

MINUTES  
HAMILTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
and  
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 17, 2022  
Conference Room 1A  
Hamilton County Government and Judicial Center  
One Hamilton County Square  
Noblesville, Indiana

Vice President Altman called the Commissioner's meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. declaring a quorum present of Commissioner Christine Altman and Commissioner Mark Heirbrandt. Commissioner Steve Dillinger was absent

County Council ARPA Committee members present were Councilor Brad Beaver, Councilor Sue Maki, and Councilor Amy Massillamany (via Teams).

**MINUTES**

Heirbrandt moved to approve the minutes of January 14, 2022. Maki seconded. Motion carried with Massillamany abstaining.

**ARPA FUNDING REQUESTS**

**Updated Project List**

Discussion was held regarding the \$1 million request for the White River Campground Sewer/Water infrastructure project as to whether it was previously approved and was it included or not included in the total amounts on the summary spreadsheet. Auditor Robin Mills confirmed the following:

1. Application #73 White River Campground Sewer/Water Infrastructure project was approved at \$2,100,000 and the project has started. This project was included in the summary sheet totals.
2. Application #76 Koteewi Park Public Sewer/Water Facilities requested \$1,000,000 but no action has been taken.
3. Application #90 Broadband in Rural Parks (Design/Permitting/Construction) requested \$1,000,000 but no action has been taken.
4. ARPA Committee set aside \$300,000 for Broadband and this amount is included in summary sheet totals.

Summary Sheet (Remaining) \$5,350,327

Less \$2.5 million affordable housing set-aside = \$2,850,327

Drain Projects

Heirbrandt reported bids have been received for the Flora Mendenhall Drain #137 with the bid coming in substantially higher than the amount requested of \$275,890. The bid came in at \$637,000. Altman and Mills confirmed this project has not been approved by the committee with Heirbrandt agreeing and

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noting he was only bringing it to the committee's attention because this is the next drainage project in line. Mills confirmed he would bring that information back to the committee.

Heirbrandt believes Ream Creek has been approved with the bids being over what was anticipated but he does not have the exact figure. We will need to discuss this with the Surveyor.

Heirbrandt asked how do we handle credits such as a drainage project that has been approved and comes in with a deduct, is that reported to the Auditor or how does the Auditor want the Surveyor to handle it? Altman thinks it needs to be reported to the committee and then the committee decides whether it is applied to reducing what the homeowner pays if there is a contribution or we take it as a deduct and make it available for other uses. Mills confirmed any additional amounts or deductions would have to come back to the committee and the spreadsheets would be adjusted.

Fairgrounds Drainage

Beaver asked if there is any progress on the fairgrounds drainage? Heirbrandt replied no, it is on hold. We are re-doing the master plan that should be done by the end of March. We will then have a meeting to review the plan with the fairgrounds staff and then it will come to the Commissioners. Heirbrandt has been told the drainage will change.

**MEETING DATE**

Next meeting will be held March 24, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

**HOUSING**

Mr. Connor Sullivan reported the US Treasury final rule did provide more flexibility for affordable housing. If the project falls under one of these two federal programs - National Housing Trust Fund or HOME Investment Partnerships Program, it is a permitted ARPA use. Both of those programs permit construction and land acquisition, meaning we can essentially build affordable housing if needed. ARPA wants us to provide an analysis, they do not want all the money put into the long-term construction, but they want something in the immediate future which can be providing vouchers, rental assistance, financial counseling, etc. Both programs have to be considered. Sullivan reported the housing collaboration works with these programs quite a bit. He has spoken to Nancy Ramsey and the housing coalition and has told them as long as it falls into these two programs it would be a permitted use.

