



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Office of the Board of Selectmen

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AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) AD HOC COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

HYBRID MEETING

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

5:00 p.m.

Old Saybrook Town Hall – Second-floor Conference Room

To access a recording of this meeting: <https://youtu.be/UQyo2ndS8J4>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by the chair, Mr. Carlson.

Members Present: Bruce Carlson (Chair), Susan Esty (Vice-chair), Maureen Zavatone (Secretary), Kacie Hand and Kristin Roberts (remote).

Members Absent: Judy Sullivan, Brad Thorpe, Elizabeth McEvily

Others Present: Carl Fortuna (arrived 5:24), Ray Allen, Chris Costa, Jennifer Donahue and Terence McGrath.

Remote attendees: Amanda Brouwer, Deborah Shah, Karina Julius, Erin Colwell, Doug McCracken, Nancy Walsh and Mary Ann Iadorola.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. McGrath inquired as to whether the application window is still open. He is considering submitting an application for funding for the infrastructure to provide drinking water to town streets, Driftwood and Beachview.

Ms. Julius and Ms. Colwell both expressed concerns about funding an affordable housing task force, voicing their worries about overdevelopment, developer profit and funding an as yet unformed group.

Mr. McCracken, a Planning Commission member, voiced his support for Mr. McGrath's project, noting that it meets the criteria, involves combating flooding and sea-level rise and ties in with support for the grant match for the Long Island Futures Fund.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 27, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Zavatone made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Esty seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.

IV. GRANT MATCH REQUEST FOR LONG ISLAND FUTURES FUND

Ms. Costa noted that the ARPA Committee supported a grant match for this project last year and the grant was not received. The Land Use Department is resubmitting with a stronger application this year and would like the ARPA Committee to again support them. The grant would be approximately \$350,000 and a 50% match is required this year. An ARPA contribution of \$87,500 is requested, while a second request is being made to the Board of Finance to use town funds of \$87,500 for the other half. Committee members agreed to hear all requests before voting.

V. DISCUSSION ON AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF ALLOCATION OF REMAINING ARPA FUNDS

Mr. Allen presented a list of four projects/partial projects that would cover the \$150,000 proposed allocation for outdoor recreation: work on the Maple Avenue playfield for \$36,000, Kavanaugh Park outfield fence for the baseball field for \$9,795, upgrades to the bathrooms at Clark Community and Kavanaugh Parks for \$14,321.20 and partial funding to continue strategic planning and engineering for Clark Community Park in the amount of \$89,884 (out of \$219,000 estimated expenses). He also voiced Park & Rec's support for the \$100,000 seawall repair allocation as expressed in a separate application.

Mr. Carlson noted that the remaining four town applications meet the early criteria set by the committee, catalyze other development and can potentially leverage other funding. \$1.3 million remains available and since these items were discussed extensively at the February meeting he asked committee members how they would like to proceed. Committee members agreed not to go one by one but some concern was brought up regarding governance of the Heritage Fund, which was proposed as an off-budget account. It was agreed that clarification about the governance should be provided before it is approved even though committee members feel positively about it.

Mr. Carlson noted that a \$100,000 contribution for the library had been discussed but the library has requested \$250,000. Because of the remaining funding, that amount can't be honored at this time. After discussion it was agreed that the committee can reconsider additional funding from ARPA if available later this year.

Ms. Esty made a motion to approve \$500,000 for the affordable housing task force, \$250,000 for the Mariner's Way catalyst project, \$150,000 for recreational projects, \$100,000 for the seawall repairs, \$100,000 for Acton Library's renovation, and \$87,500 for a grant match for the LIFF; the Heritage Fund was set aside for now. Ms. Hand seconded the motion. After discussion, the affordable housing task force was removed from consideration for further clarification.

[At this point in the meeting technical difficulties resulted in a loss of the video feed for remote participants; not knowing exactly when that had occurred, a new motion was made and seconded, see below.]

Mr. Carlson made a motion to approve \$250,000 for the Mariner's Way catalyst project, \$150,000 for recreational projects, \$100,000 for the seawall repairs, \$100,000 for Acton Library's renovation, and \$87,500 for a grant match for the LIFF. Ms. Zavatore seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Carlson made a motion to approve \$500,000 for the affordable housing task force. Ms. Hand seconded the motion and discussion followed. After further discussion where it was explained that this funding could help leverage significant additional funding and/or provide significant assistance to supporting a project that would provide much-needed housing diversity in town, all were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. COMMENTS FROM ARPA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no further comments from committee members.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on April 30, 2024 at 5:00 pm in the Town Hall first-floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Donahue