



Town of South Kingstown, RI

Office of the Town Manager

TO THE HONORABLE TOWN COUNCIL
FROM THERESA L MURPHY, INTERIM TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN – STATUS OF FUNDING AND PROJECTS
DATE NOVEMBER 2, 2021
Cc: JAMES RABBITT, PLANNING DIRECTOR

This memorandum serves to update the Town Council as to the status of the Town's American Rescue Plan Funds and intended uses.

Background

On July 26th, the Town Council approved of the proposed distribution of American Rescue Plan Act funds allocated to the Town to address the Covid-19 pandemic recovery efforts. The program was distributed into three broad categories as noted in the following table:

American Rescue Plan Proposed Distribution	
Downtown/Village economic revitalization	
Public Sector Investment	\$4,360,000
Public/Private Sector	2,282,500
Sub-total	\$6,642,500
Response to negative economic impacts	
Housing	400,000
Social Service/non-profit (Grants)	500,000
Sub-total	\$900,000
Municipal Investment	
Focus on services that suffered detrimental effects	\$1,407,500
TOTAL ARP FUNDS	\$8,950,000

As noted in the initial presentation of the proposed ARP program, a critical first component to ensure proper planning and execution of each project, is establishing a dedicated professional or experienced project management firm to manage the largest program elements - Downtown/Village Economic Revitalization and Social Service programs. As noted in the progress report below, the process to secure a professional services contract is currently underway.

The following ARPA Program elements are in progress as noted.

GRANT & CONTRACT MANAGEMENT SERVICES

In October, the Town released an RFP (Request for Proposals) associated with retaining a firm(s) with specialized project development, design (civil, engineering, architecture, landscaping and traffic engineering) and grant management experience to assist the Town with its use of the ARPA funds to support the Town's COVID-19 disaster response to economic recovery. These services include supporting the Town with project development, project management, financial accountability, and compliance with all federal requirements. Three proposals were received on October 29th and are currently under review. Providing there is a proposal that meets the Town's requirements, a recommendation will be presented to

the Town Council within the next four weeks. This contract will set the foundation for moving forward with the Downtown/Village economic revitalization Plan as well as the grant programs for local Housing and Social Service Agencies.

TECHNOLOGY – Office 365

An RFP is currently being advertised for professional services to complete the migration of Office365 inclusive of all files, SharePoint and Teams to the cloud. The Town will greatly benefit from having Office 365 (O365) in order to allow for multiple contributors on projects, with shared documents and files. Office 365 will include additional cloud storage and Teams virtual meetings technology, which would replace Zoom as a more secure internal meeting platform. It is anticipated that a bid award recommendation will be made in December; and the migration of files, as well as implementation and training of O365, will be in place by spring 2022 barring any unforeseen issues.

NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICER/HARBORMASTER

The Town Council approved the establishment of a full time position of Natural Resources Officer/Harbormaster. This position is being funded for two years with ARP funds and will be budgeted within the general fund beginning in FY2023-2024. This position was advertised in late spring of 2021 and a candidate was in place as of July 1, 2021. The combination of higher level harbormaster activity and the need for dedicated attention to the Town's natural resources supports the need for a full time Natural Resource Officer/Harbormaster position. \$180,000 in ARPA funds is allocated to support this full time position for the first two years after which the position will be incorporated into the general fund operating budget.

MENTAL HEALTH IN POLICING

As detailed in the original proposal, the specified police roles of community officers will be non-enforcement positions that focus on the overall social service needs of the community and also focus on community engagement which will ultimately bring the police department closer to the citizens it serves. SKPD plans to reassign two seasoned officers to the community policing division for this program enhancement; and backfill those two positions with two new officers who will start academy training in July 2022. This program will be reflected in the FY22-23 operating budget and rollout expected to begin in 2023. Total budgeted for this program is \$407,000.

COMMUNITY PARA-MEDICINE AND MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

To reverse the spike in mental health care needs due to the effects of Covid-19, the South Kingstown EMS Community Paramedic Program would work to implement integrated behavioral health care to the citizens of South Kingstown. This program is projected to begin in spring of 2022 with two CPP paramedic personnel and associated vehicle and equipment. The budget for this program is \$270,500.

NEXT STEPS

It is anticipated that once a program management contract is in place the specified programs will be developed and rolled out over the next two years. It is important to note that there are stringent regulatory and reporting requirements for ARPA funds, and we want to ensure compliance throughout the process. Social Service and Economic Development grant programs will be the priority for rollout once a firm has been hired.