

Bakersfield Town ARPA Meeting
Wednesday, July 27, 2022
6:00pm

Residents attending: Brenda Churchill (Bakersfield ARPA Coordinator), John West, Linda McCall, Kathryn Rosenberg, Cheryl Irwin, Alice and Gary Foote, Lyle Willey, Nicky Cribb, Wendy Cobb, Tami Brennan

Brenda introduced herself and said that this was Bakersfield's 2nd official ARPA meeting. She said that the Final Rule to the Final Rule did not come out until April. Brenda said that she is responsible to follow those rules. Brenda asked if those petitioning for funds had read the Final Rule. The attendants said that they had. Brenda asked if their request would qualify for the Final Rule. Brenda said that ultimately the petition will go to the Select Board for appraisal. Brenda said that we are waiting for the final ARPA payment which will bring our ARPA total to \$390,000.00.

The attendees asked if there was a formal application. Brenda said that John had taken the time to draw up a formal application and then U.S. Treasury changed the final rule, so the application didn't apply. Brenda asked if the applicants had already applied for funds from other grants, etc.

Nicky asked if this was the Final Rule that won't be subject to change. Brenda said that they could change it. This Final Rule is dated April 28, 2022.

Nicky asked when Brenda thought that the Select Board would be ready to disperse the funds to approved projects. Brenda said that she hoped to get Select Board approval in November, recommendation in December and issue a final ruling in January.

Rosalie said that she was attending just to know what is going on. She said that she had read the rule and she works with other agencies. She asked Brenda how many applications she had received so far. Brenda said that there are about half a dozen folks with proposals. She said that basically she is asking two questions. Brenda said that they are not making any decisions tonight. They are just getting started and that anybody can put a proposal in.

John said that the Town is submitting proposals as well. A new Town water tank monitoring system would allow the pump to run more accurately. It would have a float system that would tell it when to fill. Right now, it's on a timer. This would be critical for the infrastructure of the town.

John said that the second proposal is the matter of the town grader which is 31 years old and a tractor that is over 25 years old.

John said that third town concern is that there is currently no back up for the town records. If those records are somehow destroyed, stolen, lost in any way there is no way to replace them.

Nicky asked if the town will be subject to the same process of application to ensure an equitable way of applying for the funds.

Proposal #1- Kathryn Rosenberg spoke for the Fairfield Community Center. She said that the center had lost funds due to not being able to have their fundraiser, the Jig in the Valley, during Covid. John asked if the Community Center has presented their proposal to Fairfield. Kathryn said that they have presented to Fairfield and have been approved for \$60,000.00. She said they are asking Bakersfield for \$20,000.00. She said that half of their services are provided to Bakersfield residents and a third of their volunteers come from Bakersfield. She said they want to make some capital improvements to their facility. Kathryn said that they found that their facility was inadequate to provide the services that they do...provide meals and produce take outs and the food shelf. She said that the west part of their building is chopped up into several small rooms and they want to open it up and upgrade the kitchen to provide services. Kathryn said that they have raised bed gardens that are available to anyone who wants to pick. She said that they hand out produce and do kids educational programs. They want to restore the existing raised garden beds and build a handicapped accessible raised bed. She said that the section of their facility that is used as a daycare is being used by the Fairfield pre-school and they are asking Bakersfield to provide the fence. Brenda asked if anybody had any questions for Kathryn. There were no questions. Brenda said that she was familiar with the facility and asked Kathryn to come back as part of the subcommittee and be part of the decision-making process.

Proposal #2- Linda McCall and Gary Foote appeared for the Historical Society. They had submitted an application for funds in April and since then they have paid the first payment on their loan. They said that Gary and Alice co-signed on the loan from the Trustees of Public Funds for the Town of Bakersfield, because at the time they were told that there was money coming up from Washington that might be able to help with this. Gary said that the Historical Society can't get any other grants because they have a loan and if the town could pay that off, then they can apply for some grants and there are other things that need to be done to the building to make it a year-round building for Community use. Gary said they are requesting \$40,000.00 to pay off the loan, so we can apply for some grants.

Linda reminded the board that the Halloween Storm had damaged the building and unlike the road issues, we didn't know the damage until the frost left in the Spring and by then Covid had hit. She said they usually have a big fundraiser on the 4th of July but that didn't happen during Covid, which was a good thing at that time because to have anyone close to the Historical Society building would have been dangerous since parts of the back portion were in danger of collapsing. She said school was closed for Covid, so there were no kids sliding and getting near the building as well. Linda said that they had applied for grants in 2020, but in the fall of 2020, structural engineers weren't

coming because of conditions before the vaccine, and we were denied because we didn't have that report. When they did finally come, the structural engineers said that if you start jacking up the building to repair it, the gable will collapse and they would be a danger to the workers and all, so the quote for the repair went from \$50,000.00 to \$80,000.00. Linda said that they had already received a grant for \$10,000.00.

