



## **ARPA Advisory Committee**

1315 S. Washington Avenue  
Council Chambers – Room 205  
989.399.1311  
April 27, 2022  
DRAFT MINUTES

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

ARPA Advisory Committee Chair, Renee Johnston, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Christina Jones, Renee Johnston, James Hernandez, Hurley Coleman, Jr., Calvin Talley, Grady Holmes, Jr., Fenobia Dallas, Veronica Horn, Sharon Leaman-Case, Tina Swanton, Amy Spadafore, Jeffrey Bulls<sub>7</sub>  
Excused: Kevin Albosta  
Absent: Valerie Toney, James Doane

Committee members James Doane and Valerie Toney entered the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

### **PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Ms. Horn moved to approve the April 7, 2022 draft minutes. Ms. Swanton seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

### **CHAIR REPORT:**

Chair Johnston asked the committee how they are feeling. Members of the committee expressed the following: optimistic, upset, frustrated, determined, focused.

### **DR. ROBERTS, SPSD SUPERINTENDENT:**

What has the school district done with ARPA funds already?

School districts don't receive ARPA funds, they received ESSER funds. Three rounds of ESSER given: 1<sup>st</sup> round (\$5 million) in the early waves of the pandemic mostly for PPE, 2<sup>nd</sup> round (\$18 million) to continue with PPE equipment, bolster technology, facility issues, and curriculum adaptation issues, 3<sup>rd</sup> round (\$40 million) to do wholesale changes to any HVAC/facility needs in district and to address additional PPE. Of the \$40 million in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, 20% was set aside for instructional needs. SPSPD has allocated all of ESSER I, about 90-95% of ESSER II, and about 40-50% of ESSER III. Remaining of ESSER III will be for infrastructure (HVAC, heating, etc.). Over the next two years, the 20% of ESSER III will be used for instructional needs.

Priorities on remaining funding?

Set aside portion of ESSER funds as part of strategic plans: after school programs. 750K – 1 million to begin after school/community youth program in partnerships with others for a sustainable program (not 1-3 years but planning to fund it long-term). Community center to East side that is sustainable.

Mr. Sernick emphasized sustainability in any programs going forward.

Chair Johnston asked what the timeframe is about ARPA funds being spent. 2024 for ESSER III.

Mr. Coleman, Jr, asked about any other areas for funding (outside of afterschool programs) with the schools. Dr. Roberts said that the SPSPD funding is restricted: only for facilities and curriculum.

Mr. Bulls asked for more details on afterschool programs in the East side. Dr. Roberts said that a portion of Saginaw High School will be turned into a community center.

Ms. Jones asked whether any outside people will be welcome for outside collaboration. Dr. Roberts said that they need to make sure the project is feasible and sustainable before collaboration opportunities are available. Dr. Roberts emphasized the importance of the School Liaison public meetings. At some point, collaboration information will be presented there.

Ms. Horn asked what SPSPD's recommendation would be if the Committee gets a proposal for an after-school program. Dr. Roberts thinks that it would be wise to work together to pool resources.

Ms. Toney asked about the community center: would Great Lakes Bay Center still be in that side of the community? Dr. Roberts wants to keep that health center, but some services may change because of the size and open to the surrounding neighborhood.

Chair Johnston asked about focus areas in instructional funding for ESSER III funds. Dr. Roberts talked about lowering class sizes in all schools. SPSPD put resources in academic interventionists, which are adults with college-level training to help students to lower adult-student ratio from about 22:1 to 15:1 (in some cases 12:1). SPSPD increased high impact tutoring after school, converted curriculum to digital curriculums, increased computer ratio from 1:1 to 2:1 (students have a school computer and home computer). Academic interventions will be sustainable for at least 3 years.

Dr. Roberts said new middle school will be about 400-500 students. Portions of the facility will be renovated and other demolished. He said afterschool program will be open to the entire city, with an emphasis on the East side, and transportation will be provided.

Mr. Doane asked about changes to Thompson Middle School. Dr. Roberts said that sixth graders will be brought into Saginaw Middle School.

Ms. Horn asked about losses in SPSPD. Dr. Roberts said that SPSPD did not experience losses even though enrollment dropped.

Mr. Holmes asked about curriculum and community center: would mental health and conflict resolution be looked at for middle and high school students. Dr. Roberts

said that curriculum was supplemented with mental health support. Community mental health professional in each elementary school. After COVID, one mental health practitioner added to the district, and three more coming soon. Next year, staff will be trained about mental health crises in adults and students.

