

**ARPA – Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Committee
Town of Hooksett Municipal Building
Council Chambers
Friday, February 18, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lapierre called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Councilor Tim Tsantoulis, Councilor Randell Lapierre

Missing: Councilor David Boutin

Staff & Other Departments: A. Garron, Town Administrator

PROOF OF POSTING

Kathleen Donnelly, Administration Secretary, provided proof of posting.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

OLD BUSINESS

Review of proposed processes for subcommittee recommendations to the full Town Council

Chair Lapierre: At our last meeting, different viewpoints were expressed on the process we should use to evaluate projects suggested for ARPA funding. I asked Councilor Boutin to develop one, and I have developed one as well. Because he is not present, we can now review my suggestion for the process. A good place to start is with a motion in this form: "I move that the subcommittee recommend (name of project) at an estimated cost of (\$\$) to be paid from ARPA funds for the consideration of the Town Council." A second would follow and a vote taken. A majority of two favorable votes would be required, and it would be placed on the next appropriate Town Council agenda under Old Business. The staff report should include an explanation of how the estimated cost was determined and a ranked list of all projects being considered – a running tally. Public input would be accepted. Any subcommittee member, if recognized, could make a motion regarding a project. I would ask the Town Administrator to review the project and advise on its feasibility in terms of its impact on other town projects. We would also like to know what other funding sources might be available to be used instead of ARPA funds or in addition to them.

A. Garron: This is a great idea, leveraging money to make funds go further.

Chair Lapierre: A motion to remove a project at any time would also be in order, understanding that the Town Council could either override our decision to remove a project or remove a project which we have recommended favorably.

T. Tsantoulis: To clarify the process, we are making recommendations to the Council but the Council has the final decision.

Chair Lapierre: Yes. We will develop and maintain a curated list, but what we do is non-binding.

T. Tsantoulis: I expect members of the public will come back and want to discuss projects that we might not endorse. An example is the Farmer Road water project. The cost versus the small number of people who would benefit makes it unfeasible from my point of view.

Chair Lapierre: That is a good example.

A. Garron: I think other options are available for the Farmer Road project. It is not a lost cause, but there are more appropriate ways to get it done.

Chair Lapierre: I am sensitive to the fact that some residents don't have clean water sources. My understanding is that most of the contamination is from naturally occurring uranium.

T. Tsantoulis: This is a good sorting process. I would caution against opening this up to people outside of Administration. We would have to be prepared to be inundated. This is not a lot of money. I suggest we lean heavily on the Town Administrator. He has better knowledge than we do about projects. He can also help us deal with other ideas.

Chair Lapierre: We need to invite all input or else we are making decisions with blinders on.

T. Tsantoulis: I agree, but we need to be prepared.

A. Garron: You will be keeping a running list of what is suggested. Departments and the various committees, boards and commissions could present projects at your meetings, but you would not want to hold public input sessions on Friday mornings. Perhaps you could hold a public session an hour or two prior to a Town Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Review of CIP projects on the March ballot

Chair Lapierre: We do want to hear from the Conservation and Heritage Commissions, as well as from CIP. We should cast a wide net and also make it clear that we are looking for small projects. We would start with town departments, creating a list. I have a list of the Capital Reserve Funds. For our next meeting, I will have the list already created by the Town Council and perhaps the CIP list. If a warrant article fails on March 8th, we might decide it is important to the town and recommend using ARPA funds.

T. Tsantoulis: Sometimes warrant articles pass easily and sometimes they get hammered. It's hard to predict. Full-time kindergarten would cost \$10.00 per month, per household, which isn't a lot, but it may or may not pass.

Chair Lapierre: If the warrant article for the K-9 vehicle fails, do we want to look at funding it via ARPA?

T. Tsantoulis: The K-9 vehicle might not pass because initially, there was to be no cost to the taxpayers.

Chair Lapierre: We might not know until after March 8th about many projects. I suggest that our next meeting be on Friday, March 18th. The Town Administrator can talk with department heads and committee/board, commission chairs about possible projects.

A. Garron: The Parks & Rec Advisory Committee might want to suggest some projects.

Chair Lapierre: I would like to have lighting for the Donati Majors' Field.

Chair Lapierre: Looking at CIP items on the March ballot, for road maintenance, it is \$600,000 per year for five years.

A. Garron: Yes, that is for maintaining our roads in decent condition.

Chair Lapierre: I notice that the data is very linear.

T. Tsantoulis: Road conditions brings up a lot of controversy.

Chair Lapierre: Warrant articles which are not part of CIP include the K-9 vehicle and \$18,600.00 for parks upgrades (Article 20). A lot of the CRF accounts are for vehicle replacement – Police, Fire and DPW. I would remind you that this is the second year in a row that Police has been reduced by one-half, getting one vehicle instead of two. This causes an increase in maintenance costs. Replacing gas vehicles with hybrids helps.

A. Garron: Transitioning to hybrids, the vehicles last longer and are more fuel efficient.

T. Tsantoulis: For the Police, patrol miles won't change from year to year. Engine miles versus engine hours varies greatly. Idling on the battery, not gas, is better, and I support the transition to hybrids. However, we may want to take a hard look at the Tahoe for the K-9 unit. This may be seen as a slap in the face to voters.

Chair Lapierre: Looking at the CIP items that cover vehicle replacement, I see that DPW has ten in the next five years. These vehicles are important for the safety of the town and for services to the town. I also have a couple of suggestions for use of ARPA funds that are not on any list.

T. Tsantoulis: Chair Sullivan would like to consider bathroom facilities for Petersbrook.

Chair Lapierre: That park is getting a lot more use. It would be good to have a concession stand as well. There is a company which has a model for both bathrooms and concession.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 21, 2022

Chair Lapierre said that the spelling of his first name should be corrected. It is Randall, not Randell.

Chair Lapierre motioned to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2022 meeting as amended. T. Tsantoulis seconded the motion. Voted unanimously in favor.

T. Tsantoulis motioned to adjourn at 10:02 am. Chair Lapierre seconded the motion. Voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Donnelly

Kathleen Donnelly
Recording Clerk