

Town of Norwich | Agenda for Special Selectboard Meeting | November 3, 2021, 5:30 pm | Remote Meeting and Tracy Hall Multipurpose Rm.  
 ZOOM access information: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87532759017> Meeting ID: 875 3275 9017 US Toll-free: 877 853 5257  
 Telephone number to call if unable to access meeting: 802-698-3000

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Packet Materials</b>	<b>Estimated Start/End</b>
[1] Approval of the agenda	Chair will ask Board to add/remove/reorder agenda items.		5:30 - 5:35 (5 minutes)
[2] Public & Selectboard comment	Public invited to speak to any item not on the agenda		5:35 – 5:40 (to completion)
[3] Town Manager Search Update & Town Employee Appointment to Screening Cmtee.	Board will provide any updates and appoint town representative to Screening Cmtee. Motion required		5:40 – 5:45 (5 minutes)
[4] ARPA Funds	Board to discuss guidelines on eligible projects. Board to discuss a process to prioritize ARPA funding allocations which will include community feedback and staff guidance.	Related materials	5:45 – 6:45 (60 minutes)
[5] FY23 Operational Budget Presentations	Interim Town Manager to provide brief update on forthcoming department presentations. Board to discuss any outstanding process questions.	Draft appropriation request form	6:45 – 7:00 (15 minutes)
[6] Adjourn	Motion required		7:00

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TO: Selectboard  
FROM: Rod Francis, Interim Town Manager  
RE: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund Allocation Process  
DATE: November 2, 2021

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Please find below and attached information regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. We are asking that the Board review and discuss the proposed framework for funding allocations and provide any feedback.

### Background

The Town has received the full disbursement of ARPA funds totaling \$840, 598.55. The Treasury has outlined the following timeframe for using these funds:

- **December 31, 2024** – Funds must be “obligated”. Any funds not obligated must be returned to the Treasury. Obligation is defined as a contract, award, order, or similar transaction requiring payment.
- **December 31, 2026** – Funds must be expended. Any funds not expended by this date must be returned to the Treasury.

Funding can be used for the following broad criteria per the Treasury:

- To respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality
- To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers
- For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency
- To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

Attached is a more detailed list of authorized “expenditure categories” defined by the Treasury. A project using ARPA funds must fall into one of these categories.

We recommend reviewing [The Vermont League of Cities and Towns \(VLCT\) resources](#) on their website. Additionally, information regarding acceptable uses of the funds continues to be shared by the Federal government, VLCT and the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC). Staff have reviewed multiple information packets concerning ARPA funds, and a very helpful summary document from Board member Brochu. We hope to bring you more information as our understanding increases.

### State of Vermont ARPA Investment Plan

The Governor [has issued a proposed investment plan](#) that outlines the State's use of approximately \$1 billion in funds. The State's proposed investment breakdown is outlined as:

- Broadband \$250.5M
- Housing: \$249M
- Climate Change: \$200M

- Water/Sewer Infrastructure: \$170M
- Economic Development \$143M
- Administrative Costs: \$17M

As the State begins to develop programs to meet their investment goals, the Town will look for ways to leverage these funds with Town ARPA funding or other programs. An important reminder here is that guidance at the federal level is still being developed, and state agencies are constantly reviewing existing funding programs to facilitate investments in their identified priorities. ARPA funds cannot be used as a match with other federally funded programs (note: some existing state programs are supported by federal funds and therefore a local 'match' cannot use ARPA funds).

**Process Recommendations**

The Board and staff will need to begin to outline a process to prioritize ARPA funding allocations. Allocations should include community feedback and staff guidance. As staff we will look to our VLCT and TRORC partners for assistance. We are recommending to the Board the outline below be used for ARPA fund allocations. The suggested process includes public input through surveys and public meetings. Staff support will confirm allocations are consistent with existing town policies (e.g., Town Plan, other guiding documents) are ARPA eligible, and identify leveraging opportunities.

