

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 3, 2022  
5:00 P.M.  
Town Hall Meeting Room, 83 Mountain Road, Suffield CT  
Hybrid Meeting**

**Present:** First Selectman Colin Moll, Tom Frenaye and Mel Chafetz

**Absent:** Michael Stevens

**Present via Zoom:** Brian Kost (5:32 p.m. arrival)

**First Selectman Moll** called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

**Public Comment**

None

**Approval of the minutes from the August 30, 2022 Special Meeting of the American Rescue Plan Commission**

**T. Frenaye motioned and M. Chafetz seconded to approve the minutes from the August 30, 2022 Special Meeting of the American Rescue Plan Commission as presented. Vote: 3-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Discussion of American Rescue Plan Funds**

**First Selectman Moll** noted that **Joe Grimard** was in attendance this evening on behalf of the Suffield Land Conservancy and wished to present to the commission. **Mr. Grimard** comes before the commission this evening to ask for funds to help the Land Conservancy continue to maintain their trails. He started his presentation with a slide show of the new 23 acre outdoor learning preserve located across the street from Suffield High School. The preserve is open to the public and partners with the Suffield schools as an educational area for students. **Mr. Grimard** provided a timeline of the preserve project which began seven (7) years ago with actual construction starting in the last two years. Much of the current work is being done by volunteers. He explained how the schools have been using the area and the items they hope to incorporate into the preserve. The goal for the preserve to be self-sustaining once complete. **Mr. Grimard** discussed various donations and grants received thus far that help to fund the preserve project as well as other activities of the land conservancy. Discussion ensued among the selectmen and **Mr. Grimard** with regard to the outdoor learning preserve project, other land conservancy properties and the future plans and needs of the group. **Mr. Grimard** answered the selectmen's questions accordingly. **Mr. Grimard** explained that the Suffield Land Conservancy is actually looking for funds to help them purchase equipment to maintain trails throughout all of their properties in Suffield, not just the preserve. The group is looking for equipment such as a wood chipper and a small skid steer loader among other items. **He asked for between \$10,000 and \$20,000 to assist with the purchase of the equipment discussed.**

Discussion ensued with the members and **Mr. Grimard** discussing the possibility of town and the Land Conservancy joining forces on the equipment purchase as many of the town properties actually abut the Land Conservancy properties. **First Selectman Moll** would like to see a more detailed plan explaining exactly how the money will be used. This will give clarity to the commission and make it easier for them to move forward with consideration. The commission asked additional questions of **Mr. Grimard** regarding the financials of the Land Conservancy which he answered accordingly.

The members continued discussions from the last meeting and voiced their opinions on each request that has been presented thus far from outside groups, including requests from the Trees for Suffield Initiative, Land Conservancy, WPCA Stony Brook Connector Project and the VFW. Additional ideas were discussed by commission as well, including the town athletic fields in West Suffield and Bridge Street Property. The method by which the funds will be distributed was discussed, with **Mr. Kost** giving an in depth explanation based on his expertise on the Board of Finance. The members agreed to meet again in order to allow them all to consider the ideas brought up this evening.

## **Public Comment**

**Dave Gauthier, 3219 Phelps Road – Mr. Gauthier** noted that he was not asking for money but would like to comment that at this point in time that there is \$650,000 unallocated. He expressed his concern that the group may come under criticism as a result of the method they are currently utilizing to reach out to non-profit groups for allocation of funds, using as an example the Suffield Community Aid. He suggested that an application should be created and put out for all groups to submit if they are interested in obtaining ARPA funds. He sees this as a much fairer method.

**Janet Davis, 8 Wisteria Lane – Ms. Davis** provided her concerns with regard to some of the groups being considered and the discussions that have taken place thus far as well as the categories that items fall into. She provided additional commentary as well as follow-up information regarding the WPCA presentation/request for Stony Brook Connector Project.

**Jeff Davis, 8 Wisteria Lane – Mr. Davis** discussed the study that has been conducted by the WPCA and what it entailed and what information they were able to glean from it as far as next steps in the process for the Stony Brook Park Connector Project.

**T. Frenaye motioned and M. Chafetz seconded to adjourn at 6:11 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristen O. Lambert  
Recording Secretary