Proposal #3- Linda McCall and Lyle Willey appeared on behalf of the needed repairs on the Hearse House. They said that this municipal building has historic value and is a part of the town's infrastructure. Linda said that Nancy Hunt was going to get it listed on the National Historic Registry, but she passed before she was able to do so. Lyle has put together a group of volunteers and put together a price list for materials needed for repairs which is very reasonable. If we took this to a grant program and got insured contractors, the cost could be ten times this amount. Lyle said that the medium beam had completely collapsed and there is no floor on the left-hand side. It has not affected the walls yet but if not fixed it will become irreparable. He said that there are broken windows and the windows on the back side have been destroyed, the roof is good, needs paint and a new floor where the Cemetery equipment is placed, so we need a safe floor. Maria currently parks her zero-turn mower on that floor and that is not safe. Terry said that there is a broken window theory that says if you have one broken window, you will have more broken window and if you fix the broken window, you will not get more broken windows.

Linda said that they are requesting the amount of \$5,499.88 for materials for repairs and the labor is being donated.

Linda said that the Cemetery Commission has been responsible for the upkeep throughout Covid, and volunteers have kept up the flower garden on the Town Green and the walkway in the cemetery have new stones in them.

Proposal #4- Nicky Cribb and Cheryl DeRue appeared on behalf of the Brigham Library. They have two projects- the first being the clean-up of the current flooring. The original flooring is asbestos tile, and it is currently covered with indoor/outdoor carpeting that is glued down. For the last 5-6 years, the cleaners have said that this could be the last time and then that last time was the last time and we had to sign a waiver. There is also a dampness to the carpeting that does not go away. Back in November, VLCT came and did an inspection, and we were told that we had trouble with the carpeting. Nicky and Cheryl said that My Box Company has storage units and a weight limit for what you can safely store, so they may need two storage units to contain the weight of the books. Cheryl said that they have looked into getting pre-finished flooring from Lumber Liquidators and what they would charge if we can't find a local installer. Cheryl also included a quote for the removal and installation of a new door system. She said that the door the library has currently is a residential door and not up to code. Cheryl said that we have to bring it up to

code and the new door will be more insulating and cost efficient. The quote for both projects comes to \$26,980.00.

John said that VLCT had grants to apply for building maintenance. Nicky said they have looked. John said he will look again for building projects in 2023.

Linda said it's the same grants as the NWRPC.

Nicky said that the school also uses the library for testing and the Pre-K class comes on alternate weeks. Cheryl said the younger they are the more likely they are to sit on the floor. They provided pictures of programs that they have held over the last 4-5 years.

Project #5- Alice Foote spoke on behalf of the Conservation Commission and said that she felt there is a big misunderstanding about their creation and their purpose. She said that the CC is a wing of the town itself and all they do is approved by the Select Board. Alice spoke of improving the barn on the town park beyond the white fence, so at least it's stable. She said that the town got a loan to buy it originally. She said that we have had it over 10 years and have paid it off in 10 increments. Alice said that this whole section is owned by the town and has been there for many years and they would like to see it restored to a useful purpose. She said that some people think it's beyond repair and needs to be removed. Alice said that we have to get a historical contractor to get an estimate and need to get approval by the Select board to get it done. Alice said that she is asking Brenda tonight to give us a chance to think this through and have a chance to make a presentation. Alice said that they don't know how much fixing it will need, and they have a person in town anxious to rent it and use it.

Brenda said that she would like to see what you have. She said that she plans to have a series of 5-6 meetings with the next meeting in 3-4 weeks and wrap it up in November. Brenda said that she wants to make it known around town and she wants things to be totally transparent.

Project #6- John said that the town is planning on putting in an application to buy a new grader which costs about \$330,000.00. He said that we have some money in the new equipment fund, and we have a trade-in. We need a new grader and are looking for funds to offset the cost in taxes in some way. John said that we have been talked about graders since March. Our grader has a lot of problems, and it is costing a lot of money to keep it going and the same thing is happening with the tractor. John said that we have had to hire someone to do the work that our tractor can't do, and we can't afford to have them do it all, so we can only hire them to do part of the work.

Project #7- John said another project the town would like to have done is a new system for the Watershed. John said that currently, the town water pump is run on a timer that runs if it is needed or not. This system would only run when the spring needs to refill and would be more efficient.

Project #8- John said that another project that needs to be done in the town is to have the records in the vault backed up. If anything happens to the 150 years of records due to fire, water, vandalism or theft, there would be no way to replace them.

Linda said with all due respect, the situations presented here tonight are also going to need to be funded by taxes. Nicky asked if the town's application would be considered with the same weight as all the other applications. Brenda said yes, they will all be considered on equal ground. Brenda said that we all want to do something good with the funds. She said that we are grateful for the funds and how the state disposed them to help the towns and relieve the tax base. Brenda said that she is looking for information for the town proposals and for Alice to bring the Conservation Committee proposal.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.