



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Reading Arpa Advisory Committee

Date: 2022-08-31

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Public Library

Location: Community Room

Address: 64 Middlesex Avenue

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Chair Marianne Downing, Shawn Brandt, Geoffrey Coram, Andrew Grimes (remote), Chris Haley, Joe McDonagh, Tom Wise

Members - Not Present:

Vice Chair Mark Dockser

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, Town Accountant Sharon Angstrom (remote), Mike Fiorentino, Alex Rozycki, Steve Bohannon, Maureen, Maria, Paul Forsey, Jamie Eulie, Jack (remote)

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Jacquelyn LaVerde

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in-person in the Select Board Meeting Room of Town Hall and remotely via Zoom.

Chair Marianne Downing called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and noted that some items on the agenda that would be tabled to the next meeting.

Public Comment:

There was no comment from the public.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - Request from First Congregational Church of Reading for \$30k for asbestos remediation and \$4k for landscaping:

Reverend Emelia Attridge was unable to attend this evening's meeting and will either attend, or send a representative to present to the Committee at the September 6th meeting.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - RAAC members Shawn Brandt and Thomas Wise to present possible premium pay approaches and discussion by RAAC on same:

As members of AFSCME were expecting to present later in the meeting, the Committee began its review of the premium pay models suggested by members Tom Wise and Shawn Brandt. Mr. Wise presented two models. The first model considers employees who worked from March 2020 through June 2021. This includes retirees who were employed during that time frame, but not after retirement, and does not include employees who have left employment with the Town, but did not retire. The model uses Pay Bands of high, medium, and low, and includes a differential to focus on lower paid employees, which is consistent with the original ARPA guidance. Model 2 is based on Model 1, but adds a consideration for risk level, or amount of community contact. Both models address the key points that the Committee has discussed for premium pay: salary, in-person, and risk factor.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - Follow up information from AFSCME/Michael Fiorentino re: premium pay for certain Reading collective bargaining units:

Michael Fiorentino, representative for AFSCME, was joined by many members of various bargaining units, and thanked the Committee for the seriousness with which they have approached hazard pay. AFSCME has seven bargaining units in Reading including: Facilities, School Custodial, Cafeteria workers, Engineers, DPW Workers, and others. He explained that much of the work performed by many of the union members could not be done remotely, and they worked in-person to ensure that everything continued to run smoothly. Senior Civil Engineer Alex Rozycki noted that everyone is essential, and everyone did their jobs in a time when it was difficult to do so. Cafeteria workers, Maureen from the Parker Middle School, and Maria from one of the elementary schools, shared their experiences preparing meals for Reading families, including over the summer. Jamie Eulie of the Water Department explained that water department staff had to enter peoples' homes to replace valves, or to handle sewer backups.

Follow up PRESENTATION (placeholder) /DISCUSSION - Possible follow up with Burbank Y to hear more specifics on their proposal and possible conditions that could apply to an allocation (this may be moved to 9/6 pending availability of representative from Burbank Y):

John Feudo of the Burbank YMCA was unable to attend this evening's meeting and will come back before the Committee at the September 6th meeting.

CONTINUED ALLOCATION DISCUSSION - RAAC members to continue overall discussion on requests received; possible finalizing of some categories:

The Committee reviewed the list of requests, and Andrew Grimes shared some of his suggested allocations. Marianne Downing tried to gauge whether members would like to approach the next discussion by voting on recommendations for small requests first, or large requests. As there have been changes, such as the Community Garden receiving state funding, and the Maillet Sommes project receiving the MVP grant, and other revisions to requested amounts, some Committee members requested an updated spreadsheet so everyone could update their suggested allocations.

(Continued from earlier) PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - RAAC members Shawn Brandt and Thomas Wise to present possible premium pay approaches and discussion by RAAC on same:

The Committee continued a lengthy discussion on the models for premium pay, and expressed concerns about creating divisiveness in premium pay awards. Marianne Downing polled the Committee members present on which model they preferred. Four favored Model 2 and three favored Model 1. She noted that everyone who supports Model 2 inherently supports Model 1, as it is the basis for Model 2. The Committee still needs to determine an amount, and further data is needed on the number of eligible employees.

Discuss future agenda items:

Marianne Downing stated that she would make sure the Committee receives a revised, accurate spreadsheet with Andrew Grimes's numbers.

Review/Approve minutes from 8/3/2022 meeting:

On a motion by Shawn Brandt, and seconded by Tom Wise, the Reading ARPA Advisory Committee voted 7-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes of August 3, 2022.

Roll call vote: Andrew Grimes – Yes, Shawn Brandt – Yes, Tom Wise – Yes, Chris Haley – Yes, Joe McDonagh – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Marianne Downing – Yes.

On a motion by Tom Wise, and seconded by Shawn Brandt, the Reading ARPA Advisory Committee voted 7-0-0 to adjourn at 9:18 pm.

Roll call vote: Andrew Grimes – Yes, Shawn Brandt – Yes, Tom Wise – Yes, Chris Haley – Yes, Joe McDonagh – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Marianne Downing – Yes.