The following is a draft framework to review and select allocation for ARPA funding:

**Selectboard Information Session and Discussion – November**

**Community Input – December**

- Consider Town-wide Community Survey for feedback
- Consider informational sessions on Treasury eligibility guidelines
- Town Staff to provide feedback on questions and outreach on community input

**Selectboard and Staff Input – on-going**

- Review allocation ranking (see attached example project sheet)
- Prepare a prioritized list of allocations including estimated allocation amounts
- Review Community Survey data for potential inclusion

**Selectboard ARPA Public Meeting(s) – TBD**

**Staff Prepare a Collated List of Recommendations for Selectboard - TBD**

- Staff will review latest available guidance to confirm feasibility and eligibility
- Staff may internally rank allocations for Selectboard reference

**Selectboard ARPA Allocation Review and Selection - TBD**

**Appendix 1: Expenditure Categories**

The Expenditure Categories (EC) listed below must be used to categorize each project as noted in Part 2 above. The term "Expenditure Category" refers to the detailed level (e.g., 1.1 COVID-10 Vaccination). When referred to as a category (e.g., EC 1) it includes all Expenditure Categories within that level.

<b>1: Public Health</b>	
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination ^
1.2	COVID-19 Testing ^
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)*
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19
1.10	Mental Health Services*
1.11	Substance Use Services*
1.12	Other Public Health Services
<b>2: Negative Economic Impacts</b>	
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs* ^
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid* ^
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers* ^
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs* ^
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention* ^
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers*
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)* ^
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)* ^
2.10	Aid to Nonprofit Organizations*
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries
2.13	Other Economic Support* ^
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff
<b>3: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities</b>	
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning* ^
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts ^
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services* ^
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services* ^
3.5	Education Assistance: Other* ^
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care* ^
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting* ^
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System* ^



3.9	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other* ^
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing* ^
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused Persons* ^
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance* ^
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other* ^
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators* ^
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation ^
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions* ^
<b>4: Premium Pay</b>	
4.1	Public Sector Employees
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to Other Employers
<b>5: Infrastructure<sup>27</sup></b>	
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized Wastewater Treatment
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized Wastewater Collection and Conveyance
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized Wastewater
5.4	Clean Water: Combined Sewer Overflows
5.5	Clean Water: Other Sewer Infrastructure
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater
5.7	Clean Water: Energy Conservation
5.8	Clean Water: Water Conservation
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint Source
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & Distribution
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & Distribution: Lead Remediation
5.13	Drinking water: Source
5.14	Drinking water: Storage
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects
5.17	Broadband: Other projects
<b>6: Revenue Replacement</b>	
6.1	Provision of Government Services
<b>7: Administrative</b>	
7.1	Administrative Expenses
7.2	Evaluation and Data Analysis
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government
7.4	Transfers to Non-entitlement Units (States and territories only)

\*Denotes areas where recipients must identify the amount of the total funds that are allocated to evidence-based interventions (see Use of Evidence section above for details)

^Denotes areas where recipients must report on whether projects are primarily serving disadvantaged communities (see Project Demographic Distribution section above for details)

<sup>27</sup> Definitions for water and sewer Expenditure Categories can be found in the EPA's handbooks. For "clean water" expenditure category definitions, please see: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-03/documents/cwdefinitions.pdf>. For "drinking water" expenditure category definitions, please see: <https://www.epa.gov/dwsrf/drinking-water-state-revolving-fund-national-information-management-system-reports>.



Town of Norwich  
ARPA FUNDING REVIEW  
Funding Request: Hybrid Public Meeting Technology

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**Funding Request:**

Hybrid Meeting Technology

**Location:**

Tracy Hall

**Description:**

Procure and install equipment to support hybrid public meetings that will be operated by CATV

**Estimated one-time ARPA funds expense:**

[Expenses procured], [Additional costs]

**Estimated added annual town operational expense:** Assume a 5- year replacement cycle for CIP funding.

**Timeframe:**

Partially completed with zoom software, additional software and hardware support projected

**Supporting Documents:**

[Invoice], [Cost estimates]

