

Shaftsbury ARPA committee meeting

Friday October 21, 2022

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order in person and via Zoom at 9:01 a.m. Present were committee members Andrea Bacchi, Tony Krulikowski, Naomi Miller, Rick Bennett, and Betsy Habberfield.

2. Conflict of interest statement

No one reported a conflict with any item on the agenda.

3. October 13 2022 minutes

Ms. Habberfield moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-1.

4. ARPA funding survey results presentation

Mr. Krulikowski noted that the Select Board toured the Dailey building and found it needed a lot of work, and that at the time, the owner would not sell at a reasonable price. It might be a good idea to revisit the idea. Mr. Kiernan pointed out the site is very dusty and noisy. Ms. Habberfield will ask her husband, who has become friendly with the new manager, if he'd be willing to further investigate. The old Vermont Moonlight Cookie site could also be a candidate for a central meeting location.

Mr. Bennett expressed a wish that more people had participated.

Ms. Habberfield wondered what is the center of Shaftsbury? And wherever it is, perhaps it needs marketing like the kiosks or signage in N. Bennington.

Ms. Miller suggested the group should discuss how, who and when the Select Board presentation is to be put together and what it is to say.

5. November 7, 2022 Select Board presentation planning

It was agreed that a dry run for the presentation would be needed. A subcommittee will first deeply develop the decisions to be made today about what will be included in the presentation. The dry run will be held 4 p.m. Wednesday November 2.

Ms. Miller asked how to treat the input received at the public meeting. Mr. Bennett suggested following the recommendations of some at the meeting to make a "one and done" sort of recommendation. He also encouraged the group to work to maintain momentum, to maybe suggest something that could be done more quickly. The library kiosk is such a project. The community club might be such a project. Mr. Bennett suggested allocating \$20K to the Historical Society (which would raise an additional \$20K to the Society in the form of a grant). He said he wasn't sure the \$40K expenditure has been earmarked. Mr. Krulikowski noted that the Society is sitting on a quarter million dollars and that the Society hasn't indicated a willingness to step up to the plate to fundraise. Mr. Bennett said he thought at least some of the money should be donated to the Society because history is so important to the state and the town. Ms. Miller said she wondered whether one of the Society's buildings couldn't be used as a public space and whether any funding should be contingent on its serving such a function.

Ms. Bacchi reported that she'd heard from a Lake Paran Recreation member about support for the lake and the lands around it. The group briefly discussed assisting the Lake.

Ms. Miller asked what project ideas might be highlighted, in addition to the library kiosk, the community club roof, and the historical society restoration. Ms. Miller suggested that, were the historical society to be chosen, the Select Board could require that the renovated space be

open to the public. Ms. Habberfield suggested that commercial spaces along 7A should not be allowed to become residential as there are already too few commercial spaces in town. Ms. Bacchi said there are other funding sources for businesses.

Ms. Bacchi said the information she received from the school was similar to the public survey responses but at the same time wasn't all that clear.

Martha Cornwell said she thought the recommendation to the Select Board should include revitalizing the Economic Development Committee. Arlington offers a good example.

Ms. Miller asked how to address Cole Hall. Mr. Kiernan noted that there are several funding streams which could be tapped to make it a hub. ADA compliance is mandatory, but other projects -- a senior citizen center, a library kiosk -- can be incorporated into that renovation. Ms. Cornwell said there are individuals in town who could help fundraise for a revitalized village center. Ms. Miller said an economic development committee could devise a plan to guide such fundraising efforts. Mr. Bennett suggested recommending that some ARPA funds be dedicated to economic development as led by a reorganized committee.

(Ms. Miller left the meeting.)

Mr. Krulikowski suggested going to the Select Board with the highest ranking general ideas such as economic development. "Head for the big points," he said. "Don't get bogged down in the specifics."

Ms. Habberfield asked about the format of the presentation, its length, and whether the Select Board might call the ARPA committee back for further information. Mr. Krulikowski said the presentation shouldn't last more than an hour and should be accompanied by a compilation of the survey results and recommendations from the committee. He said he thought the Select Board might invite the committee back.

Mr. Bennett asked whether expenditure recommendations should mirror priorities. Mr. Kiernan thought that might be hard to do reasonably as some projects will cost just a little and others very much. A pie chart could, however, reflect priorities.

Mr. Kiernan suggested the committee might think of contributions in terms of seed money. Ms. Habberfield said she thinks of it as a domino effect.

6. Public comments

There were none.

7. Other business

There was none.

8. Action items

Ms. Bacchi, Ms. Miller and Ms. Habberfield will work as a subcommittee to draft the presentation. Mr. Bennett said he'd be glad to help.

Mr. Bennett will get more specifics from the Historical Society regarding their budget.

Ms. Habberfield will try to get more information on the Dailey facility.

The next meeting will be held November 2.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Krulikowski moved to adjourn at 10:34 a.m. Ms. Habberfield seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.