

Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
May 26, 2022 6:00 PM
Held via Zoom

1. **Call to Order:** Board of Finance Chair Rone Baldwin called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Also in attendance were: Board of Finance members Steve Ezzes, Jeff Farr, Amy Gare, Michael Imber, Dick Bochinski, and Jamie Zeppernick ; Board of Selectmen members First Selectwoman Sam Nestor, Selectman Martin Mohabeer, Selectwoman Amy Jenner; Finance Director Rick Darling; Building Committee Chair and member of ARPA Advisory Group Joe Stromwell; and Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz. Approximately 60 members of the public were also in attendance

2. **Public Hearing:** Mr. Baldwin gave an overview of the ARPA plan as presented to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance on May 12, 2022. Mr. Luiz stated the procedures for public comment using Zoom by computer and phone. Selectwoman Nestor encouraged the public to also send emails to Board members with questions or comments.

Comments were heard from members of the public:

- Susan Baron: internet band-width improvements are needed throughout Town and would like to see broadband infrastructure in the ARPA plan, senior center bathroom cost seems low, questioned composting and pickle ball courts, road maintenance is important. Need more communication from Town, tablets and phones do not show all website information. Mr. Luiz provided information about new cell towers and addressed the cost of bathroom renovation. Selectwoman Nestor provided information about road paving and pickle ball courts.
- Gillann Blunski, Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee: read letter on behalf of DEI Advisory Committee requesting funds for DEI initiatives.
- Lynn Ries, Buttonball Lane: questioned use of funds for community projects, other priorities and necessities should be prioritized including security, cell towers, AC in schools.
- Michelle Liguori, Georgetown Road: against expenditures not explicitly laid out at federal level, prioritize police and public safety, build up emergency response and mental health services, spoke about dangerous driving and read a letter from a resident regarding driving incident reported to police, also spoke about mold in school building.
- Margaret Wirtenberg, former resident of Weston: provided general support for projects.
- Jeff Seide, Wood Hill Road: expressed concerns about proposed location of school emergency access on Wood Hill, he supports emergency access and has emailed Boards other viable alternative locations.
- Gregg Haythorn: concerned about accountability of accomplishing projects, emphasis should be placed on road improvements, expressed thoughts on public hearing process.
- Ed Migliaccio, Wood Hill Road: inquired about public vote process.
- Leslie Burhans, Georgetown Road: priorities should be community wellness, school security infrastructure .
- Theresa Brasco, Laurel Lake East: supports road improvements and road safety, questioned need of pickle ball courts.
- Nina Daniel, Good Hill Road: important to address mental health issues of seniors and minorities in the wake of covid, requested that emails received by Town be presented in back-up material, questioned need for pickle ball courts, supports funding for DEI.
- Katherine McConaughy, Valley Forge Road: supports community projects.

- Woody Bliss, Grays Farm Road: spoke of on-going expenses of projects, pickle ball court inside senior center are rarely used.
 - Marisela Esposito, White Oak Lane: this meeting should have taken place earlier in process, take feedback and recommendations into consideration, supports funding for mental health issues relates to public safety, asked if police cameras could be funded here, expressed support for pickle ball and dog park as related to mental health. Asked about timeframe for funds that are not part of matching grants. Selectman Mohabeer spoke about the importance of DEI initiatives and will be considered. Selectwoman Nestor and Mr. Baldwin spoke about funding process and timeframes. Selectwoman Nestor spoke about the overall paving plan.
 - Noah Cohen-Cline, Salem Road: supports community projects like town green and dog park, feels important to health and growth of town and ties into community development; endorsed comments from DEI Chair
 - Lisa Flanagan, Merry Lane: asked what projects were considered but did not make the list and were future maintenance costs considered, supports mental health services, food insecurity services, public safety, public health, including paving as public safety. Mr. Baldwin responded about other projects and the process of determining what to include in ARPA plans and consideration of future costs.
 - Carol Baldwin, Fanton Hill Road: supports Lachat Town Farm and its importance in the community
 - Melissa Conner, Wells Hill Road: DEI Advisory Committee member, supports DEI request.
 - Deirdre Doran, Old Farm Road: expressed support for Lachat in supporting the community.
 - Sonia Skindrud, Old Farm Road: supports sustainability and DEI, concerned about environmental issues
 - Vanessa Richards, Good Hill Road: member of DEI Advisory Committee, supports DEI request.
 - Nicci Wiese, Ridge Road: Chair of Sustainable Weston, supports more involvement of sustainability, provided more information on food scrap recycling program.
 - Gillan Blunski: asked what next steps for DEI request would be. Mr. Luiz explained process and Selectwoman Nestor requested additional information about their request, including future funding for projects. Selectman Mohabeer spoke about pilot programs, as did Mr. Baldwin.
 - Michelle Fracasso: supports sustainability initiatives, community activities, and support for DEI, less supportive of Ravenwood.
 - James Maggio, High Noon Road: supports Ravenwood as this is a town obligation, supports town wide water testing and water quality, supports road improvement. Mr. Stromwell spoke about town wide water testing and Asptuck Health District.
 - Nina Daniel: suggested dropping pickle ball court and fund senior center and commission on aging.
 - Theresa Brasco: supports road improvements and advocates outdoor activities.
 - Michelle Liguori: youth mental health and safety should be prioritized over community projects.
 - Carolyn Welsh, Richmond Hill Road: supports DEI, invest in existing programs on public safety, roads, traffic, water quality.
 - Mr. Baldwin and Selectwoman Nestor thanked the ARPA Advisory Group, BOS, BOF, and all participants. The community is encouraged to email their comments to the BOS and BOF. Mr. Baldwin reviewed the next steps; June 1 BOS meets for discussion, June 2 BOS and BOF meet, June 9 Special Town Meeting and June 18 machine ballot vote.
3. **Adjourn Board of Finance:** Mr. Imber made a motion to adjourn. Second by Mr. Farr, motion carried unanimously. Board of Finance adjourned at 8:30 pm
 4. **Adjourn Board of Selectmen:** Selectman Mohabeer made a motion to. Second by Selectwoman Jenner, motion carried unanimously. Board of Selectmen adjourned at 8:31 pm.