

MINUTES

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AR ROOM #301, CITY HALL

5:00 P. M., MAY 26, 2021

Mayor Amy Goodwin, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City American Rescue Plan Act Advisory Committee to order at 5:00p.m., May 26, 2021.

Committee Members Present:

Mayor Amy Goodwin, Chair

Becky Ceperley, Vice Chair

Ben Adams

John Kennedy Bailey

Brent Burton (arrived after approval of the previous minutes)

Mary Beth Hoover

Joe Jenkins

Will Laird

Bobby Reishman

Chad Robinson

Members Absent:

Caitlin Cook

Also Present:

Chuck Overstreet

A roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

1. Approval of Previous Minutes –

Councilmember Reishman motioned to approve the minutes for the previous meeting held on 4-14-2021. Councilmember Hoover seconded. With no objections, the previous minutes were approved.

May 26, 2021

2. Released Guidance from the US Treasury –

Mayor Goodwin stated that the City Manager, Jonathan Storage, had gone over all of the guidelines released by the State to review with the Committee.

Highlights of Storage's presentation:

- The Interim Final Rule implements the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds that provides the foundation for multiple Treasury summary documents.
- Spending and Timelines – Funds must be contractually committed for a specific purpose by December 31, 2024 and by spent by December 31, 2026.
- Reporting Requirements – Reports are due in August and October of 2021, and quarterly thereafter. They must include contract details and projects being funded during a specific reporting cycle.
- Uniform Guidance for Federal Awards – The requirements are detailed and substantial, and all community partners who intend to collaborate with the City should be knowledgeable of the rules in advance. It is required that special funds be created to track all spending activity as well as the use of an internet-based reporting system.
- Document Retention – The City is required to maintain all spending documents for at least 5 years from the date all funding is used or returned.
- Allowable Uses – Include revenue loss, services and programs to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, services to address behavioral healthcare needs exacerbated by the pandemic, addressing the negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, serving the hardest-hit communities and families, premium pay to a broad range of essential workers, water and sewer infrastructure, broadband infrastructure and possible other infrastructure for bridges and roads.
- Ineligible Uses – Include paying for tax reductions, deposits to pension funds, to match certain federal grants, paying off or reducing municipal debt or interest obligations.

Councilmember Bailey asked if infrastructure projects needed to be run through the normal budget process. Storage replied that would be part of the fund allocation that had been set up, although it would still be approved by Council. Councilmember Jenkins confirmed that it is not directly backfilling the budget. Storage added that there is no need to transfer money from the General Fund.

Councilmember Ceperley inquired about violence intervention/prevention. Storage replied that at least 1 program had been considered, such as installing cameras to help track reported violence. Mayor Goodwin added that they are also looking into gun violence/gun suicide, etc.

Councilmember Laird asked if the involvement of the State Auditor was a curtesy or a requirement. Storage replied that they do not have pre-approval authority, they are simply recording the transactions for transparency. Councilmember Reishman asked if

the money could be used for auditing services. Storage replied that the City will likely need outside auditing services.

Councilmember Laird asked how the City would account for money received under the CARES Act regarding accounting for lost revenue. Storage replied that the formula the City will use uses an assumption of 4% growth year over year, which is the national average.

3. Presentation of Collected Community Input –

Mayor Goodwin stated that Mackenzie Spencer would be doing a review of the community meetings and online suggestions. The Mayor added that there were many good suggestions and projects that may not qualify, but were worthy of finding separate funding for them.

Highlights of Spencer's presentation include:

- The City held 4 Listening Sessions and made the form available online.
- They have received close to 300 submissions; some do not qualify for Act funding.
- Top 10 Categories are (note: examples are not comprehensive nor are in any particular order): Parks & Recreation (pocket parks and bike trails), Housing (home repair grants/loans and low-income housing), Infrastructure (sewer system repairs and bridge infrastructure), Business (low-interest loans for small businesses and ppp grants), Aquatic Center, Tourist Attractions & Entertainment (small zoo and return of the regatta), Food/Water (community gardens and greenhouses), Mental Health/SUD/Healthcare (comprehensive treatment facility and mobile crisis intervention team), Broadband (free wi-fi and fiber optic), Youth Activities (athletic leagues and art/textile studio)

Councilmember Reishman asked if that regulations required businesses that received funds to follow any particular guidelines. Storage replied that it depended. For example, if the City gave money to a business to do something specific, then they would probably have to follow some guidelines. Business incentives, grants or premium pay would not require that.

4. Presentation of Collected Community Input –

Mayor Goodwin asked the Committee to think about what ideas could be funded through other sources, and to whittle down the projects that can be funded through the ARP money in to the 3 buckets that have been identified: Economic Recovery, Healthy and Safe Communities and Infrastructure/Investing in the Future.

Councilmember Laird asked what the best process would be for citizens who would still like to submit their ideas. Mayor Goodwin replied that there really wasn't a preferred method, whether it be via email, letter or other means. There does need to be documentation.

Councilmember Ceperley stated that she did not know how much money it would take to correct the storm water/sewage problems or if it could be corrected piece by piece. She added that having that information would more inform their decision. Councilmember Jenkins agreed.

A member of the public asked if there was a timeline for the distribution of the funds into various projects. Storage added that the rules will not be binding until July 16, 2021. During that time, the Committee will try to come up with a plan. Mayor Goodwin added that she wanted to ensure that the money was not misspent, and that the funds be used to have the greatest impact on as many people as possible in considered investments. Mayor Goodwin added that it will be essential to partner with the County and State in order to accomplish some of these projects.

A member of the public asked if there was a strategy on how the internet will be spread around the City, and if it will be privatized. Mayor Goodwin replied that the State and County are just beginning to plan, so those conversations will happen. Councilmember Jenkins added that he wasn't sure if most areas in Charleston would be eligible for this based on how the rules are written. Councilmember Robinson added that South Park Road would probably qualify. Storage added that the infrastructure capacity in the core areas would also need to be improved in order to reach the underserved areas.

A member of the public added that they would like to be able to schedule a time to be able to speak to the Committee about a proposal for an aquatic center, and to outline possibly the greatest return on investment and economic impact for the funds.

A member of the public asked if the members chosen for the Committee were diverse and inclusive. Mayor Goodwin replied that the community that gave their input was diverse and inclusive. Councilmember Ceperley added that the Council body will be making the final decisions.

Councilmember Ceperley motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Reishman seconded.
Meeting adjourned.