

Isle La Motte ARPA Committee Meeting  
Regular Meeting  
11 August 2023  
3:00 pm  
Town Office at Isle La Motte School and Zoom

**In Attendance** : Mary Catherine Graziano, Cary Sandvig, Catherine Dimitruck (via Zoom), Steve Stata, Carol Stata, Barbara Callahan, Peter Brzozowy, Mary LaBrecque, Mark Dostaler, Carmine Centrella

**1. Call to Order** : The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Select Board Chair Mary Catherine Graziano.

**2. Administrative Work :**

**Organize Committee** : After a brief introduction by committee members a motion was made by Barbara Callahan and seconded by Carol Stata to nominate Steve Stata for Chair, Peter Brzozowy for Vice-Chair, and Mary LaBrecque for Clerk. All in favor.

**Review Advisory Committee Overview document:** Steve Stata inquired about the Open Meeting Law requirement that changes to the agenda be added as the first agenda item, and that those added items would not be binding. Catherine Dimitruck responded that items must be added as the first item on the agenda, and that it is best practice not to add items that can wait. Steve proposed adding future agenda items to #4. She added that discussion about scheduling and agenda is exempt from Open Meeting Law restrictions. Steve inquired if the committee members had read the Advisory Committee Overview and if Select Board approval is required. Mary Catherine replied that the Select Board should be advised of any changes.

**Review Committee Policy Document** : Peter Brzozowy commented that he feels it is too early to approve this document before the work of the committee is underway. Carol Stata agreed, however Steve Stata feels that this document would provide structure for the meetings, and not having structure is asking for chaos. Barbara Callahan inquired if the meetings should be run according to Robert's Rules of Order until our own policy is adopted. Steve Stata suggested moving this item until the next meeting. He also inquired if he had heard correctly that the Select Board would like to see some progress by early fall. Mary Catherine Graziano shared that the Planning Commission would like to have a survey, and were interested in working with the ARPA committee. Carmine Centrella (chair of the Planning committee) confirmed that they would like to have the survey questions by the end of September Steve Stata confirmed this with Carmine. Catherine Dimitruck commented that the survey will be useful for other grants that the town is eligible for.

**Schedule of Meetings** : Carol Stata commented that she feels that two meetings a month will be necessary, and there was general agreement that this was a good idea. Fridays and during

the day were ruled out. Wednesdays (opposite the Select Board meetings) at 6:30 were deemed an optimum time, with the option to use another room in the building if needed. Steve Stata inquired if the broadband could handle this, and Cary Sandvig replied that it should be fine. The next meetings will be 24 August, 13 September, and 27 September 2023 at 6:30.. Mary LaBrecque made a motion to accept these meeting dates, Peter Brzozowy seconded. All in favor.

**Review Conflict of Interest Policy :** Steve Stata suggested that the committee review the document before the next meeting, and move the approval to the next meeting.

### **3. Orientation**

#### **Open Meeting Law Overview:**

Mary Catherine Graziano reviewed the basics of Open Meeting Law with the group. Essentially, the meetings need to be warned; at the town office, 2 public places in town, and the website. Minutes must be posted on the website within 5 days. A quorum must be present for meetings, and care must be taken to not conduct business by email, with the exception of meeting schedules and agendas. The main takeaways according to Catherine Dimitruck is that all business of the committee must take place in a public meeting. There was some discussion about who would compile the agenda (the chair or the clerk), which will be decided doing forward.

**Presentation on ARPA funds, eligible work opportunities :** The ARPA money must be encumbered by the end of 2024, and spent by the end of 2026. Mary Catherine Graziano commented on several potential uses of the ARPA money. \$50,000 was committed to start digitization of Town Records, \$19,600 for Town Office maintenance, and about \$1300 for some of the flags installed around town. She also commented that public input is not required for spending this money, however it is highly recommended by Vermont League of Cities and Towns. In addition, she has heard of numerous suggestions, including expanding “green areas,” a mural on the salt shed, and a drive- in movie theater.

**4. Next Steps:** Peter Brzozowy feels that a survey is needed, the ARPA money has a limited time frame for expenditure, and that there is a possible conflict with the Town Planning committee as a Town Plan is more long term with no funds available at first. Mary Catherine Graziano commented on the few instances where ARPA money cannot be used, an example would be to settle a lawsuit.

Steve Stata commented on the organization of the meetings and that he didn't feel discussions from the public are appropriate during the business portion of the meeting. Mark Dostaler questioned if public questions would be carried over to the next meeting, and Steve Stata replied that they would as the committee cannot vote on an item that was not on the agenda. Barbara Callahan asked about posting the agendas on Front Porch Forum, Mary LaBrecque replied that she could do that.

Mark Dostaler inquired what would happen if the committee had voted on a decision, and a member of the public had questions. Steve Stata and Peter Brzozowy answered that we should

set aside a small amount of time for public input, and that the function of the committee is an advisory function, and is to gather information from the public for the select board.

Steve Stata stated that for the next meeting, the Committee Policy document, and the Conflict of interest policy, administration of adding to the agenda, and process for evaluating ideas for the ARPA money.

Carol Stata made a motion to adjourn at 4:12 pm, second by Steve Stata. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary LaBrecque