**ARPA Scoring Review:** xx/50

1. Is this a confirmed ARPA reimbursable expense and what US Dept. of Treasury Expenditure Category does the request fall under? (10 pts) Yes, 7.2- "Administrative Expenses"
2. Is this a one-time expense with no to minimal new funding or replacement of an existing asset? (10 pts)
3. Does this request fall under one of the Town Plan goals or other Town adopted planning documents (identify the goal/document)? (10 pts)
4. Does this request leverage other funding sources or stakeholders? (10pts)
5. Does this request fill an identified gap in Town services or programs? (10 pts)

**Subject:** FW: additional thoughts on ARPA use

From: **claudette brochu** <[cbrochu30@gmail.com](mailto:cbrochu30@gmail.com)>  
Date: Sat, Oct 23, 2021 at 11:29 PM  
Subject: additional thoughts on ARPA use  
To: Roger Arnold <[rogerarnoldvt@gmail.com](mailto:rogerarnoldvt@gmail.com)>  
Cc: Marcia Calloway <[msbcalloway@gmail.com](mailto:msbcalloway@gmail.com)>, Mary Layton <[marydlayton@gmail.com](mailto:marydlayton@gmail.com)>, Robert Gere <[rgere@mac.com](mailto:rgere@mac.com)>, Fielding Essensa <[FEssensa@norwich.vt.us](mailto:FEssensa@norwich.vt.us)>, Rod Francis <[RFrancis@norwich.vt.us](mailto:RFrancis@norwich.vt.us)>, Miranda Bergmeier <[MBergmeier@norwich.vt.us](mailto:MBergmeier@norwich.vt.us)>

Again, board members, DO NOT REPLY.

An additional use of ARPA funds was the ability of the TON ro "grant" funds to essential use organizations. To be more specific, money could be granted to businesses deemed essential during COVID to enhance is the way of "premuim pay or hazard pay".

If there was any business in town that fit that category it is Dan & Whit's. The store stayed open, provided free delivery to residents in town and out, and provided an essential service.

Another business may be the Child Care Ctr or other child care organizations in town (I admit I do not know if there are any others) who benefited the town by staying open. This category may be difficult to parse. The demographics of our town might make us ineligible but it might be worth investigation.

We may consider Baydaya but I am not sure but given their funding sources and rate of pay for employees, we may not want to consider. Ditto the private, for profit organizations in town.  
C

Please note that any reply or response to this email is subject to the disclosure provisions under the Vermont Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act..

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Please note that any response or reply to this electronic message may be subject to disclosure as a public record under the Vermont Public Records Act.

To: Norwich Selectboard, Rod Francis, Interim Town Manager, Miranda Bergmeier

From: Claudette Brochu, Selectboard member

Date: October 20, 2021

Subject: ARPA funds

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The Town of Norwich (subsequently referred to as TON) has been the recipient of significant funds from the federal government’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). To date, I believe we have received approximately \$500K this fiscal year, with the second appropriation to be received in FY2023.

While the final, approved uses for these funds have not been published, there is an interim plan published by the US Treasury on appropriate use(s) for these funds. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) website includes a section dedicated to use of ARPA funds, including links to the Treasury interim guidelines and frequently asked questions (VLCT.org/ARPA). One provision of the ARPA funding is that any project proposed after March 2021 can be covered under ARPA. Another is that the funds can be used for administrative costs associated with ARPA funding. There are five general categories for ARPA funding of which three are more specific to the TON. Due to town demographics, funding for sidewalks or recreation would not qualify for ARPA funding. Funding for HVAC systems in public buildings, enhanced cybersecurity systems for TON, or any project that would address water systems, wastewater systems, or any project that would meet the criteria under the EPA clean water act (think culverts or other projects that enhance the clean water) would qualify. Funding could also be used to provide grants to any business in order for that employer provide up to \$13/hr (in addition to base pay) in enhanced pay for employees working in critical roles during the state of emergency declared during COVID-19.

One consistent message from VLCT as well as the National League of Cities (NLC) has been that the public should be included in how these monies should be spent. I welcome such a public discussion and ask that the Selectboard Chair include a public “listening session” as part of the upcoming budget discussions. The criteria



for use of the funds is that the funds need to be obligated by Dec 31, 2024 and expended by Dec 31, 2026. Any unspent funds are to be returned to the US Treasury. While this timeline seems generous, the board must consider how planning for any project will fit into the specified timeline.

