Tuesday – April 25, 2022 - 10:00 a.m.

ARPA Worksession

Present: Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Sheneika Smith; Councilwoman Sandra Kilgore; Councilwoman S. Antanette Mosley; Councilwoman Kim Roney; Councilwoman Sage Turner; Councilwoman Gwen C. Wisler; City Manager Debra Campbell; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Mayor Manheimer said that the purpose of this worksession is to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocations.

Assistant to the City Manager Jaime Matthews provided key takeaways from the worksession of (1) the requested funding far exceeded the amount allocated to the City; (2) federal guidelines have been updated and are continuing to be interpreted; (3) robust evaluation and scoring process based on Council approved categories and criteria; and (4) staff evaluation process and feedback from City Council led to the recommendations.

Goals for this worksession include (1) review timeline, budget and evaluation process; (2) provide draft recommendations to City Council for discussion and feedback; and (3) inform the final recommendations for funding at the City Council meeting on May 10.

Ms. Matthews then reviewed the timeline from April-June, 2021 to the present. She reminded Council of the ARPA fiscal recovery goals and uses. Regarding community engagement, previous public engagement efforts were used in making recommendations for the City's ARPA approved categories. Initiatives that were analyzed were (1) Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 budget engagement; (2) reimagining public safety; (3) National Community Survey; (4) Comprehensive Plan; and (5) Climate Justice Initiative.

Council approved categories consisted of affordable housing; care for aging residents; homelessness services; small business recovery; food systems; City infrastructure; domestic violence prevention and assistance; community communication; climate change; and workforce development.

She reviewed the Council approved ARPA funding to date. The total ARPA award was $26,293,853. The ARPA funds budgeted to date are $8,386,212. And, the total ARPA remaining funds to be allocated is $17,907,641.

ARPA Project Manager Kim Marmon-Saxe explained the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. She said that the RFP for the ARPA funds was designed to adhere to the Federal Treasury guidelines which clearly emphasizes equity considerations. Guiding principles were developed to measure our decisions and results - use an equity lens; invest in resilience; align with City strategic priorities; focus on measurable impact leverage partnerships; and consider the long term. The RFP was issued by the City of Asheville on September 27, 2021, for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

From the RFP to evaluation, (1) design RFP questions to elicit deep information on how well project aligns with guiding principles and priorities; (2) weave equity throughout; (3) develop a parallel set of evaluation questions designed for objective scoring; (4) support objective evaluation through question-specific guidance; (5) make evaluations blind to individual question weight; (6) the structure of the RFP was designed to ask questions that would lead respondents in a straightforward fashion to answer the RFP and provide relevant information; (7) the answers

to the RFP questions would allow evaluators to score objectively against the initial criteria, as defined in the RFP; and (8) the questions for the evaluators were clear and detailed enough to objectively measure very specific criteria and offer a strong approach to a more equitable process for scoring.

Ms. Marmon-Saxe said that the evaluation process details included (1) number of eligible responses received - 71 total for 64,728,534 (significant amount of responses were in the Workforce Development Category) - 13 of the 71 were City projects; (2) scoring criteria based on Council approved categories (a) equitable community impact - 40%; (b) project plan and evaluation - 40%; and (c) organization's qualifications - 20%; (3) criteria created for objective evaluation, same process for internal and external applications; and (4) evaluation team - 27 staff evaluators (a) representatives from 13 departments/divisions; and (b) diverse job level: Department Directors, Senior Firefighter, Transportation Supervisor, Administrative Assistants. Equity focused questions were dispersed evenly throughout the rubrics to ensure that the scoring is consistent with our guiding principles - most specifically using an equity lens and investing in resilience.

Evaluation takeaways are by applying the principals of RBA, we were able to learn from the first evaluation process - Council categories and significantly improve outcomes on the second - RFP process and evaluation. The evaluation process was robust and objective. Quality of submission was high. And, the decision process has been detailed, thorough and it has been hard to choose from the excellent applications.

Next steps are (1) the City of Asheville is a sub-recipient of the ARPA monies and whichever RFP applicants get selected, they will become partners with us to help achieve successful outcomes; (2) the sub-recipients/partners information and progress will be monitored and added to the City of Asheville's quarterly reporting to the Treasury; and (3) the exacting reporting standards must be adhered to and provides an opportunity for collaboration, capacity building and learning together.

It is a fast changing environment as the Treasury gets feedback and attempts to clarify the guidelines.

Recommendations are (1) $17,907,641 remaining be allocated to sub-recipients by December 31, 2024; (2) $6 Million for hold back funds for project outside this RFP process; and (3) $11,907,641 - total remaining to be allocated.

Due to changes in the rules and new guidance from the Treasury, two of the previously listed potential candidates have been removed and a number of the funding options had to be adjusted. The recommendations are as follows, noting some adjustments have taken into account the new April 1 rules and regulations:

Proposal Title	Organization Name	Amount Requested	Recommended Funding
71 COA Inclusive and Accessible Government	City of Asheville CAPE	$514,120	$514,120
56 Community Engagement for Equitable Response	Young Men's Institute Cultural Center (YMICC)	$1,000,000	$800,000
53 Southside Kitchen	We Give A Share, Inc	$90,000	$90,000
31 Homeless Services Program	Eliada Homes, Inc.	$473,050	$473,050
20 Litter & Cleanliness Program	City of Asheville	$840,000	$500,000
28 HELP2Day	Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation	$143,128	$143,128
30 Mobile Meals Expansion	Food Connection Inc	$221,676	$221,676
47 Domestic Violence Intervention Program	SPARC Foundation	$153,483	$153,483
49 Increasing Access to Affordable Housing	Thrive Asheville	$135,000	$135,000
24 Modernization & upgrade Downtown restrooms	City of Asheville	$650,000	$650,000
66 Emergency Shelter for Domestic Violence Survivors	Helpmate	$2,000,000	$1,500,000
43 Mountain Community Capital Fund Expansion	Mountain BizCapital, Inc. dba Mountain BizWorks	$1,293,000	$1,293,000
42 Continuum of Victims' Services	The Mediation Center	$1,128,425	$500,000
67 Permanent Supportive Housing Expansion Project	Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina	$1,200,000	$999,900
65 Equity & Resiliency Thru Affordable Homeownership	Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity	$900,000	$600,000
35 Clean-Energy Upgrades for Low-Income Housing	Green Built Alliance	$363,400	$250,000
57 Transformation Village Housing for Women & Children	ABCCM	$3,000,000	$999,900
17	**Total $ of initial recommended funding**		**$9,823,257**

Regarding the recommendations, (1) following up-to-date guidance from the Treasury, State, Legal, management and staff, the recommendation to fund $9,823,257 is an eligible and allowable use of ARPA funds and follows the City's guiding principles; (2) recommendation of $6 Million for revenue replacement funds (hold funds) for upcoming potential projects that have been previously discussed (i.e., Memorial Stadium); and (3) remaining funds for future awards from the RFP/other ARPA uses $2,084,384. The balance if recommended are moved forward as follows:

Total ARPA Award	**$26,293,853**
Total ARPA Budgeted to Date	**$8,386,212**
Amount remaining to be allocated by 12/31/2024	**$17,907,641**
Recommended funding 4/25/2022	**$9,823,257**
Remaining after initial recommendation for awards	**$8,084,384**
Recommended revenue replacement funds (Hold funds)	**$6,000,000**
Remaining funds for future awards from this RFP/other ARPA use	**$2,084,384**

The next step is to take feedback from today's workession and bring back final recommendations to City Council at their May 10, 2022, formal Council meeting.

After hearing the presentation, Ms. Marmon-Saxe responded to various questions/ comments from Council. As a result of that discussion, it was the consensus of Council to proceed with the recommendations recommended by City staff with the following exceptions: (1) increase Helpmate by $500,000 (for a total of $2 Million; (2) increase The Mediation Center by $250,000 (for a total of $750,000); and explore funding (or potential partial funding) for Pisgah Legal Services in the amount of $1,348,650.

In response to Councilwoman Roney's suggestion to look for other funding options for the City's project downtown restrooms project (which she supported), Mayor Manheimer said that she will be in a meeting later today to see what other funding opportunities are available.

Councilwoman Turner requested additional information on the Transformational Village Housing for Women & Children requested by ABCCM.

On behalf of City Council, Mayor Manheimer thanked all City staff that have worked on this project, along with all the applicants who have applied.

At 11:20 a.m., Mayor Manheimer adjourned the meeting.

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City Clerk Mayor