

ARPA Committee
Minutes of Special Meeting April 6, 2023 (DRAFT)

The Hybrid Meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM
Kathy Marchant and Jack Slagle were present at the Town Office with meeting host Cathy Mander-Adams. Andy Iwaskiewicz and Mary Hysick participated on Zoom.

Motion by Mary, seconded by Kathy, to recommend that the Selectboard commit 4% of Town's ARPA funds to the LMFCUD for the uses outlined later in this document.:

Andy presented a spreadsheet that he had prepared to show the group the true dollar value of a variety of contribution percentages along with the approximate number of customers that could benefit and the amount of rebate they could receive. Andy cautioned that the closest access point for each resident may not be the pole that is closest to their home.

There was discussion about the funds not being able to be used to fund drops by Mansfield Fiber for those residents who do not choose the CUD.

The possibility of fully funding fewer drops was rejected by the group in favor of assisting as many of the Town's residents as possible due to the overwhelming number of residents who have expressed this as their priority for the ARPA funding as well as in recent, past surveys.

Motion by Mary to amend the commitment amount to 5%. Seconded by Kathy.

Jack reminded the group of the need to assist residents with what could be a costly installation for many families and suggested a commitment of 12% which, with the matching State funds, would be a more meaningful amount. There was general consensus that a higher amount was appropriate due to the severity of need for decent internet in Belvidere, but the group thought 12% was a bit high and the suggestion was made to make a commitment of 10%.
Vote was taken - no votes in favor, amendment did not pass.

Motion for amendment by Mary to change the commitment amount to 10%, or \$10,910.80.
Seconded by Kathy and passed unanimously.

Discussion began about recommending conditions for use of the funds committed and the associated matching funds. Kathy reminded the group that all the funds must be used in the Town of Belvidere. Andy suggested wording for the method of distribution of drop fund rebates to residents that the group approved of and which were then incorporated into the conditions outlined below. The conditions resulting from these discussions are listed below.

Recommended Priorities for Usage of Funds Committed to LFCUD

- 1), to be used to cover 100% of costs associated with bringing fiber internet to the Town Office.
- 2) to partially fund any portion of drop costs not already covered by the fiber provider(s) using a formula that disperses these funds equitably to as many residents as possible based on the total number of residents who sign up for the CUD service, the combined total of their drop lengths, and the total amount of funds available. Credit to be provided at the time of installation.

In addition, the funds are NOT to be used for any properties that are not occupied by permanent residents of the Town of Belvidere. This includes camps, and all business entities. Drops to maple sugaring operations will not be eligible.

The initial motion was re-read to include the usage verbiage above. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Kathy that the other committee members give her authority to sign the letter to the Selectboard in all their names. Seconded by Mary. Passed unanimously.

Andy volunteered to attend the next SB meeting to answer any questions they may have about our letter of recommendation. Kathy to contact the SB to request time on their agenda for the next meeting and advise the SB that an ARPA committee representative will be available.

Mary to draft a recommendation letter to the SB and send it to members by Monday. Kathy will review, advise of changes, sign and forward to the SB for review ASAP. The letter will include a reminder of the upcoming deadline for matching funds and that Andy will be present to answer their questions.

Motion to adjourn at 7:32 PM by Mary. Seconded by Andy. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.