

ARPA Spaghetti Dinner Notes Summary

Meeting held at Bristol Elementary School on 9/8/2022. ~20 participants attended a brief presentation by Porter to describe ARPA funding and the committee's work thus far, and subsequently 1) identified significant challenges/issues that Bristol faces and 2) provided their feedback for how to best use Bristol's ARPA funds. Their responses are summarized herein.

Issues/Challenges that Bristol faces

- Affordable childcare¹
- Affordable housing¹
- Outdoor activities (especially outdoor education for youth – space & programs)
- Mental health care (e.g., Bullying, etc)
- Sustainability (e.g., solar panels on public buildings, etc)
- Taxes/affordability issues

Potential Solutions/ARPA fund use

- Multi-use community center/recreation center² (could include senior programs, pool, high ceiling gym, community kitchen, maker space, business incubator, etc.)
- Outdoor spaces (Bristol trail network, outdoor classrooms at schools and/or library, swimming pool, bike/pedestrian lanes)
- Upgrade town water systems if needed
- Improve WIFI/broadband access
- Internships and tutoring for youth
- Broaden population eligible for benefits (e.g. universal childcare, universal lunches)
- Sustainability (e.g. insulation, solar panels, anaerobic digester)
- Attract and support young families (childcare expansion/housing)

Other Notes

- Request that ARPA funds do not go towards programs that otherwise have access to federal or state funds. Do not duplicate programs that could be funded through more typical funding sources.

Committee Summary (internal only)

- By far the two biggest issues were childcare and housing
- Participants tried to encourage the idea of using any created space (new community center; adding on the Hub, etc) for multiple community uses, such as childcare, outdoor programming, cooking lessons, elder care, exercise, etc)
- Everyone recognized that the ARPA funds by themselves might not be enough to completely meet needs, but hoped that funding could be matched with grants, private-public partnerships, etc to make the money go farther

¹These two topics, in some form or another, were mentioned by most participants

²Lively discussion across multiple participants was present outlining ways in which such a space could address a variety of issues facing Bristol