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Heirbrandt asked Nancy Ramsey to explain the project opportunities she has. Ms. Nancy Ramsey reported as part of the CDBG funds (\$500,000) Family Promise has been granted she is currently working on acquisition of property for low-income housing. They were working on a 9% low-income housing tax credit bid with TNH with Family Promise being the social services provider that they need. They were not awarded the 9% so now they are working on a 4% but that takes more density. They are looking at approximately 64 townhomes with 3 bedrooms and 2 ½ baths. The location is on S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Noblesville with five acres available. The infrastructure is already developed. They have met with Mayor Jensen regarding the zoning as it would need to be re-zoned from R-4 to R-5. At first it was an initial no but they have continued to work at it and they met with other Noblesville staff and they want to see drawings, etc. to take to the Mayor. Ramsey thinks it is progressing in a favorable way for a re-zone although she is not promising anything. Altman added there is a private developer that is willing to upfront the costs and take the risk in exchange for credits. Heirbrandt asked how many years is the tax credit, he understands the developer gets the money up front with the tax credit. Altman stated they negotiate how long they have to keep it within certain range of average income, 20 years is typical. A certain percentage of the units will be affordable for this period of time and that is part of their application. Heirbrandt confirmed this is not Section 8? Altman and Ramsey confirmed that is correct, it is not Section 8. Ramsey stated it is income restricted so you can only make up to a certain amount with this being a 50 to 60 percent property.

Massillamany asked if this is something that Noblesville wants? Beaver replied no. Altman stated she has been an advocate for this site with as much density as we can put on it with the reason being is that you have an area that nobody else wants because it has sat there forever that no developer would touch and there is a huge need for this housing and it is a bigger need in Noblesville than anyone else. Ramsey stated if you look at the rental assistance numbers Noblesville Township has the bulk of the rental assistance that has been provided. Altman has been working with the Noblesville Mayor and members of the city council that if there is ever a place they should have density, this is it. They keep saying they do not want to compete with market and everybody including MIBOR has said this is not a market issue because what you are building in town you would have to earn a lot of money to afford these units. The reason they want lower density is because they could fit it in without a zoning change. Ramsey has learned it has been zoned R-5 at one time but because the development could not progress quickly enough it expired as an R-5 and reverted back to an R-4.

Beaver knows the area they are talking about and does not disagree, if you are ever going to increase the density that is the spot. He would say going forward as we deal with this issue let's not put everything that we do in Noblesville Township. Altman did not disagree. Beaver stated if they want to do this

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project he is not disagreeing but let's not provide all the county's affordable housing in Noblesville Township. Ramsey agreed stating scattered sites throughout the county are much better. Altman noted part of the housing coalition's mission has to be to speak with each community to say they can not shove it all to some location somewhere else, they have to find areas within their plan commission area to put attainable housing. It is needed.

Heirbrandt asked what is the ask? Altman would like to do, as part of this committee, is to allocate so much money and reserve it until the coalition brings us projects that meet our goals then we will consider giving part of "x" amount. If they do not have something to plan to we will keep spinning our wheels. Altman suggested we allocate \$3 to \$5 million for this because we have allocated \$1 million out of CDBG funds in addition to this \$500,000 Ramsey is talking about. If we put it together, either we attract a developer or we say we are not going to play with these tax credits and come up with a project and see if we can model it and then have product for developers. Altman moved to allocate \$5 million, reserved, for this purpose. We can defer half of that to the next round of funding that is coming in. Massillamany confirmed we are not allocating \$5 million; we are allocating \$2.5 million now and once the second round of money comes thru we would allocate the other \$2.5 million. Altman is asking for a \$2.5 million commitment right now. Altman stated correct. Sullivan confirmed this is not opening the portal up for non-profits? Altman stated they will control it as a committee and vet projects. Sullivan stated it is a permitted use under the ARPA Act so it is separate from the non-profits that the county provided funding to. It is not re-opening anything, just a mission driven instrument. It could be any one of the non-profits that are part of the housing coalition that could receive the funds towards the mission. Altman replied correct.

Heirbrandt noted typically we use a lot of CDBG dollars for something like this, what do we typically receive annually for CDBG? Altman estimated it is less than \$1 million. These funds have to be allocated into different buckets and we keep giving it to the non-profits; if we want to change that then we will have more money for housing. 15 % is cut off the top and given to the non-profits. Ramsey stated where we can leverage all of the CDBG funding as well as ARPA funding, private investors, and non-profits for a transformational project. Altman thinks this allocation does, as we are required under the ARPA concept to hit pockets that need help in terms of housing, etc. and the COVID effect. Sullivan noted the geographical area has broaden so they do not actually have to focus on a qualified census tract. These funds can be used to leverage with other funds which is part of the permitted language. Altman would like to incentivize one of our communities Carmel, Fishers, or Westfield to find a mixed-use property where they have levels of housing that you have people within this income and then other

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levels of income so we have a project done so those that think their house values will be ruined can see that does not happen.

