

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Maurice Matte Jean Szilva Ashley Lucht Shelden Goodwin

City Staff Present: Wendy Harrison Kristine Lott

Call to Order by: JS

Meeting Start Time: 5:31 PM

II. Public Comment

None

III. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Decision: Approved

Motion by: AL

Second: MM

IV. Council Update

KL: Several events to educate voters on new process for noncitizen voting. Seven city council candidates.

V. Discussion: ARPA – Impacts of COVID

AA: 2.19 million coming to the city. \$100k has been approved for small business loans. Smaller pieces as well. Trying to hear from as many residents as to how COVID impacted them, including the Finance Commission.

KL: Shorter and longer term priorities that Staff and Council are working on. Implementing forums and surveys during Town Mtg day. Hoping to have conversation to be strategic with one-time funds and TIF district.

JS: A lot of the people she knows were professionals, retired and weren't impacted that much. No loss of income, children out of school, bills couldn't pay, didn't get sick. How do we reach people who did have those issues. Elderly lost ground in isolation and lost mobility / ability. Foster / Grandparent program to help kids and elderly neighbors.

AL: Walking around, a lot of older rental properties are not being taken care of well. Landlords aren't willing to make upgrades to properties due to increased costs (taxes, property values). Potentially have a twice / year bulky trash pickup to help clean things up. Potential tree removal / clean up program.

SG: Rent costs have soared, to the point of being unaffordable.

MF: Food shelf demand spiked, maybe look to help them out. Elderly had a rough time, maybe reaching out to senior center to see if they have needs. Second the foster / grandparent program. Daycare After school issue.

MM: We should look at investments, not expenditures.

AA: What other organization were helpful during the pandemic?

MF: DWTN Winooski has been helpful

AL: Reach out to new american groups

WH: Distributed masks via food shelf, the city is in touch with Food shelf and Meals on wheels and other meal delivery groups

SG: Winooski Mutual Aid another good organization to get in touch with

JS: Richards Park idea - Currently we can't build anything permanent. Suggest the city have a van to park with recreational gear for people to use and rent out / keep track of.

AA: How effective was info from the city on the pandemic?

AL: Saw on instagram. Envelopes for water bills is helpful

AA: Also do Front porch forum, email blasts, Facebook, Twitter

JL: Signage works, maybe use to communicate on the feeder streets

MM: Can ARPA be used to help people buy homes?

WH: Probably not, but the city can help people access that information, such as the housing trust fund

JS: Winooski not being affordable is distressing. Should be a priority. What about hazard pay?

AA: Businesses can use the grants to help pay hazard pay.

JS: How can we help frontline workers who live in Winooski but work elsewhere?

SG: Really good question

WH: At other meetings, folks felt isolated and interested in figuring out how to meet neighbors and connect better. Also wanted to lower barriers for new Americans to city programs.

KL: What information or resources do we need to make decisions?

AA: Will be an anonymous portal for people report how they're impacted

MF: Curious to hear what other towns / cities are doing. Also how to answer questions on a city vs state / region ?

MM: Money needs to be spent not invested

AA: Needs to be spent by 2026, committed by 2024

AL: Give people stimulus checks

MM: Engage high school kids to think about it. Maybe have them help shovel driveways for seniors. Tap into the senior center to see what their needs are.

VI. Adjourn

Motion by: MM

Second: MF

Meeting End Time: 6:35 PM