Ms. Jones asked about Arthur Hill. Dr. Roberts said it will be renovated and Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy will be for 6-12 students. Arthur Hill will become K-12.

Ms. Spadafore asked whether ESSER funds can be used for mental health. Dr. Roberts said yes, but they used a state grant to fund mental health priorities.

Mr. Sernick asked Dr. Roberts about specific things the committee can think of about SPSPD collaboration opportunities. Dr. Roberts said Committee needs to think about time students spend in school and outside of school. Over 80% of SPSPD students live below poverty line. Dr. Roberts talked about prioritization after school hours in unstructured programming and environments.

#### **GUIDEHOUSE:**

Mr. Sernick began by detailing the scope of the committee: that no individual opinion can represent the committee. Mr. Coleman, Jr. agreed.

Reviewing Submission Portal:

Mr. Bulls expressed concern about capacity and support in the application process. He added that it may not be easy for everyone. He is concerned about the question asking about prior federal funds as it may turn some people away. Mr. Sernick talked about adding that question to the end. Mr. Bulls said that won't deter them. The Committee came up with ideas to make the portal more accessible.

The Committee discussed ways to improve the portal, and Guidehouse will review and make changes.

Ms. Spadafore suggested having office hours with the ARPA Committee to answer questions from the community. Mr. Doane emphasized that those that have grant management experience would be a great help for the community. Ms. Toney thought that's what the committee would do.

Ms. Horn said that the committee should be careful about meeting with people about filling out content in the proposals.

The group took a 5-minute break starting at 6:05 pm. Chair Johnston reconvened the committee at 5:10 pm.

Reviewing Community Engagement Calendar:

Groups to add to Community Engagement

- Chair Johnston
  - Entity
    - Higher education?

- Chair Johnston doesn't think higher education is covered. Ms. Horn thinks she'll have at least all three education facilities.
- Geography
  - Southeast side?
    - Mr. Bulls will capture them.
- James St. area?
  - SAAP will be meeting at that location.
- St. Stevens Neighborhood association area?
  - Committee agrees that can be a gap.
- Southwest neighborhood associations
  - Gap added.
- Cathedral districts?
  - Ms. Leaman-Case has St. Mary's planned.
- Ms. Spadafore
  - DSA and DDA here, but should Riverfront area be engaged?
  - YMCA and boys and girls club?
- Mr. Bulls
  - Youth engagement?
    - How does the committee talk to the youth?

Mr. Coleman, Jr. asked whether there should be an effort to reach out to those who have submitted old proposals. Chair Johnston said she will offer up the Community Foundation as a place to have a mini workshop and potentially as a venue to address those who already have submitted a proposal.

Community Engagement Training:

Mr. Sernick went through high-level tips about engaging with the community. He moved on to the high-level process.

Ms. Dallas asked about the city-staff suggested projects. Mr. Sernick said those projects will be put in the overall bucket.

Mr. Sernick then presented the city council priorities, the subgroup ideas the committee came up with, and instructions on how to submit a proposal.

### **MISCELLANEOUS:**

Mr. Sernick moved on to the next steps: community engagement and future check in meetings on May 12<sup>th</sup> and May 19<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. For the May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, city representatives will talk about their priorities.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Edward Connolly: Use a word like partnership with matching funds. Also, maybe extend proposal time to end of June because of the city budget cycle.

John Milne asked whether members of the public also get handouts? Make sure rental houses also qualify for housing projects. The committee will have to balance between good ideas and between prioritizing the funding in each bucket.

John Pugh said he is scared. There are good people in this committee but expresses concern on whether need-based system will work.

Saleem Mannan asked that Guidehouse respect the committee and listen to their guidance. Make sure the money benefits Saginaw and only Saginaw.

Juanita Drake asked when Guidehouse will reach out to those who submitted old proposals. Mr. Sernick responded that it would happen before May 1<sup>st</sup> and that they would have all of May to submit proposals.

Cirven Merrill said he respects everything that he heard at today's meeting. He expresses concern about transparency regarding empowering low-income members of the community.

**ADJOURN:**

Moved by Mr. Bulls, seconded by Mr. Talley to adjourn the meeting. Chair Johnston adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Recorded by,

Walter Aguilar  
Guidehouse Consultant