Heirbrandt reported he just received a text from Mike Thibideau that he has been contacted by some developers to float condos at \$600 to \$800 per month for one-to-two-bedroom developments in the county. Altman thinks if we have seed money we will be able to snag some of this stuff. Beaver confirmed they are suggesting to buy down the rent in an existing or under construction project to put lower income people into that project that is being built or new construction.

Ramsey noted this is project #2 that she was going to bring up, it is a basically a quasi-voucher program with Altman stating that is not what she was thinking. That is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. Ramsey replied but we have to consider short-term with Sullivan confirming in the analysis you do have to consider short-term options. Altman stated we can allocate some funding, but it is not a good investment. Sullivan does not think they necessarily have to do the short-term, but they have to show the framework showing it compared to the long-term. Ramsey stated because of the market rate that is being built and 30% there is a gap and if we only have 178 Section 8 vouchers within the community how do we make up that gap? We can build a program, as she understands, allowable under ARPA guidelines that will help sustain that gap support for one year as they continue with their ongoing case management through non-profits which is budgeting, employment, training, all social service support things while there is a monetary support. It is capped or the length would be a 12-month program or something along those lines. We still have a short-term crisis in housing in Hamilton County. We can build things that fit within the guidelines, but we have to be able to get from here to there.

Beaver understands what Ramsey is saying, he will vote in favor of the proposal to allocate up to \$5 million over two lumps of money for that particular location, S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Altman replied no, this is not just for that location, it is for the whole county incentive for the housing coalition. Beaver asked how many units are proposed for the S. 16<sup>th</sup> site? Ramsey replied 64. Beaver will vote for that but wanted to go on the record that he fears for his community, he is from Noblesville, born in Riverview Hospital and with the amount of apartments being built in Noblesville we are going to change the complexion of Noblesville, we are going to change and increase our traffic pattern. South 16<sup>th</sup> is in no way prepared to deal with that kind of traffic but we build stuff without worrying about the traffic anyway and he thinks 10 years from now when all these apartments are fully loaded our community will not be the same as it is today.

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Heirbrandt confirmed if we do not use the \$5 million it can revert back to available funds? Altman confirmed that was correct. Heirbrandt asked how would this effect the Noblesville Housing Authority? Altman does not think it would have any effect. Massillamany confirmed the request is a \$5 million allocation with \$2.5 million from the batch now and \$2.5 million later but all the coalition findings outside of the South 16<sup>th</sup> Street project would come to this committee for discussion and approval, is that her understanding? Altman replied yes. She would like them to come up with a plan as to how they would leverage that. Massillamany stated she can support that. Heirbrandt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**BAKERS CORNER**

Heirbrandt noted they are expecting the Wessler wastewater/water study for the Bakers Corner area any day. We have a lot of failed septic systems along that corridor that we are hearing about now. This will be a large project that will be transformational. Altman noted the meeting she attended the discussion was if we use ARPA money now to get it moving and once we have the rate base established or more ARPA money then turn around with revenue bonds to retire the investment in ARPA and bring it back.

Sullivan stated ARPA funds can be used, there are funds available from the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) available and you can use a Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) for seven years. After seven years we presume there would be users. Beaver noted the county council will decide how we fund this project. Adding the council knows this is coming. Heirbrandt noted they are trying to maximize what we get back from the IFA, they have met with Jim McGoff twice, he is excited about this project, we expect to get a large sum of money to help offset some of the costs.

**Thank You's**

Mills reported Connor Prairie sent a letter of thanks for the funding. Heirbrandt and Altman reported they have received several thank you's including from the Lion's Club and Carmel Main Street Barber.

Heirbrandt moved to adjourn. Altman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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**Present**

Christine Altman, Commissioner  
Mark Heirbrandt, Commissioner  
Brad Beaver, County Councilor  
Sue Maki, County Councilor  
Amy Massillamany, County Councilor (virtually via Teams)  
Robin Mills, Auditor  
Connor Sullivan, Assistant County Attorney  
Dan Stevens, Director of Administration  
Kim Rauch, Administrative Assistant to Auditor  
Jennifer Chavez, Auditor's Office  
Lauren Powell, Auditor's Office  
Nancy Ramsey, Family Promise

APPROVED  
HAMILTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Christine Altman  
Mark Heirbrandt

ATTEST

Robin M. Mills, Auditor

Date Approved: 2/28/2022