

**Wallingford ARPA Committee Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**  
**March 21, 2023**

**Committee Members Present:** Anne Awad, Elicia Pinsonault, Bruce Dobbins, Robert Allen, Peg Soule, Jim Bagnall, Grey Wicker

**Others Present:** Chris Hayes (Simon Operation Systems), Terry Crossman (Main Street Café)

Peg called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

**Additions/deletions to agenda:** None

**Approving Minutes from January 17:** Grey made a motion that was seconded by Anne to approve the minutes from January. Motion carried (6-0).

**Public Comment:** Chris Hayes reported that Otter Creek Engineering had completed an evaluation and inspection of the sewer and water facilities and systems. Their report is going to include estimated project costs and will likely promote some projects, but he noted the applicant may choose to pursue different projects for ARPA funding, like equipment that could be shared with South Wallingford and the Highland Water District (operating costs would be the responsibility of whatever district is using the equipment at the time). The original request for ARPA funds was to cover the cost of the evaluation, which has already been paid for.

Chris noted additional equipment that could be funded using ARPA money, including a spare water pump (estimated at \$25,000+), among other things. He also said there could be additional costs if the town formally abandons the old water system that runs along Route 140, or if the town decides to upgrade fire hydrants. He also described challenges with water blowoffs.

Bruce asked if the inspection would take into account and determine if we have lead in the system. Chris notes that the State is looking to fund the identification of lead in water systems and noted areas of town that this would likely impact.

Jim inquired about water supply issues for fire protection, noting Classes 6 and 9 are predicated on working hydrants, available water, etc. He noted if the class rating drops, it could impact residents' homeowner's insurance. Chris isn't personally concerned about fire hydrants and water in that capacity since his work is limited to "drinking" water.

Since the evaluation is complete, the committee noted that ARPA funding could reimburse the town for the cost (approximately \$18,000).

Peg asked about the School Street sidewalk project and if there were opportunities to address blowoff situations for homes in that area concurrent with that project.

Chris's overall recommendation to the committee is to not consider wastewater improvements if the committee decides to recommend funding any projects that come from the evaluation.

Terry Crossman (Main Street Café) is requesting reimbursement for lost income during the pandemic through ARPA. She shared additional information about how she determined the funding amount she is requesting with the committee.

**Select Board Report:** Bruce shared that the select board would like to receive recommendations/updates from the committee in April.

**Municipal Energy Resilience Grants:** Bob noted that Ken may have applied for this grant already, but he was unsure. There are concerns about inflation impacting the reach of this grant money and that the Town may not receive a grant at all. Jim agreed with these concerns.

Bruce will connect with Barbara at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission about the status of the grant program and register for an upcoming meeting to learn more. He will report back to the committee with additional information in the coming weeks.

**Recommendations to Select Board:** Peg noted there is \$586,322 in ARPA funding available. The committee reviewed applications again, creating a preliminary list of recommendations that Peg will put together and share with the select board for review. The committee asked Peg to remind the select board that the purpose of the ARPA committee is to make recommendations for what projects should be funded (not to act as project manager or assume other administrative responsibilities) and that the community understands that these are solely recommendations. The final decision on the approval of projects and funding will be made by the select board.

Bruce called a vote to recommend the committee include Main Street Café's request for funding with the recommendations sent to the select board. The vote passed (5-1).

**Other business:** None

**Agenda Building:** None as we're unsure of the date of our next meeting

**Adjourn:** Bruce made a motion that was seconded by Anne to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Motion Carried (6-0).

**Next Meeting Date:** TBD