

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMITTEE
COURTHOUSE, 117 DICK STREET, 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 564
AUGUST 2, 2021 – 10:30 AM
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Commissioner Jimmy Keefe, ARP Committee Chairman
Commissioner Glenn Adams (arrived 10:37 a.m.)
Commissioner Toni Stewart
Commissioner Charles Evans, Board of Commissioners Chairman
(departed meeting during Item 4.)
Commissioner Michael Boose (departed meeting during Item 4.)
Amy Cannon, County Manager
Angel Wright-Lanier, Assistant County Manager
Tracy Jackson, Assistant County Manager
Sally Shutt, Assistant County Manager
Rick Moorefield, County Attorney
Vicki Evans, Finance Director
Dee Taylor, Community Development Director
Al Florez, Applications Manager, Innovation and Technology Services
Candice H. White, Clerk to the Board

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Keefe called the meeting to order. The purpose of the meeting is to review and discuss feedback from the public.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Stewart moved to approve the agenda.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (2-0)

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 25, 2021 (Meeting with Hamm Consulting Group)
- June 16, 2021 (Virtual Attendance by Hamm and Bryant, HCG)
- July 7, 2021 (Finalize survey and community meetings for citizen input)
- July 13, 2021 (Meeting with Mayors' Coalition)
- July 15, 2021 (Spring Lake Community Meeting)
- July 20, 2021 (Town of Godwin)
- July 22, 2021 (Gray's Creek)
- July 27, 2021 (Fayetteville)

MOTION: Commissioner Stewart moved to approve the minutes as recorded above.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (2-0)

4. REPORT ON SURVEY AND MEETING FEEDBACK

Sally Shutt, Assistant County Manager, referenced the American Rescue Plan Community Engagement Survey and Meeting Feedback handout recorded herein at **Attachment A**. Ms. Shutt stated the information contained in the report is through Friday, July 30 with 647 surveys submitted. Al Florez, Applications Manager, Innovation and Technology Services, demonstrated and lead the committee through the live dashboard that included data from all 775 surveys submitted through Saturday, July 31 when the survey ended.

Information pulled the morning of Friday, July 30 that showed complete responses to Question 6. “Are There Any Additional Programs, Services or Project that the County Should Consider for ARP Funding” was also provided to the committee and is recorded herein as **Attachment B**. The information was broken down into broad categories and a chart was created that is recorded herein as the second tab of Attachment B. Ms. Shutt provided highlights of the information.

Consolidated Public Comments from the community meetings held in the Town of Spring Lake, Town of Godwin, Gray’s Creek/Town of Hope Mills and Fayetteville were given to committee members and are recorded herein as **Attachment C**. Ms. Shutt read all the public comments.

Commissioner Keefe asked staff what they thought was the main take away from the survey report and meeting feedback. Ms. Shutt stated the analysis by zip code is helpful as are rankings and trends seen in some of the comments. Amy Cannon, County Manager, stated the large number of people participating in the online survey is appreciated even though turnout at the community meetings was small. Ms. Cannon stated she feels valuable information was received to guide the Committee in making its decisions. Discussion followed.

5. DRAFT FUNDING FRAMEWORK WORKSHEET

Commissioner Keefe inquired about next steps. Ms. Cannon stated the report is due at the end of August and the Committee is not being asked for any final recommendations at this meeting. Ms. Cannon referenced the framework worksheet recorded herein as **Attachment D** that was put together by Ms. Shutt to help guide the Committee when it ready to make decisions. Ms. Cannon also referenced requests for funding from Pathways for Prosperity, the FCEDC and Troy Williams recorded herein as **Attachment E**. Ms. Shutt stated the Committee may also wish to consider the Board of Commissioners’ FY21-22 Priorities and Objectives and the Department of Public Health’s Strategic Action Plan 2021-2022.

Commissioner Keefe stated although ARP funds do not have to be spent all at one time, the funds are not helping citizens if the Committee waits too long to make decisions. Commissioner Keefe stated there should probably be short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. Commissioner Adams stated the key word is “rescue” and it is about touching people right now. Discussion followed about needs/loses associated with the eviction moratorium, the Rental Assistance Program, capital projects, infrastructure projects, those who did not qualify for the PPE loan, affordable housing, beauty and barber shops, venues that were shutdown, caterers and getting people back into business.

