



**Town of Ayer**  
**Executive Bi-Board Meeting Minutes For**  
**Tuesday, October 12, 2021, 2pm**

**Attendance:** Scott Houde (Chair); Pat Diamond; Mark Smith; Lisa Gabree (Finance Manager); Barbara Tierney (Treasurer/Tax Collector); Carly Antonellis (Assistant Town Manager); Robert Pontbriand (Town Manager)

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 2pm by S. Houde.

S. Houde read the following statement into the record:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, in accordance with Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law (OML), public bodies otherwise governed by the OML are temporarily relieved from the requirement that meeting be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means." This meeting will be live on Zoom. The public may participate remotely by joining Zoom (Meeting ID# 854 0032 4335) or by calling 929-205-6099. For additional information about remote participation, please contact Carly Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager at [atm@ayer.ma.us](mailto:atm@ayer.ma.us) or 978-772-8220 ext. 100 prior to the meeting.

**Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (September 28, 2021):**

The Bi-Board reviewed the DRAFT minutes from the September 28, 2021, meeting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by P. Diamond and seconded by S. Houde to approve the September 28, 2021, meeting minutes. **Motion passed (7-0)** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; P. Diamond, Y; M. Smith, Y; L. Gabree, Y; B. Tierney, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

**Discussion on Plan for ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act) Funds for the Town:**

R. Pontbriand provided an overview of the American Recovery Plan Act and advised that the Town will be receiving approximately \$2.4 million in ARPA Funding. The Town will need to develop a specific plan for the ARPA Funding. We do know that ARPA Funds can be used for water and sewer infrastructure projects. The Town currently has a significant infrastructure need on Westford Road which is the replacement of the sewer main. The sewer main is old and in deteriorating condition. We recently had a major issue with it that the DPW was able to temporarily repair. The project will cost approximately \$1.3 million, and the Town currently has \$600,000 in funding. ARPA Funds in the amount of \$700,000 could be used to complete the funding for this project.

L. Gabree stated that in her professional opinion this would be a wise use of some of the ARPA Funds on this major sewer infrastructure. She consulted with the Town's Auditor who also advised that this would be an acceptable and good use of some of the ARPA Funds.

S. Houde asked if the Town's account holding the ARPA funds is interest bearing?

B. Tierney advised that it is and that any interest would go toward the General Fund.

L. Gabree advised that ARPA Funds must be committed by December 30, 2024, and must be spent by December 30, 2026.

S. Houde stated that since the Town has some time, we should take a more staggered approach to using the ARPA Funds. Westford Road is a priority, but we should take our time developing the rest of the plan and keep some of the funds in the bank and put the interest toward the General Fund.

M. Smith agreed with S. Houde and stated that he would support the use of ARPA Funds for the Westford Road Sewer project.

P. Diamond stated that the Westford Road project needs to be done; it is important infrastructure; and that is what the ARPA Funds are for.

S. Houde stated that he would also like the Town to consider ARPA Funds in the Budget and Capital Planning Process for this year.

**Motion:** A motion was made by S. Houde and seconded by P. Diamond to recommend that the Select Board authorize up to \$700,000 in ARPA Funds for the Westford Road Sewer Main Project and to include the consideration of ARPA Funds as part of the Town's Budget processes for this year. **Motion passed (7-0)** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; P. Diamond, Y; M. Smith, Y; L. Gabree, Y; B. Tierney, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

#### **Fall Special Town Meeting Update:**

R. Pontbriand provide a brief update on the Fall Special Town Meeting which will take place on October 25, 2021, at 7pm in the Auditorium of the Ayer Shirley Regional High School. There are seven Articles and one Citizens Petition. The first three Articles have to do with the Transfer of the Woodlawn Cemetery of which Article 2 seeks \$41,000 in funding for the FY 2022 operations of the Cemetery. There is not much on this Town Meeting Warrant with a direct budgetary impact outside of the \$41,000 for the Cemetery and two CPC Articles which seek to \$21,000 to update their Community Preservation Plan and another CPC Article which seeks funding in the amount of \$300,000 for the Ayer Shirley Regional High School Field Complex.

#### **New Business:**

There was no New Business.

#### **Scheduling of Next Meeting:**

The Bi-Board did not formally schedule the next meeting but will look to do so when one is needed as the Town starts the FY 2023 Budget Process.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by P. Diamond and seconded by S. Houde to adjourn the meeting.  
**Motion passed (7-0)** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; P. Diamond; Y; M. Smith, Y; L. Gabree, Y; B. Tierney, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

The meeting adjourned at 2:42pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Executive Bi-Board on February 8, 2022.

Signed:  2/8/2022  
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager