

Finance Advisory Committee 11-16-21 minutes

Members: Timm Harris, Gordon Little, Rusty Marine (SB Liaison), Sheila Morse (chair), Lynn Pancake, Anne Rider

Absent: Rusty Marine

1. Approval of Minutes of 10.25.21 Meeting: Gordon moved and Lynn seconded that the minutes be approved. Vote was four in favor with Timm abstaining as he had not participated in the prior meeting.
2. Discussion of gift to the Town of the Guilford Meeting House: *Should the Town acquire the building for use by the library, or other purpose?*
 - a. The Selectboard has not weighed in on this. They did listen to a presentation by the Meetinghouse trustees, after which Cathi Wilken indicated that she was not in favor of the proposed gift.
 - b. FAC members noted that
 - i. the gift of the building will entail substantial expenses initially and then probably over the long term (Ceiling \$19,810; Roof \$ 125,00), and the Town would incur costs to bring the building up to code.
 - ii. there was no compelling reason to disregard the assessment and recommendations prepared by Goldstone Architecture.
 - iii. funds required to improve and maintain the building could be put to better use by the Town.
 - iv. With regard to possible future use of the building for small gatherings and presentations, it was noted that for \$5000 annually the Town partners with BBCC which has a better capacity for hosting such gatherings. BBCC facilities can be used year-round and would be ADA accessible. Additionally, there are parking and toilet facilities which the Meetinghouse does not have.
 - v. The library current expansion plans make more sense than adapting the meetinghouse to its use, per the architect.
 - vi. The MH might possibly lose its historical status.
 - c. The FAC considered if the Town should accept the building for other possible uses and felt that there was no real need.
 - i. Perhaps there are other funds that could be used to preserve and protect it. If the Town takes it on, they have to pursue funding. But it's really the responsibility of the Historical Society.
 - ii. Failing that, the FAC acknowledged that someone or some other entity might want to purchase the building.
 - d. **Motion: Gordon moved and Timm seconded that the FAC recommend to the SB that the town not accept ownership. All were in favor.**

3. ARPA Funds

- a. *On Wednesday, 10/13/21, the SB voted unanimously to ask the Finance Advisory Committee to work with the SB and others in the community to explore how the ARPA funds might best be used to (a) benefit individuals and organizations that were negatively impacted by COVID and (b) also see how these funds might be used for longer term benefits that could help mitigate such negative experiences in the future.*
- b. A few small businesses have applied, but not that many. Marc (Guilford Country Store) will apply, GPI will, Neighborhood Roots, among others.
- c. Following are salient points from the ensuing discussion:
 - i. Two primary uses of ARPA funding include infrastructure and helping nonprofits. With regard to infrastructure:
 1. The Conservation Commission shared the Land Use section they prepared for the new Town Plan, in which they're recommending that development be in more highly concentrated sections of Town, leaving wilderness and open spaces alone.
 2. CC4G, Neighborhood Roots, GPI, Guilford Cares are thinking about their resources and needs and working cooperatively with other nonprofits. One common factor is they all need water and sewer.
 3. The Town should consider creating a fire district that extends the water district too Weatherhead Hollow, Guilford Center Road, Guilford Center Village to facilitate acknowledged needs of the Town such as elder care, affordable housing, childcare, assisting with food insecurity, supporting our agriculture community.
 4. Timm: This is a finite amount of money 600K over two years. With the infrastructure and potential Build back Better bills there may be greater sources of funds than the
 - ii. Sheila reminded members that VLCT suggesting we "be patient and think **bigger**." ARPA dollars can be used to leverage other funds. Water and sewer infrastructure is just an example.
 - iii. Some Guilford nonprofits are asking for funds to cover a feasibility study. That makes sense (seed money). Others are saying that they could focus their request – planning for the future – planning for a building structure that they need. Timm would recommend that to the SB.
 - iv. Gordon: utilize this money to take the nonprofits in a direction down the road. By combining resources, you may be able to impact more than one organization. Something major that will benefit in a larger way than just doing feasibility study.
 - v. It seems to make sense for nonprofits to coordinate their efforts; Timm spoke in favor of a combined efforts

- vi. Group agreed that projects benefitting a number of organizations could result in the best use of funds.
- e. FAC members agreed to work further to prepare a draft of its ideas regarding a recommendation to the SB and to meet again shortly.

Next meeting Monday, November 29 at 12:30