

ARPA Committee Meeting

Cole Hall and remotely via the Zoom platform

Friday, June 17, 2022

Call to order

Andrea Bacchi called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Also present were Naomi Miller, Rick Bennett, and Betsy Habberfield. Martha Cornwell also participated, as did town administrator David Kiernan.

Minutes

Naomi Miller moved to accept the xxx minutes. Ms. Habberfield seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Goals and planning

Ms. Bacchi reported she had further edited the postcard and the online survey. Attendees offered other thoughts. Mr. Bennett suggested leaving the postcard out at the transfer station permit table and at businesses in the area. Ms. Miller suggested passing them out at the lake, at the parade on the Fourth, at N. Bennington Market. Ms. Habberfield asked for a cheat sheet to help with public outreach. Ms. Kiernan said he'd found a printer, Easy Print, to do direct mailing to all 05262 and 05257 addresses, a total of 2278 addresses. Some fifty addresses in the East Road area will be labelled in house as they are served by the Bennington P.O. Ms. Cornwell suggested Midnight Madness (July 14th) and several popular gathering places such as Hemmings Cruise-Ins (July 7 and August 8), and a Lions fundraiser in July.

The group discussed how to pitch the public outreach. Does it begin with the question: Do you live in Shaftsbury? Should the outreach also include cheerleading for Shaftsbury amenities? Ms. Habberfield said she could bring out her easel and put the message up on it. She'll put together a poster for everyone to comment on. Mr. Bennett will compile "catch phrases" suggested by other committee members.

Mr. Kiernan asked how many postcards total the group would like to have printed up. He wasn't sure what the additional price would be. It was agreed that no more than 500 additional would be printed up.

Ms. Bacchi will add a statement to the effect that "each member of your household is encouraged to respond" to the postcard and survey. She will come up with language announcing the link on Front Porch Forum. Ms. Cornwell suggested asking TruLove, Clearbrook, and Mighty Food Farm if they would share such an announcement in their weekly newsletters. Ms. Miller will reach out to Mighty Food. Mr. Bennett will reach out to Clearbrook and Karen Trubitt.

Ms. Bacchi will regularly send out Front Porch forum posts about the card and survey. Ms. Miller moved to designate to Ms. Bacchi the authority to design the wording for the Front Porch Forum post and to change it weekly as needed. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Kiernan suggested the cards might arrive in residences by July 1.

The group agreed to send in suggestions about the language for the heads-up to the survey.

Ms. Bacchi will share access to the Typeform account. Ms. Miller will be her backstop.

Mr. Bennett asked about the committing of ARPA funds for a study of ADA renovations for Cole Hall. Ms. Miller asked Mr. Kiernan where the ARPA committee sits in the process of making decisions re

ARPA funds. Mr. Kiernan said the committee is advisory only, and final decisions will be made by the Select Board. The group agreed that the ARPA funding should be seed money for transformational projects, and that projects identified during the survey process might be placed on the town's future to-do list, no matter how they are to be funded.

Public comments

Ms. Cornwell congratulated the group on their work.

Other business

The next meeting will be held Friday July 1 at 9 a.m. Once post cards are in hand, the committee will start organizing personal visits.

Mr. Kiernan said he hopes to get the post cards by the end of next week. He will deliver a bunch to the transfer station.

Review of action items

Ms. Habberfield: poster

Mr. Bennett: compile a list of catch phrases; reach out to Clearbrook and TruLove re including survey heads-up in their newsletters; compile a list of events at which public outreach will be undertaken.

Ms. Bacchi moved to adjourn at 10:20 a.m. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.