

State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the twenty third day of May 2022 A.D. the said meeting was called to order by Town Council President Stephen Moffitt, Jr. at 6:30 P.M. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 1 Town House Road, Hopkinton, RI 02833.

PRESENT: Stephen Moffitt, Jr., Sharon Davis, Robert Marvel; Scott Bill Hirst, Michael Geary; Town Manager Brian Rosso; Town Clerk Elizabeth Cook-Martin. Also present: Public Works Director Dave Caswell.

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

The Workshop was called to order with a moment of silent meditation and a salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Councilors Moffitt, Davis, Hirst, Marvel, and Geary all present.

The Town Council began discussions on proposed planned uses by the Town of Hopkinton for the American Rescue Plan Act Funds. A power point video presentation had been prepared by Mr. Rosso and was available for viewing by the public.

The State of Rhode Island received \$536.8 million in local recovery funds and this amount had been split up based on population. Mr. Rosso read through the power point presentation on ARPA Compliance and Guidance.

Cities and towns received funds through three programs:

1. Six largest “metropolitan” cities receive a total of \$272.9M directly from the federal government.
2. The State distributes \$205.8M (county distribution) to all cities and towns (large and small) pro rata based on population.
3. The State distributes \$58.1M to “non-entitlement” (i.e. not metropolitan) cities and towns pro rata based on population.

The initiative is to respond to negative economic impacts and must be designed “to respond to” an economic harm resulting from the pandemic. Ineligible concerns include:

- No extraordinary pension contributions
- No debt service payments

- No rainy-day fund contribution/ Fund Balance
- State is not allowed to put additional restrictions or conditions on the distributed funds.

Eligible activities include:

- Replace public sector revenue loss
- Investments in infrastructure, water, sewer, broadband, low-income housing.
- Address negative economic impacts
- Equity-focused services
- Support public health response.

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

- Focus on equity, infrastructure, housing, tourism, travel, hospitality industries
- Municipality funds flowing through State distributions.
- Municipalities are responsible for meeting compliance requirements and reporting to US Treasury
- Fiscal and Performance quarterly reporting
- Funds obligated on or before December 31, 2024
- Period of Performance ends December 31, 2026

The Town will need to amend the RFP process based on the information provided in a 2,000-page book of compliance documentation.

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

- Treasury's Final Rule details recipients' compliance responsibilities and provides additional information on eligible and restricted uses of SLFRF award funds and reporting requirements.
- Per 2 CRF Part 200 recipients must develop and implement effective internal controls to ensure that funding decisions under the SLFRF award constitute eligible uses of funds.
- The Final Rule states that any NEU that receives a distribution less than \$10M can classify all of their funds under Revenue Replacement.

Mr. Rosso noted that the Town had already completed the first quarterly report. With regard to the Final Rule, he stated this was good news for the Town as distributions of less than \$10 Million can be used as revenue replacement. Initially, it was thought that it had to go towards water, broadband or sewer infrastructure but the Final Rule states it can be utilized differently because the Town's distribution was well under \$10 Million.

Proposed project list:

- Town Manager met with all the Department Heads to discuss the needs of their respective departments.
- After conferring with Department Heads a list of priority projects was established totaling \$3.7M.
- Careful consideration was taken for all requested projects and further discussion took place between the Town Manager and DH’s.
- The total list was revised to include only the highest priority projects that could be completed with the Town’s \$2.4M
- The Proposed Project List will be presented to the Town Council for comments, questions and suggestions.

Mr. Rosso stated the Town would need \$3.7 Million for every project the department heads had come up with, so that initial list was pared down to the \$2.4 Million. It was noted that the Town of Hopkinton had spent \$1.6 M on Capital Improvements over the last seven years, which was an average of \$233,355.00 per year. \$233K represents 0.84% of the Town’s total Operating Budget. The Town has had a very small amount of money to dedicate to improve operations or to invest in capital improvements. He felt Town was fortunate to have been granted this amount and we must be careful on how it is used. The proposed projects for the ARPA funds are listed below:

