

**RTM HHS Committee Meeting
November 3, 2021**

The RTM HHS Committee met at 7:30 pm on November 3, 2021 to consider a request by DHHS to approve an appropriation of \$185,000 from the ARPA CLFRF Grant Income account for "Stop Gap Measures." Committee members present: Jessica Bram (Chair), Chris Tait, Arline Gertzoff, Kristin Schneeman, Jack Klinge. One participant was called away early and the meeting lost its quorum.

Others present: Elaine Daigneault, Director, Westport Department of Health & Human Services.

Daigneault presented the details of DHHS's request from the federal ARPA grant; the Town will receive \$4.2M each over two years and has already received the first installment of that money. DHHS initially requested \$400,000 which was reduced by the Board of Finance (BOF) to \$185,000.

Daigneault detailed the specific requests, including \$15,000 for nursing support for homebound seniors conducted in conjunction with DHHS's meal deliveries to those clients; \$15,000 for other health and safety support for seniors and disabled clients, including emergency services; \$55,000 for mental services for adults and youth; \$75,000 for short-term emergency homeowners and rental assistance. These funds are all meant to provide extra support for needs seen due to and during the pandemic and are not anticipated to be recurring costs in the future.

The Board of Finance chose to table a request for \$25,000 for transportation assistance while discussions begin with Transit Director Peter Gold about how to best complement existing services and maybe pilot some new ideas.

The BOF also chose to table a request for \$150,000 to support a feasibility study of a proposed affordable housing project on West Parish Road with the Housing Authority. DHHS is hosting a public meeting Nov. 15th with Senior Services, P&Z and other relevant agencies to have a public discussion of this project and other affordable housing needs in Westport. A municipal housing plan is due in 2023 around the time our 8-30g moratorium will be ending. The BOF did approve \$25,000 of \$65,000 requested to support a part-time affordable housing administrator; this position is currently funded out of a grant, and the BOF would like to look at whether this should be in the P&Z department's operating budget.

The committee had some discussion of how the RTM's priorities for expenditures of ARPA funds could best be reflected in the decision-making. Jack Klinge mentioned some work by the RTM's Long Range Planning Committee to discuss the Selectmen's proposed projects as well as suggest some potential new additions. He advocated that the LRP Committee as well as the other substantive committees play an active role in advocating for their priorities and not just accept what the Selectmen and BOF hand down.

Chris Tait noted that most of the projects proposed for ARPA funds come from the Town's capital forecast and therefore don't naturally square with the work of DHHS, which is more oriented around service provision and less around capital projects that are "shovel ready." He and other committee members encouraged Daigneault to think broadly about what department priorities could be defined as

“capital projects,” or what priorities might intersect with other departments such as Public Works (e.g. ADA projects), that they might support and that RTM members might advocate for. As an aside, Tait and Daigneault both noted that hiring Town employees has become challenging recently as Westport has fallen behind its competitors in terms of salaries and benefits.

Committee members in attendance did vote unanimously to recommend approval of the \$185,000 request of ARPA funds.

Submitted by:

Kristin Schneeman, District 9
Jessica Bram, HHS Committee Chair

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS (ARPA) 1ST TRANCHE, IMMEDIATE USE REQUEST

PRESENTATION TO THE WESTPORT REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING, NOVEMBER 9, 2021



WESTPORT

CRITERIA FOR USE OF FUNDS



WESTPORT
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- 1st tranche must be underway by 12-31-2024
- 2nd tranche must be underway by 12-31-2026

- Eligible Uses:
 - To respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts
 - To respond to workers performing essential work during COVID-19 by providing premium pay
 - For the provision of government services, to the extent of the reduction in revenue of such recipient due to COVID-19
 - To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

PROJECT IDEAS – 1ST TRANCHE, IMMEDIATE USE



- **Public Health & Human Services:** Stop Gap Measures \$185k **\$285,000**
- **Cybersecurity:** Network protection \$100k

COMING IN DECEMBER (Approved by Board of Finance):

- **Resiliency:** Tree Trimming \$100k
- **Equity:** Bus Shelters \$150k
- **COVID:** Reimbursement to General Fund \$250k

IN PROCESS:

- **Economic Vitality:** Downtown Parker Harding & Jesup Lots Design \$340k
- **Resiliency:** Generator for Gillespie Center \$50k
- **Arts:** Allocation to the Arts \$250k

PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES: STOP GAP MEASURES

Project		Amount
<i>1st Tranche</i>		
Resident Health & Safety	\$15,000 Visiting Nurse and Hospice \$15,000 Senior & Disabled Client Needs	\$ 30,000.00
Mental Health Services for all ages	\$20,000 Positive Directions \$15,000 Liberation Program \$10,000 Prevention Funding \$10,000 Mentor Program	55,000.00
Emergency Homeowners/Renters Assistance Program	\$75,000 Direct Financial Assistance to income eligible residents	75,000.00
Affordable Housing Administrator	\$20,000/yr - 1 years \$5,000 Add'l hours	25,000.00
		\$ 185,000.00

\$185,000



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CYBERSECURITY: NETWORK PROTECTION

\$100,000

		<u>Operating Impact</u>
Network Monitoring	\$ 25,000	Annual Cost going forward.
Active Directory Security and Cloud Security Assessment	20,000	One-time expenditure.
Penetration Testing, External and Internal	35,000	Annual Cost going forward.
Phone System Performance Monitoring	9,600	Annual Cost going forward.
Additional MS Office 365 Licenses; 20 Police Users	5,000	Annual Cost going forward.
Staff Training & Phishing Tests	5,400	Annual Cost going forward.
	\$ 100,000	



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