



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Office of the Board of Selectmen

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475

Telephone (860) 395-3123 • FAX (860) 395-3125

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) AD HOC COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

HYBRID MEETING

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

5:00 p.m.

Old Saybrook Town Hall – First-floor Conference Room

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by the chair, Mr. Carlson.

Members Present: Bruce Carlson (Chair), Susan Esty (Vice-chair), Maureen Zavatone (Secretary), Judy Sullivan, Kacie Hand, Brad Thorpe, Elizabeth McEvily and Kristen Roberts.

Others Present: Carl Fortuna, Chris Costa, Susan Beckman, Jennifer Donahue, Chloe Carlson, Dennis Tulumieri, Jr., Kathleen Connolly, Tony Lyons, Paul Connolly, Sophia Barber.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms. Connolly spoke about including environment as part of infrastructure discussions and how shrubs and trees and gardens contribute to the community. She emphasized plants as part of resiliency planning by acknowledging the positive role of native plants and trees and the negative impact of invasive plants. She suggested a tree inventory, tree committee or planting plan as part of these efforts.

Mr. Tulumieri suggested that Sustainable CT and the Hope Partnership be considered when discussing housing. Specifically Hope Partnership is a nonprofit dedicated to affordable work force housing.

Mr. Lyons, a board member and a founder of Hope Partnership, stated that they were happy to partner with the Town for the 2012 Ferry Crossing project, which is an example of a small-scale affordable housing success. They have recently opened a new mixed-use affordable housing site in Essex. He requested financial support from the Town in any

amount as Hope is primarily a volunteer organization as well as expressing interest in pursuing another project with the Town.

Mr. Connolly noted that he is a member of the Harbor Management Commission and can be a point of contact with the commission for any issues that might relate to its work.

Mr. Carlson gave an overview of the agenda for the evening and noted that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities has a best practices tool kit for handling ARPA funds. He added that any expenditures need to be tied back to the impact of the pandemic, which could be one filter to use when selecting projects. He also noted that harm needs to be quantified. Ms. Hand added that nonprofits can be used to carry out uses. Mr. Fortuna clarified that the Town will categorize all ARPA funding use under “lost revenue” to maximize the broader purpose use of the funding. He also added that perhaps a piece of land could be found to kickstart the housing process and suggested contacting Lynn Stoddard from Sustainable CT.

III. MINUTES

The minutes from the January 25 meeting were reviewed. A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Thorpe and seconded by Ms. Esty to accept the minutes as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. GUEST SPEAKER

Ms. Costa, town planner and zoning enforcement officer, made a presentation on affordable housing in Old Saybrook. She referenced the Affordable Housing Plan that was completed last year and is statutorily required every five years. She gave a brief history of affordable housing support over the years in the OS community, where the Town has been a leader compared to many towns in its peer group. She noted that there are many tools in place to help landlords to offer affordable housing solutions but people need to continue to be educated about them and encouraged to use them. This would include reuse of available housing and mixed-use housing, not just new development. She noted that the best way to accomplish these goals is to partner with others, to consider land acquisition, and to find ways to encourage private developers to up the number of affordable units they offer.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Carlson reviewed an expanded version of the four pillars model that Ms. Roberts had begun at the last meeting. Committee members suggested additions to the lists including grant programs under small business and speakers under infrastructure including the Estuary Transit District, the Estuary and a representative from the elderly housing on Sheffield Street. Committee members agreed that this could be a working document and that speakers, groups, and existing plans within and outside town government should be considered. Committee members should add to the list and report back at the next meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Carlson suggested inviting Heather McNeil and Sue Consoli to speak about mental health and social services needs at the next meeting. Committee members noted that a representative should also be included from the school because of their work with the mental health of students.

VII. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

There were no additional comments from committee members.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thorpe made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 6:05 p.m. Ms. Zavatone seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall first-floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Donahue