Town of Hopkinton American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)		
Proposed Project List		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Funding Requested</u>
Town Hall Consolidation	Town-wide	\$ 600,000.00
Rehab or New Construction of Activity Center (Potential 50% Match f/ State)	Town-wide	\$ 500,000.00
New Video Conferencing Equip for Town Hall	Town-wide	\$ 47,968.00
Hire ARPA Consultant and Compliance Firm (iParametrics)	Town-wide	\$ 55,000.00
Tax Collection System Upgrade	Tax Collection	\$ 76,950.00
Accounting System Upgrade	Finance	\$ 6,750.00
Tennis Court Repair and Resurfacing/ New Fencing w Wind Screen/ Walkway	Recreation	\$ 48,864.00
New Basketball Court/ Hoops/ New Fencing w Wind Screen	Recreation	\$ 146,292.00
Removal of Old Playground/ Drainage/ Hydro-Seeding	Recreation	\$ 61,693.00
New Well at Public Works Complex	Public Works	\$ 20,000.00
New Generator for Public Works Complex and Animal Control	Public Works	\$ 77,236.00
3/4 Ton Pickup Truck with Plow	Public Works	\$ 55,000.00
3/4 Ton Pickup Truck with Plow	Public Works	\$ 55,000.00
Large Dump Truck/ Sander and Plow	Public Works	\$ 205,000.00
1 Ton Pickup Truck with Electric Sander	Public Works	\$ 105,000.00
Brush Cutter and Blower	Public Works	\$ 155,000.00
Animal Control Storage Shed	Animal Control	\$ 7,392.00
New Body Armor for Officers (15)- Grant Match	Police	\$ 9,195.00
New Cruiser Computers (3) with Installation	Police	\$ 10,211.00
New Car Radios for Police Cruisers and ACO (8) with Installation	Police	\$ 32,391.24
Portable Radios (2)	Police	\$ 9,270.00
New Server for Town Hall	IT	\$ 15,000.00
New Firewalls (2)	IT	\$ 10,000.00
Emergency Service Contribution (AFD, AAA, HVAC, HVWFD, RCFD)	Non-Profits	\$ 100,000.00
Total Projected Cost		\$ 2,409,212.24
Town of Hopkinton Total ARAP allocation		\$ 2,409,189.05

Councilor Geary noted it was quite a list; he asked if there was any State or Federal Funding

for the purchase of body armor. Mr. Rosso responded there was; this was just the Town's list of priorities. He noted one big concern was with the condition of the Thayer House building that will need to be addressed sooner vs. later. Another important item was that the Town had some funds set aside for Town Hall Expansion. A lot of work has already been done but some additional engineering work will be required and updated figures will be needed, so this project will need to be dusted off and brought current. One of the projects proposed was for new construction for the activity center. This came to fruition because the Governor has placed \$46.6 Million in his budget in ARPA matching funds for activities centers and there will be some training the Town would have to commit to; a 50% match is what is being considered. He noted there were many issues that need to be addressed to improve the buildings, including leaks, leaking windows, etc.; and make the buildings that were grandfathered in, ADA compliant. He stated he felt the first step would be to contract with a consulting firm the cost of which he estimated would be less than 2% of the amount allocated to the Town, to make sure the Town is compliant with the regulations. He stated he supported using a consultant; one firm he identified as a consulting organization was iParametrics. Richmond may use them; Charlestown has committed to using them. Mr. Rosso noted the compliance paperwork is daunting and the Town would want to make sure that we are in compliance; he has already gone through a federal audit which was extensive. Mr. Rosso pointed out that the cost of the Public Works proposed projects were at \$670,000.00 right now; this department still needs more but this is a step in the right direction. Councilor Davis asked about the video conferencing system project. Mr. Rosso responded that this system had already been procured; Signet had installed the system. Council President Moffitt felt discussion on the consultant was the first step. All Councilors felt the same and supported going with a consultant; that it would protect the Town and Mr. Rosso. Council President Moffitt noted with the anticipated work load, we are not staffed to be able to do all the related work involved. Mr. Rosso indicated he would consult with iParametrics. He stated he would do his best to negotiate consultant fees to keep them at a bare minimum. The consultant would help to revamp the RFP process and he read other assistance they would provide from a quote he had: create a compliance and transformative investment program with the ARPA funds; identify and assist with other state and federal opportunities coming up with the American Rescue Funds and the Infrastructure Bill, which Mr. Rosso noted would be helpful with the grants that are coming out that are very nuanced. He noted we have spent a lot of

time on this; meeting weekly with the Planning Office but the grants are hard to track and there are hundreds of them so it would be nice to have some more insight. They would provide support to Town staff for compliance review, coordinate with appropriate legal staff, provide training and resources for best practices and guidance for Town staff, provide regular progress reports and the consultant would provide updates on hours spent and management of hours. Mr. Rosso stated pricing for large pieces of equipment for Public Works were two years out so to get quotes would be difficult which is why there were estimates on the list. Some things may come in a little lower or a little higher.

