

**TOWN OF CANTON, CONNECTICUT**  
**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**  
**Wednesday, January 26, 2022**

A Special Town Meeting of the Town of Canton was held on Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. immediately following the Annual Town Meeting in the Canton Public Library and Community Center, 40 Dyer Avenue, Collinsville, CT. David Leff, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. The Town Clerk, Linda Smith, read the call of the meeting and the return of notice.

1. Robert Bessel moved that the meeting consider and take action on the following question:

Shall the Town of Canton approve the ARPA Assistance Plan which outlines \$2,535,863 of expenditures for COVID 19 relief and various municipal projects, to be funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021(ARPA).

Seconded by Tim LeGeyt.

Discussion:

Chief Administrative Officer Robert Skinner explained the American Rescue Assistance Act was signed into law in response to the pandemic. Over three million dollars was appropriated to Canton. We have already received the first half of the funding last June and will receive the second half this June. They must be encumbered by the end of 2024 and spent by 2026.

ARPA can be used to address the negative impacts created by COVID, including impacts to businesses and families

- Premium pay for essential workers
- Investment in Sewer, Water and Broadband
- Replacement of government revenues lost due to the COVID Pandemic

The Treasury Department was tasked with defining each category through interim rules. Basically they stated that the first ten million dollars each municipality gets (which is all of ours) can be used for lost revenue to spend on government services. This gives us freedom to spend the money with some exceptions. ARPA funds cannot be used to directly off-set taxes, be paid into a pension fund, be used for debt service, or be used to pay legal settlements or judgements.

While there is no set process in the statute for the approval process, Canton is following the same appropriation process specified in our Charter:

- Approved by Board of Selectmen and referred to Board of Finance
- Approved by Board of Finance and sent back to Board of Selectmen to schedule Town Meeting
- Town Meeting for Final approval

Our process over the past six months has been:

- July 2021 – Matter referred to CIP Committee to Develop ARPA Assistance Plan
- September 2021 – Plan is reviewed by Selectmen and referred to BOF for review and comments
- October 2021 – Plan reviewed by BOF and sent back to the Selectmen
- 11/23/2021 – Selectmen hold a Public Hearing and take comments from the general public.
- 12/20/21 – BOF approves the Plan and refers back to Selectmen to schedule Town Meeting
- 12/22/21 – Selectmen set 1/26/2022 as Town Meeting date to approve the plan

The overall theme of ARPA is how can these funds be utilized to enhance the quality of life for our residents, especially considering the impacts of COVID. The team came up with five categories and 22 projects in the areas of health and well-being, safety, outdoor recreation, support for non-profits (tourism), small business, and facility improvements.

Other considerations involved limiting the mill rate increases by funding capital expenditures and limiting future expenses by supporting non-reoccurring costs such as staffing.

The projects are:

#### Health / Wellness

- Social Service Fund \$60,000
- School Psychological Services \$40,000

#### Safety

- Fire Department Air Packs \$360,000
- Public Offices Security Improvements \$70,000

#### Outdoor Recreation

- Bike Trail Improvements \$359,000
- Renovate CIS Field \$65,000
- Splash Pad \$125,000
- Outdoor Exercise Equipment \$25,000
- River Access \$340,000
- Replace Pool Shell \$90,000
- New Little League Field \$250,000
- Mills Pond Park Playground Equipment \$75,000

#### Nonprofit / Tourism and Business Support

- Local Shuttered Tourism Grant \$70,000
- Artist Support Grant \$20,000
- Support Main Street Fund \$25,000
- Business Stability Fund \$100,000

Facility Improvements

- HVAC for Town Hall Auditorium \$152,863
- HVAC for High School Auditorium \$150,000
- CBS Broadband Improvements \$49,000
- Town Technology Support \$50,000
- Community Center Furnishings \$35,000.00
- Showers at the Community Center \$25,000.00

Total ARPA Funding           \$3,034,667  
Total ARPA Expenditures    \$2,535,863  
Total Reserve                 \$ 498,804

Reserves will be appropriated using the same Charter process.

The process of accounting for funds would be very similar to the Town’s current CIP. Each fund would have its own line item and expenditures would be documented. Similar to CIP, unexpended funds could be re-designated to existing or new projects.

Next steps:

- Social Service/Psychological Services fund could be set up immediately.
- Capital Expenditures will have to go through normal competitive procurement process.
- Non-profit / Business grant application process will need to be further developed and finalized.
- Continue to monitor and pursue other grant opportunities.
  - Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
  - State ARPA Grant Opportunities

Comments:

Fred Swan – 39 Case Street

There being no further discussion, the motion vote was passed unanimously with a voice vote.

Robert Bessel made a motion to adjourn. Ken Humphrey seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42pm

Linda Smith, Town Clerk

Received for record January 27, 2022.