Commissioner Adams referenced the income level for the Rental Assistance Program and stated there are people just above the HUD eligibility guidelines that need assistance but may be evicted because the RAP does not cover the working poor who do not qualify. Commissioner Keefe stated there were a lot of RAP applications according to the handout recorded herein as **Attachment F** and asked why some people did not qualify. Dee Taylor, Community Development Director, stated they did not qualify due to income or because they were unable to provide certain verifications that were required. Ms. Taylor stated 65% of the RAP funds must be obligated through an approved rental contract by September 30; if 65% is obligated, the county gets to retain the other 35%. Ms. Taylor confirmed the county is a long way from 65 and stated the county received the second round of funding just over \$1M; these funds have to be spent by March 2022. Rick Moorefield, County Attorney, stated per the Treasury Regulations, the penalty for not spending these funds in that they must be reallocated to jurisdictions that have met the 65% obligation. Questions and discussion followed about the RAP. Commissioner Keefe asked whether HUD and ARP funds could be combined. Commissioner Adams stated HUD funds need to remain separate and suggested using ARP funds for those who are about to be evicted and are above HUD eligibility requirements. Commissioner Adams asked Ms. Taylor to find out the incomes of those who were denied, how many were denied, and other reasons people were denied assistance under the RAP.

Commissioner Stewart inquired about the status of the application for nonprofits. Ms. Cannon referenced a handout of the draft “Cumberland County ARP Application” contained herein at **Attachment G**. Commissioner Adams suggested streamlining the application so it is not so cumbersome. Ms. Cannon explained how the draft application was put together and stated one thing to remember for reporting purposes is that performance data is needed because the county will be audited on its ARP expenditures. Commissioner Keefe stated the Committee may want to consider setting a maximum grant amount for non-profits. Discussion followed about non-profit services that may be considered for ARP funding. Mr. Moorefield stated the Committee should determine the types of services it wants to focus on as its priority when considering non-profits and everyone should be given a fair shot in terms of evaluating services. Ms. Cannon reminded the Committee that the non-profit services must be tied to Covid.

Commissioner Adams stated when considering PPE loans, he does not think ARP funds should be used for that purpose. Commissioner Keefe asked whether the data requested for rental assistance and a cap on funding should be used as placeholders. Commissioner Adams responded in the affirmative and stated the Committee may want to develop broad categories for funding such as non-profits, small businesses, and rental assistance, then figure out how many categories it has and let staff can figure out how to do it. Commissioner Adams stated there should be category to save some of the funds so they can be spent down the road.

Commissioner Keefe stated the Committee should determine short-term, mid-term and long-term goals, identify categories for funding, identify maximum amounts to be put into the categories and then the Committee can drill down and tweak them.

Commissioner Adams asked staff what was needed for the August 31 report. Ms. Cannon stated guidance has not been issued so the due date is all that is known at this time. Commissioner Adams stated the Committee should keep an eye on that August 31 deadline.

Commissioner Adams asked staff to develop a template for short-term, long-term and long-term goals, send the template to Committee members to fill out and return to staff to compile, and then bring the consolidated list of goals back to the Committee. Commissioner Adams stated staff can also include goals for consideration by the Committee. Ms. Cannon stated Dr. Green indicated she needs things such as emergency generators for the shelters and asked whether staff could include that on the list. Commissioner Adams stated it can be placed on the list/kept on the radar with a question mark beside it because the infrastructure money may be better spent for generators and storm related items.

6. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Commissioner Adams stated the county's consultants were hired to be lobbyists and not for the ARP and he thinks they need to be compensated for helping the county with ARP.

The next Committee meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 7 immediately following adjournment of the Board of Commissioners' regular 9:00 AM meeting.

7. ADJOURN

MOTION: Commissioner Adams moved to adjourn.
SECOND: Commissioner Stewart
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (3-0)

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Approved with/without revision:

Respectfully submitted,

Candice H. White
Clerk to the Board