

MINUTES OF SPECIALLY CALLED BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING TOWN OF WALDEN HELD

NOVEMBER 11, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT:

JOHN BARRY

GABE WHITMER

JON COOK

MIKE LEARY

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE

The meeting was called to Order at 9:30 am at the Town Hall of Walden.

The Committee discussed the receipt of funds from the Federal American Rescue Plan grant. (Grant #2) The Town has received some \$330,000 in Funding from that Federal ~~program~~program (Section 603 of Title VI of the Social Security Act). It is believed that these funds represent the first of two installments, with a second installment in roughly the same amount to be received by the Town in future. Previously the Town received an ARP grant of approximately \$77,000 which was unrestricted. (Grant #1)

The Committee reviewed the pertinent portions of Section 603, and also Interim Final Rule issued by the Department of Treasury which deals with the use of these Funds by State and Local governments under the American Rescue Plan Act (31 CFR Part 35). Amongst the permissible uses of these funds as provided by the Act and the Treasury Department Rule, it appears to the Committee that the funds may be legitimately used for necessary investments in, "water, sewer or broadband infrastructure". It also appears that the Interim Rule promulgated by the US Dept. of Treasury provides, "the Treasury encourages recipients to consider [that] more frequent and extreme weather events combined with construction and development trends have led to increased instances of stormwater runoff, water pollution and flooding".

Against this background the Committee considered the stormwater and flooding problem confronting the Town on Fairmont Road, and also in two or more locations on Wilson Road. Previously, the Town had reserved or earmarked funds from Grant #1 for the remediation of these stormwater/flooding problems on Fairmont. Approximately \$63,000 is remaining of this grant. The estimate of the repair of the two Wilson Culverts is in the approximate amount of \$125,000 but the exact amount will not be known until the projects are submitted for bidding. Believing that the cost of repair and remediation of

stormwater and flooding conditions at those locations would legitimately qualify as a permissible use of these ~~Grant #2 American Rescue Plan Funds~~, the Budget Committee is of the opinion that these funds should be used - by the Town to fund 100% of these expenditures. By using those Federal funds in that way, the ~~\$125,000~~\$63,000 previously reserved for that expense would be "freed up" for use toward other Town expenses.

With those circumstances in mind, the Committee discussed the request of McCoy Farm and Gardens for a \$50,000 donation by the Town to be used by McCoy to repair and refurbish the barn on the grounds of McCoy Farm and Gardens. McCoy had previously presented to the Town a detailed request for those funds which included supporting estimates, description of the work, and photos of the current condition of ~~the barn~~the barn structure. The total cost of these repairs is projected to be slightly more than \$100,000. McCoy represents to the Town that it is confident that it can obtain funds from other sources that will generate enough capital to complete the repairs. Also considered was funding for retirement of long time Town Clerk, Fern Lockhart.

Upon full discussion of these items and ~~circumstances~~, Chairman~~Chairman~~ Barry moved that the Committee recommend to the Town Council as follows:

1. The Town approve a \$50,000 donation to McCoy, to be used by McCoy only for the refurbishing and repair of the barn, with McCoy to furnish an end of project report to the Town documenting the expenditures and that the funds were in fact used for the purpose of repair of the barn and if possible, to support using Grant #2 for the donation if McCoy can provide documentation of lost revenue due to COVID.
2. That the Town Funds that had been previously earmarked for stormwater and flood remediation on Fairmont Grant#1 and Wilson Avenue (approximately \$125,000) of which \$63,000 is remaining be realigned and reallocated and placed appropriately in the general fund to a new budget line item, with \$50,000 thereof being used to fund the \$50,000 donation for the McCoy barn, and that out of the remaining balance of those realigned funds an amount to be set by the Town Council be used for the retirement grant package of Town Clerk, Fern Lockhart. Any remaining portion of Grant #1 be used if necessary to fund any portion of the McCoy donation that would not qualify for funds under Grant #2.
3. That such portion of the approximate \$330,000 Grant#2 received by the Town from the American Rescue Plan be used as necessary to fund the remediation and repair of the flooding and stormwater conditions on Fairmont and Wilson Road.

The Motion was duly seconded, and upon call of the vote, the committee voted ~~unanimously~~unanimously to make

that recommendation to the Town Council. Chairman Barry will present the recommendation to the Town Council at the December 2021 Town Meeting.

The Committee further discussed additional avenues for the use of American Rescue Plan funds that

The Town might receive. Alderwoman McKenzie and Member Jon Cook were of the opinion that in view of the provision in the Act that funds might be ~~legitimantly~~legitimately spent to offset financial losses occasioned to

nonprofit charitable organizations and other qualified community serving institutions due to COVID 19.

Alderwoman McKenzie will contact WRES, Bachman, McCoy, and Waldens' Ridge Civic League advising them of the possibility of such funding, and suggesting that they consider proposals or requests for funding based on financial losses they can document as being due to COVID.

Additionally, the Committee felt it well to explore with a suitable engineering firm the need for additional improvements and/or remediation of other stormwater/flooding prone areas within the town that need attention.

Given that the window for the obligation of these Federal COVID 19 funds appears to be March 3, 2021 to December 31, 2024, the Committee believes the Town should use dispatch in identifying qualifying projects and expending or obligating funds for those projects as soon as possible.

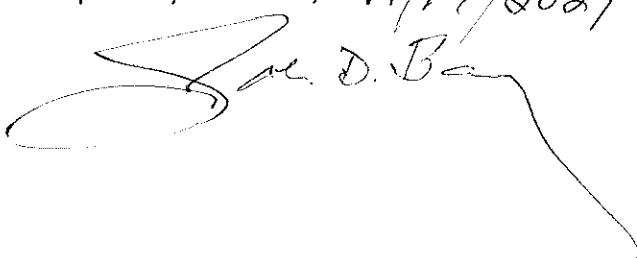
The frequency of Budget Committee Meetings was discussed. The Committee believes that strong ~~Consideration~~Consideration should be given to monthly meetings. To that end, the Committee agreed to meet again

On December 9, 2021 at 9:30 am at Town Hall.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:40 am DECEMBER 11, 2021

Sign in sheet for the November 11, Meeting is attached to these Minutes.

Respectfully Submitted,

11/19/2021


John Barry, Chairman

SIGN IN SHEET

WALDEN BUDGET COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER 11, 2021

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