

**SELECT BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 4, 2023, AT 7:00PM**  
**TOWN HALL, THIRD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

Chair Allen Phillips called the meeting to order approximately 7:00PM. Select Board Chair Allen Phillips, Vice Chair Rick Antanavica, Second Vice Chair Dianna Provencher, Selectman Herb Duggan Jr, Selectman John Bujak, Town Administrator David Genereux, and Assistant Town Administrator Chris Vitale were in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER/OPENING**

**1. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**a. CARE Group ARPA Funding Discussion**

Mr. Phillips called the work session to order at 7:00PM and turned it over to Town Administrator Genereux. Mr. Genereux stated he and Mr. Phillips met with the CARE group last week and had discussions on their concerns with the initial list of projects presented to the Select Board in November. Mr. Genereux stated there is an article at the Special Town Meeting but believes nothing productive would come out of it. Rather, it made sense to have the conversation now and then have the board ratify a policy at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Phillips talked about removing the town items from the scope of the asking for the CARE group's thoughts for the grant program.

Ms. Provencher asked if a committee would be formed to review grants before coming to the Select Board. Ms. Provencher stated if there was a committee, advisory or other committee members shouldn't be reviewing the grant applications. Ms. Provencher stated it should be members of the public to do it right. Additionally, the town may get more volunteers out of it. Mr. Phillips and other Select Board members agreed. Mr. Antanavica asked how many people would be on the review committee. Mr. Fontaine stated their goal was to have more people involved and they were thinking seven. Mr. Fontaine suggested that the Select Board could appoint someone to sit on review committee. Mr. Genereux stated the Town Administrator's Office can be there for advice and to assist, but not to vote.

Mr. Antanavica asked how they plan to address applications coming through and whether the information is public. Mr. Phillips stated it is public record, but personal identifiable information would be redacted.

Select Board members are CARE group members discussed the program outline provided by Mr. Fontaine. Members discussed the funding breakdown and the process for having accountability for spending. Mr. Vitale suggested reimbursable expenses depending on if the need is immediate or not. CARE suggested having flexibility based on the type of application. Select Board members agreed.

Mr. Phillips stated there could be three tiers of grant awards: \$5000, \$10,000, \$25,000 (Small, Med. Large). The CARE group representatives agreed.

Mr. Bujak raised several concerns, including giving out money to businesses, inflation, the openness of the grant program as designed, conflict of interest of CARE group representatives, potential abuse of funds, the fact Town entities need funds, and the fact this isn't being voted at Town Meeting.

Select Board members responded to the concerns, and stated ARPA funds are the purview of the Select Board, not Town Meeting. Mr. Phillips stated if we do this program, it's because we want to do it. CARE group

representatives stated it's a small town, and the organizations shouldn't be penalized for having certain individuals involved.

Select Board members and CARE group members went back and forth on total funding amounts for the program.

Mr. Bujak stated he would prefer making other funds available to the CARE group and having those funds voted on at Town Meeting. Mr. Bujak stated the Select Board is authoritatively making decisions. Mr. Bujak stated John Shocik was a good man, but he got voted out because people wanted change. Mr. Bujak stated this is old politics.

Mr. Bujak suggested the full \$330K as originally requested but allow town commissions and boards to seek funding. Mr. Phillips stated he is open to \$330K total, but departments and advisory boards are not eligible. The grant fund should not pay for town operation expenses.

Mr. Fontaine asked what the motion would be at town meeting, to which Town Moderator Belanger stated they could withdraw the petition. Mr. Phillips asked for the creation of the committee be put on the Tuesday 1/10 agenda for a vote. The amount would also get voted on Tuesday.

*No action was taken by the Select Board on this agenda item.*

**Motion 010423-1:** A motion was made by Ms. Provencher to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Antanavica. **Motion carries 5-0-0.**

**ADJOURN**