

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) planning

January 19, 2022

2:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Grose, County Manager Erik Martin, Austin Majors, Lindsey Shankle, J.P. Anderson, Becky Butler, Richard DeBolt, Todd Chaput, Meja Handlen

Guest(s): Nic Scott, Zora DeGrandpre, Kyle Heaton, Eric Rosane

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Richard DeBolt said the Economic Alliance is getting a generic pilot project ready for the Legislature. The money that is distributed to the Economic Alliance is approved to certain projects by the Board of County Commissioners. Josh Metcalf has been working on a culvert infrastructure plan. Richard said culvert projects are able to change dates as needed to accommodate other projects of the same location.

Austin Majors presented the results for Polco Survey. There were 1,095 total completed surveys. The top three topics were most important to the public:

- Natural Environment
- Parks and Rec
- Safety

Investments and Broadband was the most important funding category according to the survey. Austin said the Polco platform allows users to filter data easily for specific areas of analysis.

Lindsey Shankle used the Polco survey to determine how the survey was distributed to the community. She said one-third of responses said emotional health, child care, and not knowing what services are availability to the community were valuable to best determine next steps for public outreach.

Becky said the US Treasury has released its final rule effective April 1, 2022. The biggest change allows for the use of \$10 million toward lost revenue without needing to use the loss formula. It also allows for broader use in cyber funds and broadband infrastructure. Becky is requesting the Board's decision on the type of formula being used for lost revenue. There are two options; option one is a standard deduction and option two has a calculated deduction.

Becky said there are now recovery funds for medical leave associated with COVID-19 and radio infrastructure. Becky would like a better understanding of requirements associated with the steps needed to approve using ARPA funds or donated leave. Richard DeBolt said there is additional money available in the capital budget for planning efforts related to 911 infrastructure. He also suggested using ARPA funding as a possible match. ARPA allows for flexible spending versus what it takes to administer capital budget grants.

Commissioner Grose made a motion to approve Option 1 using the standard deduction of \$10 million and Commissioner Pollock seconded. **Passed 2-0.**

Josh Metcalf said HDR Consulting has developed a prioritized list to be presented to the Board during Wednesday Workshop on 1/26/22. The list will have strategic projects for each city. He would like to consider the value to the community and county. Becky suggested waiting to make decisions until after the Legislative session ends in order to determine other funding opportunities.

Lindsay Shankle said she is wrapping up meeting with stakeholders. She is recruiting parent volunteers to attend the train the trainer. This will help having families be more engaged. She is looking to start a youth resiliency program. J.P. Anderson said that offering education for youth behavioral health is important to build a foundation for the next steps to recovery from any type of trauma. Commissioner Pollock said supporting youth recovering from the trauma of COVID will be a valuable investment that can be sustainable for the long-term.

Becky said \$2.3 million of \$7.8 million in ARPA funding has been allocated. Becky said all funds must be obligated by the end of 2024. This allows the Board to move forward on projects.

Becky said Lewis County was awarded approximately \$23 million for broadband infrastructure. She is waiting for documentation for the award.

Becky has asked the Board to consider a small grants group to distribute grant funding.

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.