Councilor Geary asked how many basketball courts there were. Mr. Rosso responded there were two and that they were to be revamped. Additional efforts were being made to obtain grant funding for the drainage issue on the field. The updates for the basketball courts include new hoops; new resurfacing with an elevation adjustments and wind fencing. He explained that one grant was pending and there was another grant opportunity the Town may be eligible to apply for. There would be new tennis court walkways and there may be a fence installed between the tennis court and playground area. They were trying to make Crandall Field a destination. He stated during the next budget cycle there would be funds included in the proposed budget to maintain both the Langworthy Playground and Crandall Field Playground. They were two nice parks and we need to maintain them. The town will need to look to the future and look at future grant opportunities. Councilor Davis liked the list; it covered needs for the whole town; that Public Works has had needs for a long time. Councilor Moffitt felt this money would be well spent and was pleased there was an opportunity to help facilitate this. Councilor Geary felt the estimates were on the high side. Mr. Rosso stated it was their best estimates at this time and they could very well change. He stated the first step would be to address obtaining a consultant by advertising an RFP; once that is done, work on getting the RFP process updated and into compliance with the regulations. Council President Moffitt agreed the consultant should be the priority. Councilor Hirst asked if the Town Council would need to vote on it and was informed that as projects come up, yes the Town Council will have to give its blessing. At this point, Mr. Rosso just needs the Council's okay to solicit the bids. Councilor Hirst noted there seem to be projects that were not being funded. Mr. Rosso noted there was a second workshop with the non-profit agencies and they could speak for themselves to address their requests. They have a total amount they are asking for from

Hopkinton and from Richmond from five different public safety organizations; fire and ambulance. Councilor Davis asked if there were other consulting firms other than iParametrics. Mr. Rosso stated iParametrics was on the State MPA list but he would be soliciting other firms as well. Councilor Marvel asked about the libraries; if there was any need there. He noted that it was a great list but he did not want to leave anyone out. Mr. Rosso was certain they would be at the next workshop. Mr. Rosso needs the Council's blessing to go forward to solicit bids. He would like to get the ball rolling and start ordering the public works equipment which has a two year waiting period. He noted that it may appear that the Police Department was being left out but he explained that there is a Hopkinton Police Officer that works with the FDA on cases; which is a good thing for the town; if there is a settlement, there would be a potential revenue stream resulting from forfeiture for Hopkinton. He explained that forfeiture funds must be used for the police; it cannot supplant the budget; so they have a means and those funds can be utilized for CIP purchases. He wanted to assure everyone that the Police Department was not being snubbed and he had spoken with Chief Palmer.

Councilor Geary supports having a consultant involved. Mr. Rosso will start engaging with consulting firms. Council President Moffitt indicated when he is ready to bring a recommendation to the Town Council, it will be dealt with like any other bid. He hopes that people will understand that there are limitations on spending. Councilor Hirst felt that to be the best way to do it and the best way to let everyone know. The Town Council had no objections to Mr. Rosso's recommendation to begin the process with regard to the consultant.

Public Comment:

Robert Greene of North Road questioned what Town Hall Consolidation was. Mr. Rosso explained that for ten plus years there have been plans to expand the Town Hall. Right now Town Government is decentralized; some buildings were not fully handicap compliant. There has been some engineering work done; including DEM permitting. There is an existing layout and there are blueprints for the project to expand and add on to the existing building. Council President Moffitt explained there is money that has been set aside and saved for it; the ARPA funds will allow the Town to move forward. This project has been on the Town's radar for some time. Mr. Greene asked about the Public Works prioritization and about the Town roads; was more money needed; will public works be short changed; would it be better

to place the funding elsewhere. Councilor Geary asked what the average cost per mile to pave the roads. Mr. Caswell indicated in 2015 the cost was \$120.00 per cubic yard. In 2011 a portion of Fairview Avenue was done and the cost was over \$227,000.00 for just a portion of the road to be paved; the end and the beginning of the road were chip sealed. He hopes there will be funds added to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in the future for chip sealing projects. Council President Moffitt added that there were a few other State roads in Town in need of repair. Mr. Caswell reported that he and Mr. Rosso had met with the RIDOT Director Peter Alviti recently and learned that there was State funding coming in for future road projects in Town. He commented that the ARPA funding is not a cure all for Public Works but it will be a huge help. He stated his department does road maintenance; they are not road builders; they still must cut brush, plow snow, plus a new well is needed at public works. Mr. Rosso added that if the Town used the \$2.4 Million to only pave the roads; it would be gone and did not feel the funds would be used to its fullest potential. He stated bonds were the best way to handle the roads. Councilor Geary asked what the cost would be for a \$5 Million road bond. Mr. Rosso stated he would have to study this; a bond should match the life expectancy of the value of what is being covered; such as a building, a road or roads. Councilor Davis asked what chip seal was. Mr. Caswell explained that it involved leveling a road; then an emulsion truck sprays on a layer of emulsion; then a level course of stone is applied over the top of the emulsion and rolled in.

Marilyn Grant of Spring Street and a member of the Land Trust noted she had tuned in as a citizen and wasn't aware that a list had been drawn up. She felt it would be nice for the Land Trust to have an opportunity for input. They will have an opportunity to do so, a second workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, May 31, 2022 at 6:30 PM.

The workshop was closed at 7:35 P.M.

Elizabeth J. Cook-Martin

Town Clerk