of the award process were outlined.

Christine and Annie explained that the Town had opted for the ‘standard allocation,’ indicating that all projects funded in some way reflect lost revenue and so may be funded as “government services.” While a broad range of focus is allowed, funded projects should demonstrate an intent to provide long-term benefits to the town and its residents.

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns has developed and published guidance for towns regarding how to prioritize suggested projects, including a list of questions to aid in determining whether a given project is a suitable recipient of these funds.

Recipients will be responsible for managing the work that is funded, the Committee will not provide project management. Annie will gather further information regarding the monetary oversight responsibilities that will follow these awards.

It was discussed that some questions should be asked of applicants, including whether there is another source of potential funds (ARPA or other) that should be sought and whether the funds, if provided, would leverage the receipt of additional monies.

7. Discuss project prioritization ideas

The group reviewed a letter from Governor Scott that outlined five categories he saw as state priorities that could be addressed with ARPA funding:

- Housing
- Broadband and wireless
- Climate change mitigation
- Water sewer and wastewater
- Economic development and recovery

Annie had mentioned earlier in the meeting that potential areas for focus might include stormwater work, the digitization of the Town’s land records, and addressing cybersecurity needs.

Leo presented three ideas generated by Conservation Committee conversations: improvement of public access to Wu Ledges, directional and informative signage on hiking trails, and development of a wetlands interpretative handicap-accessible walk in the Big Picture/Lawson’s area.

Charlie brought forward several items, including Joslin Memorial Park improvements, Wait House improvements, signage at either end of Town, cemetery improvements, the Fire Station kitchen, and potentially the Town pond at the Big Picture (although there was some discussion regarding ecological vs aesthetic benefits of the pond’s evolution).

Brian voiced support for land record digitization and online availability as well as recreational opportunities proposed by the Conservation Commission. He also raised the potential to support wastewater infrastructure development and/or water system connections that may result from the current study taking place related to these issues.

Christine mentioned the need for an overhaul of the Town's website as well as cybersecurity needs, pointed out that any Library or Fire Department considerations should include consultation with Fayston, and brought forth the need for generator installation at all Town buildings.

Mac explained that he looks at potential projects in terms of categories, and noted that he would prefer supporting just a few bigger projects rather than multiple smaller ones. He also mentioned wastewater infrastructure as a potential project, along with Mad River Path continuity and support for exploration of solutions to the housing shortage.

It was agreed that projects should be transformative and multi-generational, as this ARPA funding presents a unique opportunity to fund such projects.

8. Discuss public outreach and project intake

During the meeting, there was some mention of further committee discussion prior to reaching out to the community for input; however, Annie presented the one-question survey that Bristol has provided on their website, and committee members appreciated that simplicity and gave Annie the go-ahead to include something similar on Waitsfield's site. It was also agreed to reach out to the Valley Reporter and post information on Front Porch Forum in order to raise public awareness of this undertaking.

There was also agreement on the need for an intake form for specific recommendations for expenditures. Annie will present a draft form at the next meeting.

9. Determine meeting schedule

It was decided to set a regular meeting schedule for 5:00 pm on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, with the intent to meet for about 60 minutes but sometimes more if needed.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary