

**Carver Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Town Hall - 108 Main Street  
January 24, 2023 - 5:00pm**

In Attendance: Chair Mark Townsend, Vice-Chair Sarah Hewins, Jen Bogart, John Cotter, Jim Hoffman, Town Administrator Robert Fennessy, Assistant Town Administrator Elaine Weston & Finance Director Sue Moquin.

Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance and Hoffman read the community prayer.

**Citizens Participation:**

Townsend recommended that the Board not take any votes, but instead to listen to the proposals and to take votes at a future meeting.

**ARPA Proposals:**

TA Fennessy stated that the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Fund Advisory Committee was established by the Select Board on 9/6/2022. The Committee set out to gather information from committee members, Town officials and the public. Before the Board are recommendations that fit within the confines of the requirements of ARPA. Not all projects were submitted, only those that will qualify. Carver has received \$1,129,051.24 directly from the State which is available for the Town to use now. Plymouth County has an additional allotment of \$2,114,308.49 which can be accessed through the Town's application of projects. In addition, the North Carver Water District will return to the Town at Annual Town Meeting \$208,706.95 which the Town used for the purchase of membrane filters. Funds have to be used by 12/31/2024, unless a project is in process, then the deadline is 12/31/2026. The final total of funds allotted to Carver is \$3,452,066.68.

Townsend questioned if the Plymouth County funds were guaranteed. Fennessy stated that it depends on the applications the Town submits and if the projects are applicable.

1 . **Affordable Housing through Habitat for Humanity:** Amy Belmore, Executive Director presented proposal. The request is for \$405,000 which would support three new home builds in Carver. Belmore stated that Habitat homes are not gifted and are deed restricted. Homeowners are expected to put in a minimum of 250 hours of 'sweat equity'. Habitat has identified a handful of properties including 0 & 1 Roberts Way, 157 Plymouth St., 149 Main St. & 32 Great Meadow Dr.

It is anticipated that the homes would be completed by 12/31/2026. Belmore stated that approval at Town Meeting is needed. Townsend asked Fennessy to Clarify this. Fennessy stated that if no town funds are being used in addition to the ARPA funds, a Town Meeting vote

is not needed. Townsend asked if anything has been presented to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Belmore stated that they have not gone before the CPC yet.

Hewins asked which ARPA category this falls under. Belmore stated it falls under 'Addressing Negative Economic Impacts'.

Cotter asked if Habitat could guarantee that a Carver resident would be able to get the home. Belmore stated if there were not enough eligible residents that met all of the requirements, but they would have that as a preference. It would not preclude someone from another community applying for eligibility.

Cotter asked what would happen if one of the owners sells the home to make a profit and does it still stay as affordable housing. Belmore stated it remains in the Subsidized Housing Inventory in perpetuity because of the deed restriction. Mortgages are held through a Habitat partnership. Homeowners can take their equity out, but there is a set formula for what they can sell it for.

All properties listed are in tax title. Hewins stated the tax title properties would need to be transferred to the Select Board at Town Meeting and then an RFP would need to be done. Hewins asked if Habitat pays back taxes. Belmore stated that Habitat has done that in the past, but that is something that is taken into consideration when looking at a property.

Townsend asked if a local preference can be put on each of the homes. Belmore stated it can be put in that way. It is a multi-step application process including a written application and an on-site visit to see their current living conditions. This causes some applicants to withdraw from the process.

Townsend asked if local preference stays with the home once it is sold and is there a listing of people Habitat has. Belmore stated she will look into the local preference and that there is no listing, once a home is available, they advertise the availability.

Hewins asked if the Department of Housing & Community Development supports local preference. Belmore stated that applicants are not treated unfavorably because they want it to be a wide net.

Belmore added that if the proposal is approved, the RFP would need to be done in the summer.

**2. Recreation Pickleball Courts:** This has been removed as it would not qualify under the approved categories.

Bogart questioned why this would not qualify. Moquin stated because it does not fall under any of the categories already established, it would fall to the bottom of the list for potential approval.

**3. Middle High School renovation of culinary kitchen & community café:** Superintendent Scott Knief introduced the proposal. This proposal is requesting \$745,000 to support this renovation

and the balance of the funding would be requested through a combination of existing articles. There are currently 40 students in the culinary pathway program. The goal of the project is to provide our students with industry standard equipment to learn specific skills to the culinary and hospitality sector. The existing space is a converted standard classroom, the majority of the equipment is residential or home economics equipment. There are a few pieces of commercial equipment which have been donated from other schools and are decades old.

They are looking to fund phase I with the ARPA money which is the kitchen renovation. This would include industry standard equipment and safety infrastructure. Key equipment updates would include installing gas convection ovens and stove tops, fryers, range & griddle, multi-bay sink, new prep tables, ice and chiller machines and slicer. The plan also calls for salvaging and reusing existing equipment where feasible. Phase II is for a community café in an adjacent classroom.

There is a skills capital grant that is a possibility for funding, but there is no guarantee the school will be successful in securing the grant. Fennessy stated there could be a memorandum of agreement with the school that if the grant was received, the funds would come back to the Town.

Townsend questioned the cost of phase II. Knief stated it is \$552,456.

Bogart asked when they are looking to replace the Middle High School. Knief stated they are approximately 15 years out and are looking to expand things now for an entire generation of students which would extend from children entering Kindergarten who will graduate from the current school.

Cotter asked about the \$330,000 coming from articles at previous Town Meetings in 2021 & 2022. Chief Operations and Finance Officer of Schools Ron Griffin stated that upgrades in the amounts of \$50,000 and \$100,000 is from the culinary classroom upgrades item, the balance from the curriculum modules for the pathways program.

Cotter asked why they did not receive the Skills grant. Griffin stated one of the reasons is timing as the money received from the grant would need to be spent by June 30, which didn't seem reasonable. They are putting the next application forward for the grant and it would be up to the awarding authority to determine how much to award.

Cotter confirmed if the ARPA money is received that the money in the capital outlay request will be withdrawn. Knief confirmed this.

#### **Public Safety:**

**EMS:** Chief Michael Ryan presented the proposal. Ryan is requesting 2 cardiac monitors at the cost of \$92,000. The second request is dispatch software and broadband access for \$246,000. This is a quote from one vendor and Ryan can research other vendors. Ryan requested upgrades for HVAC for approximately \$25,000, the security system for \$40,000. This would

monitor the medications, expensive equipment and the ambulances. The last requested item is the wiring in of the fire alarm & carbon monoxide alarms. A quote has not been received on this item.

Cotter asked about the quote on the dispatch software. Ryan stated the quote is from the vendor that is used currently.

**EMS & Police Premium Pay:** Townsend asked if the Board could do just these departments. Fennessy stated that it needs to be done town-wide beginning with the lowest paid employees.

Ryan stated that EMS employees fell under 'essential employees' and was questioning if premium pay could be used for certain departments and if it is only for current employees.

Fennessy stated in speaking with Plymouth County Treasurer, there are no Plymouth County towns that have used the ARPA funding for premium pay and does not recommend using the funds for this.

**Emergency Management:** Chief Tom Walsh presented the proposal. The request is to modernize the Emergency Operation Center. This has been funded by Entergy, the owner of the nuclear power station. Now that the power plant is being decommissioned, the Town is left with infrastructure from the 1980's. There are many technology issues he faces occasionally. Townsend stated he thinks it is important and would like to see a quote for it.

**Fire:** Chief Craig Weston presented the proposal. The Town-wide fiber network is to connect stations #2 & #3. There is no fiber capacity at either ends of town. This would cost \$169,920. The second request is for a security access control system for stations #2 & #3. The cost for this is \$43,755. An example where this would benefit the Town is during a storm and cable is down, communications are lost. Having a fiber line directly to each public safety building including cameras, provides security. Cotter asked if this is underground. Weston stated it is not. The radio system uses fiber and microwave so if one goes down, they have a back up. Fiber cannot fail, but a microwave system can fail. The fiber lines are lower on the poles and typically do not break, but they lay on the ground. It is not often that the fiber would go down. If one line goes down, the entire town does not go down. The next request is IT upgrades in stations #2 & #3. The cost for this is \$19,050. There currently are no capabilities in these facilities. The next request for the stations are HVAC upgrades in station #2 & #3. Station #2 is 25 years old and in Station #3 only a/c is needed. The quote for this is \$45,000. Weston added that it is in the best interests of the town to add the Council on Aging to the fiber network which would come from station #3. This would cost \$207,000 and would negate the quote of \$169,920 which would give all municipal buildings in town a fiber connection. The new communications tower is being constructed in south Carver. This would be a fourth receiving site and the Fire Department has permission to install their equipment on this tower. The last request is for \$70,000 to purchase

the equipment and installation for the site. A.D. Makepeace has already donated the shelter and generator for the site.

**Police:** Chief Marc Duphily presented the proposal. The integrated records management system (IMC) has been being used since 2005 and is reaching its end of life within 3-5 years. The replacement would be from the original vendor. The initial cost is \$246,000 and there is an ongoing maintenance cost each year. The annual cost is currently \$16,000 increasing gradually each year. The future upgraded annual cost is considerably more. This is the system that is used when 9-1-1 calls come in.

Cotter asked about the total cost of the system. Duphily stated they met with the vendor to see if there are parts of the system that are not necessary to lower the cost.

**Town Hall IT & Technology:** TA Fennessy stated the Town Hall has connection issues throughout the Town Hall. Ockers gave two quotes, one with minimal upgrades is \$14,307 and with upgrades including changing the Select Board meeting room into a smart room, updating cables, installing a subfloor, increased quality on connections and would bring the Town Hall up to modern availability. The cost of this is \$51,925. This upgrade would only include meeting room #1. Townsend asked if we could get a quote for the basement conference rooms as well.

Council on Aging (COA): Restructuring of refrigerator, freezer, generator support system. COA Director Connie Kelly presented the proposal. Kelly stated they are currently working with ten different residential freezers of different capacities. They are aging, falling apart, they are not sealed correctly and food safety and staff safety is of utmost importance. Some freezers are only accessible from the outside which presents its own problems during snow and ice, as well as the darkness in the morning. Space and access is limited. Commercial refrigerators and freezers are too large for the space so the request is for residential sizes. The quote for the units is \$15,000. The food safety aspect would be to have well-running machines connected to the generator. This would also save money by having higher energy efficiency appliances.

Fennessy stated there are 9 freezers currently. It is approximately \$5,000 to rewire to connect to the generator.

Hoffman asked if this would replace all current with the exception of the outdoor freezer.

**Select Board ARPA discussion:**

Townsend asked the Board if they would like a separate meeting for the ARPA votes. Bogart stated they can be addressed at a regular meeting. Cotter stated he would like to have a separate meeting or add to a short meeting. Hoffman would like a separate meeting and would not want to feel rushed. Townsend would like to see a separate meeting as well.

Fennessy stated if the Board has any items they would like to add to the list to contact him and all quotes will need to be obtained for any outstanding items.

Townsend would like to see money spent on the Council on Aging. He asked Fennessy to meet with Kelly to see what other needs there are.

Townsend stated that the \$205,166 is coming back to the Town from the North Carver Water District. He would like to see a plan for the town-owned complex on Lakeview St. and would like to see a well-planned proposal for the entire property.

Bogart proposed a tetherball court and bicycle routes including directional signs and safety 'sharrows' on the route. The route came from the Bike Path Advisory Committee and Open Space and Recreation Plan. The 'sharrows' alert motorists that there may be bicyclists on the road.

Townsend asked Fennessy to see if this is something that would be approved. Since this existed before, it may have a better chance.

Cotter asked if there is anything going over a dirt path that would need to be paved. Bogart stated that it is expensive to do that the state noted there is not enough support for it for funding to towns.

Hoffman asked if a recreation center is feasible. He also asked about upgrading the technology in the auditorium since it is used for public meetings and Town Meeting. O&M Director Siedentopf stated there is lighting replacement upgrades happening now. On the upper seating, it has been transformed into an AV room. Upgrades to the speakers have been done. Knief stated there will be improved sound and stage lighting. Siedentopf stated that proximity microphones are replacing older microphones. Fennessy asked about WiFi in the school. Knief stated that the school controls where WiFi is turned on and no upgrades are needed, it is more a matter of turning on the guest network and distributing the password when a meeting is going on.

Hoffman asked about additional potential items for ARPA funding. Hoffman stated the COA HVAC will use grant funding for their project. The library HVAC completion is needed and if funds were left over, the funding can be used for that as it would qualify. Other items include accounting software upgrade & Middleboro water tie-in.

**Select Board Community Announcements:**

Cotter: None

Bogart: None

Hewins: None

Hoffman: None

Townsend: None

**Next Meeting:**

January 28, 2023

Motion to adjourn at 7:30pm by Hoffman, second by Hewins.

Vote 5-0

Listing of Exhibits: ARPA proposals submitted by Habitat for Humanity, Carver Public Schools, Carver EMS, Fire, Police & Emergency Management, Quote on Town Hall IT and quote on Council on Aging refrigerator, freezer and generator support system, requests from Bogart for tetherball and bicycle routes.