

ARPA Committee

Minutes February 22, 2022

Committee members in attendance: John Haney Steve Long, Anne Margolis, and Mike Pittman. Also, Nick Kramer and Rick Cawley of the Selectboard.

The committee discussed the letter asking townspeople for input on use of the ARPA funds, including wording to include on the outside of the envelope. The letter will go out Thursday. Respondents will be able to provide feedback via an email address: arpa@corinthvt.org, or by mail. Responses will be requested in time for discussion at the March 22 meeting, and the April 26 meeting will be a public forum to gather additional feedback. It will be helpful to understand responses received to date in terms of both category and popularity in order to make an informed presentation at the forum, and a recommendation to the Selectboard.

The committee recapped the ideas received to date, including new ideas submitted since the January 25 meeting including: buying and renovating the Masonic Hall as a community center; town garage addition; an outdoor shelter at the town hall, broadband; net-metered solar to provide credits to the town hall and town garage electric bills, highway department needs; and town hall needs including a revised energy audit, entryway, siding, and possibly renovating town offices. The state legislature is working on a bill, H. 518, that could support many types of energy improvement projects in town buildings; however, the buildings would need to provide a private space & internet connection where the public could go to access telehealth, teleschool, or telework (there needs to be a connection to the pandemic).

For any items that seem like they will fit well with the available funds and timeline requirements (committed by end of 2024, spent by end of 2026), the committee would like to start getting a sense of costs. The group discussed how much funding for/per study might be appropriate, as spending “just enough” to scope a need and apply for additional sources of funding might be a better way to leverage the one-time funds than spending them all on few, extensive studies. For the East Corinth sewer & water study, John will discuss with several companies to procure a cost estimate, and he will also investigate other potential sources of funding. The Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Planning Commission might be able to help with the latter. A survey of East Corinth village residents’ receptivity to a local sewer & water system may also be warranted. The need to make decisions in a timely manner to secure contractors, who will be in high demand from other towns for similar projects, was also discussed.

Steve will follow up with Joe Blodgett on town garage needs and will talk with Holly Groschner about broadband. Anne will forward the previous town hall energy audit to Nick and Rick.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The Committee’s next meeting will be Tuesday, March 22, at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.