I have been considering how the TON might best use these funds. Absent any public or Selectboard discussion, these are my thoughts on how to use these funds in order of priority:

1. Use the funds to revamp HVAC systems in Tracy Hall. We know that ventilation is an issue in the building. We know that the heating system needs to be addressed soon and that the underground oil tank needs to be inspected and possibly replaced. How can we meet our reduction in fossil fuel use while we consider upgrades to HVAC systems? The emergency generator needs to be upgraded. Can this be a battery backup system vs a fossil fuel driven system? In addition, we should investigate how we use this space. Can changes be made in the use of the space to enhance overall use while reducing our reliance on fossil fuel? We do know that spending for HVAC is allowable under ARPA.
2. Reimburse the designated fund (I believe this was approved under General Administration) for cybersecurity upgrades. I believe we have approved approximately \$80K. Use ARPA funds to pay for the cybersecurity upgrades and return the approved funds to the appropriate designated fund(s). Such spending is allowable under ARPA.
3. Use additional ARPA funds to upgrade the TON website.
4. Fund a Grant Administrator position until the terms of ARPA have expired. I do not know if this would be a full-time or part-time position but feel strongly that the details of ARPA do justify a specific person who would deal with all aspects of the grant funding.
5. Use ARPA to fund the Moore Lane bridge mitigation. I believe this would qualify under the EPA clean water standards.
6. Consider if use of ARPA to fund the septic RFQ would be prudent. I ask because the funding of such a project is already advantageous to the TON.

7. There were two specific items related to the Public Safety Facility that could be considered for funding under ARPA. It had been reported to the board that the septic system at the PSF was deficient. The previous TM had reported that the TON might seek repairs from the original contractor. If this attempt fails, I would suggest that ARPA funds could be used to redress the septic issue at the PSF. I feel this would qualify since the deficiency was not recognized until after March 2021. Of course, I would want the TON to investigate how remediation from the original contractor would be first in line. The heat pump issues have been identified since the TON signed off on the PSF. Since the heat pump issues have been ongoing, I am not sure if the heat pump issue would qualify but it might be worth asking.

These are my thoughts to date. I am very interested in the thoughts of other board members. I am also looking forward to how residents of the town feel we should use these funds.

Respectfully,

Claudette Brochu

Norwich Selectboard

**Social Service Agency Request for Appropriation**

**Authority:** \_\_\_\_\_ 24 V.S.A. § 2691)

- § 2691. Aid to social services for town residents

At a meeting duly warned for that purpose, a town or incorporated village may appropriate such sums of money as it deems necessary for the support of social service programs and facilities within that town for its residents. Social service programs, for which a town or incorporated village may appropriate sums of money, include: transportation, nutrition, medical, child care, and other rehabilitative services for persons with low incomes, elders, children, persons with disabilities, persons with a substance use disorder, and persons requiring employment to eliminate their need for public assistance. The authority herein granted is not in derogation of other local powers to allocate funds.

Name of Organization:

Address for mailing check:

Contact name:

Telephone:

E-mail:


Description or authorization as a public organization.

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Describe the goods and/or services to be provided to Norwich residents that serve a public municipal purpose.

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Text of Article in the Town Warning.

Shall the voters of the Town of Norwich appropriate \$ _____ to _____ to be used for _____, such amount being reasonably necessary for the support of programs to benefit Town residents in accordance with ___ VSA _____.
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Unit of goods and/or services provided (select one)

Cost per unit

Unit of goods and/or services provided (select one)	Cost per unit
<input type="radio"/> Visit	
<input type="radio"/> Person served	
<input type="radio"/> Job (description):	
<input type="radio"/> Other (description):	

The organization will keep a log of services provided and will be reimbursed up to the amount appropriated. The organization will provide a brief report on goods and/or services provided to be included in the Town Report.

**Appropriation request detail (select one):**  Initial Request\*  Recurring Request  Increased Request\*

Sum appropriated current FY:

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Sum requested next FY:

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*\*Initial & Increase Requested require in-person appearance at a Selectboard meeting to review such requests. Initial & Increase in request requires a petition of 5% (percent) of registered voters submitted not less than 45 days prior to Town Meeting.*

**Oct 2021**