

**Town of Shaftsbury**  
**ARPA Advisory Committee Community Meeting**

Cole Hall & Zoom

Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. Present were ARPA committee members Andrea Bacchi (chair), Betsy Habberfield, Rick Bennett, and Naomi Miller. Also present was town administrator David Kiernan and members of the community.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. September 29, 2022 Meeting Minutes Approval

Ms. Miller moved to approve the September 29 minutes. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

4. ARPA Funding Survey Results Presentation

Ms. Bacchi shared slides summarizing the results:

- 164 residents responded.
- High ranking categories were improve commerce in the village, enhance outdoor recreation, provide indoor meetings spaces, maintain and repair infrastructure, improve communications about the community.
- Respondents reported on what they like about Shaftsbury: peaceful, low crime, simple life, melting pot of different cultures and people, Shaftsbury Community Club, friendly people, weather, Howard Park, McCullough Free Library, Clearbrook Farm, clean air and water, no billboards, close to a good hospital, accessibility to the arts, wildlife, progress on roads, North Bennington.

5. ARPA Funding Survey Results Community Feedback

Carl Korman asked if the purpose of the meeting is to say generically or specifically what we would like. Ms. Miller explained that the data had been aggregated into categories, described in Ms. Bacchi's presentation. Attendees tonight are invited to comment further as they wish.

Mr. Korman said his priority is a commerce center in the town for food, shops, etc., but understands that public sewers and parking and perhaps other infrastructure are first necessary. His second priority is therefore meeting places. He recommends however that the town look at public sewers.

Mr. Korman recommended the town look at the old Dailey office to see if it might serve as a meeting place, food venue, and the like.

Barbara Marino suggested that focusing on the McCullough library could lead to omitting the other nearby libraries.

Additionally, she advocated for facilities for seniors, even if only once a month senior social.

She advocated for main street beautification.

She suggested a bus shelter, perhaps near the cemetery.

She thanked Tim Scoggins for all he did to bring broad band to town.

Mr. Bennett noted that more granular data will be made available at the November 7 presentation to the Select Board.

Cinda Morse asked about a timeline for spending the ARPA money. She said since it is one-time money, it should be spent on things that are one-time issues or problems, not on starting things that need to be continued for which funds are not now available. Mr. Kiernan said funds must be spent by December 31 2026. It was pointed out that the schedule on which the monies are spent will depend in large part on what projects are chosen.

Alan Baker seconded what Ms. Morse said. He mentioned Cole Hall as an example of such a project.

Mr. Korman suggested choosing something that might bring money and businesses in, such as a week-long festival in Howard Park – something to bring people in at that time of year. Spaces could be leased to businesses.

Another citizen advocated for promoting business in the village.

The citizen advocated making greater and more imaginative use of Howard Park, perhaps in concert with area businesses.

Barbara Marino advocated fixing Cole Hall once and forever. She encouraged folks to participate in the activities of the Recreation Committee.

Ms. Marino noted that sewer in the Village would not directly benefit those on private septic systems. Ms. Miller responded that the survey found that food venues downtown ranked most highly, and noted that without public sewer there could be no food venues downtown.

Kathy Cardiff said she was in favor of “one and done,” and also called out the old Baptist Church in center Shaftsbury as worthy of preservation.

Kate Kline pointed out how many staff and volunteers are needed to put on something like a week-long festival, and that Bennington is already involved in such activities.

Cinda Morse asked if the committee has criteria of its own in developing recommendations to the Select Board. Mr. Bennett said no, that citizens’ voices and the number of citizens’ voices would determine the recommendations. Ms. Bacchi recommended looking at the survey results as compiled on the town website. She also read a mission statement for the committee posted on the website. Betsy Habberfield noted that the ARPA RFP poses some limits on the kinds of projects that can be funded, and that some ideas suggested by citizens are outside the purview of the town.

Jenny Rozicki of the McCullough Library described a mobile library, a 24-hour library kiosk as an option for funding by ARPA. Mr. Bennett noted that one-third of the library’s card holders are Shaftsbury residents.

Ms. Miller said the committee has been trying to imagine how to put ideas together in synergistic fashion.

Mr. Bennett reported the next ARPA meeting will be held Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> at 9 a.m. The committee will address the comments made tonight at that time.

## 9. Adjournment

Ms. Miller moved to adjourn at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Habberfield seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.