

## Minutes of the Belvidere Planning Commission Meeting, December 9, 2021

Meeting convened at 6:30 PM and adjourned at 8:00 PM This was an in-person and ZOOM hybrid meeting.

Members present via ZOOM were Deb Baker and Mary Hysick. Present in the Town Clerk's Office were Fran Leavitt and Kathy Marchant along with LCPC guests Salvadore Morales and Alec Jones by ZOOM and joining live Seth Jensen.

Motion by Fran Leavitt to move the LCPC presentation to the top of the agenda which was seconded by Mary Hysick. The motion passed.

Salvadore discussed charts in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017-2022. The group read and reviewed the first Hazard Identification/Risk Assessment Table and found text and evaluations correct except for questions regarding item 6: Drought for which the Probability has increased from Unusual to perhaps More Common and from Community Vulnerability to Moderate from Low because of failed wells in the last few years. Item 10, Extreme Temperatures was discussed as a concern because of the number of sugaring operations in town. With those changes the chart was okayed by the commission.

In Chart 4.2.1 Status of Mitigation Actions from the Previous Hazard Mitigation Plan (2015 Annex). As most of the projects were completed this year, Salvadore suggested that new projects be added such as, according to Seth, moving the public drinking well out of the flood plain where it currently exists near the Town Clerk's Office. Public access to water in the school does not exist because the school is closed. Fran suggested we discuss this later with information she planned to report about the School.

In Chart 4.2.2 Belvidere Mitigation Actions, most items have been completed. This data should be verified by the Select Board.

Alec then explained a few details of ARPA. With the passing of the American Rescue Plan Act on the federal level, a first check was sent to Belvidere based on per capita. Towns receive a share of funds as does a regional organization. Belvidere received \$109,000. Funds must be allocated by 2024 and fully spent by 2026. There are four categories.

1. Responding to Public Health Emergencies. Funds can be used for town data organization, parcel maps, HVAC for buildings, and

meeting facilitation services. There are existing funds already for some items, so choices should be made with care. Another choice regarding Public Health is funds for households and businesses affected by the pandemic with a premium for essential Workers. This part might be used to assist rescue squads from other towns that we support because we have none of our own.

2. Revenue Replacement: This is based on Nimerac formula. It involves taxes lost to towns including delinquent taxes. Mary commented that we are fine in that aspect.
3. Water and Sewer: This item involves drinking water and clean water. The funds can cover culverts and such if there is a documented water quality benefit. There can be assistance to property owners with waste water problems. Also, natural resources can be considered.
4. Broadband: This aspect is based on technical requirements including speed.

Seth stated that it is our responsibility as a town to manage the funds and can be under the auspices of SB, BPC or a separate committee. LCPC will assist. There are also possible grants to non-profits based on what they can do and what losses can be counted.

Alec and Sal departed the ZOOM aspect of the meeting. Seth left the Clerk's Office.

The minutes from the previous meeting, November 2021 were reviewed and a motion was made by Deb to accept the minutes with a second by Mary. Motion passed.

Fran made a report about developments with the LNMMUSD regarding the Belvidere Central School which has been closed because the air in the building failed an air quality test. The school district recently replaced a furnace for around \$60,000 and they are discussing correcting the air quality issues and getting the school back on line. There is a meeting of the school board on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup> which Fran and Kathy might attend.

Any decision must include contacting the Red Cross because the building is a formal emergency shelter. The school district currently

calls the building The Belvidere Public Library. Discussion ensued regarding use of the school for town meeting because the remediation project, if it goes forward, might take 10 to 12 weeks.

The discussion shifted briefly to ideas for BPC action items based on the completed plan. Two items mentioned were not actionable based on content of the plan.

Additional suggestions were: Capacity Building, a weatherization project for town buildings and private homes involving window protection (called window dressers), a workshop for residents about energy savings through the many available programs, and a possible additional paid position of an Administrative Officer. The ideas were recorded and discussion tabled as one member left the meeting.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2021 at 6:30 PM and will be held in the Belvidere Town Clerk's Office, and will likely include a ZOOM component.