COUNCIL ARPA REVIEW COMMITTEE
June 7, 2024
12:00 p.m.
Councilman Denny Whayne Conference Room, 4th Floor, Busch Municipal Building
840 Boonville Avenue

MEMBERS PRESENT: Matthew Simpson, Chair; Heather Hardinger; Abe McGull; and Callie Carroll.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

COUNCIL PRESENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Jason Gage, City Manager; Collin Quigley, Deputy City Manager; Jordan Paul, City Attorney; David Holtmann, Director of Finance; Bob Jones, Grants Administrator; Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Melissa Haase, Assistant Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement; Jody Vernon, Assistant Director of Finance and Comptroller; Tona Bowen, Financial Analyst; Jennifer Swan, Registered Architect; Nick Nelson, Director of Art Museum; Katie Towns, Director of Public Health and Welfare; Miles Park, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; David Pennington, Fire Chief; Tim Rosenbury, Director of Quality of Place Initiatives; Jim Fischer, Interim Director of Parks and Recreation; Eric Claussen, Assistant Director of Public Works; Steve Childers, Director of Planning and Development; Rinda Davis, Assistant Director of Public Health and Welfare; Bob Atchley, Senior City and Planner; Anita Cotter, City Clerk; and Julie Greer, Deputy City Clerk.

GUESTS: Marta Mieze, *Springfield News-Leader*; Mary Collette, Commercial Club.

Mayor Pro Tem Matthew Simpson, Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 12:06 p.m. Roll call was conducted: Present: McGull, Carroll, Hardinger, and Simpson. Absent: None.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson welcomed everyone and pointed out the sign-in sheets and the availability of handouts and public comment forms.

Councilmember McGull moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024, meeting as presented. Councilmember Hardinger seconded the motion, and it was approved with the following vote: Ayes: Carroll, McGull, Hardinger, and Simpson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Approved by the Council Review
Committee on August 16, 2024

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson turned the meeting over to Jason Gage, City Manager. Mr. Gage introduced Jody Vernon, Assistant Director of Finance and Comptroller, to provide project status updates.

Ms. Vernon reviewed a spreadsheet outlining the status of each of the internal and external projects which received City American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked about The Salvation Army's ability to spend funds in time. Bob Jones, Grants Administrator, responded The Salvation Army was currently in a capital campaign; he noted it was anticipated Major Shiels would provide an update within the next week. Mayor Pro Tem Simpson requested the Committee members be updated once there was a response. Councilmember McGull noted the deadline to have funds obligated was December of 2024.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked if there were any concerns about the funding allocated to The Kitchen. Mr. Jones responded The Kitchen had three different grants involved in the project, including funding through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD required an environmental review. The environmental review had to wait until the State requirements were met. In addition, a public hearing comment period was required. Mr. Jones anticipated the requirements would be met by late July.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked if there were any concerns with obligating the funds allocated to the Family Connects program by the end of the year. Katie Towns, Director of Public Health and Welfare, responded the allocated funds had already been spent; the department was in the process of making the necessary financial adjustments.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked if there were concerns about the Renew Jordan Creek project. Mr. Gage responded there were not.

Councilmember McGull asked if Ozark Greenways had a backup plan for the allocated funding for their project if time constraints became a problem. Ms. Vernon responded she would obtain additional information. Councilmember McGull expressed concerns about negotiations with the railroad being completed in time.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson requested updates on all of the projects with funds still available. He also asked that building plans for the library auditorium be forwarded to the Committee members when they became available.

Councilmember McGull asked whether amount allocated for compliance services was based on the anticipated work or was a finite number. Mr. Holtmann responded it was a conservative estimate.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson requested a report detailing the different projects funded along with possible renderings and information on external leveraged funds. Councilmember McGull agreed this was important information to obtain due to the Committee's stewardship role. He noted he would like to know the number of jobs created and the financial impact of the projects, and he requested photos of the projects. Councilmember Carroll agreed.

Ms. Vernon explained, based on the reallocations, the remaining amount to be re-appropriated was $695,481.43.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted the next topic was recommendations for projects.

Mr. Holtmann recommended allocating an additional $100,000 for compliance services from FORVIS. He explained the contract with FORVIS would be amended if additional funds were allocated by the Committee.

Mr. Holtmann then reviewed the list of potential projects for ARPA funding. Mr. Gage noted several of the items listed were requested during the City's budget process but were not funded. He further noted it was not intended to be a complete list.

Councilmember McGull asked for additional information regarding the historic building survey. Mr. Gage responded staff members were still working on that project, and one issue was the scope of the project. Steve Childers, Director of Planning and Development, agreed the issue was the scope of the project. He noted the original survey was completed in 1986, and that survey was limited to specific areas of the city, such as Historic C-Street and Walnut Street. Mr. Childers explained as the city has continued to grow, there are additional historic buildings which may not be in the specific areas surveyed previously. Including these additional buildings would expand the scope of the survey but would also provide comprehensive information for the Landmarks Board to review when making decisions.

Mr. Childers noted staff members had determined there was a grant program available through the State Historic Preservation Office which was being utilized by the City of Sedalia. Staff members had recently met with the State Historic Preservation Office to get information about the grant program, and Mr. Childers expressed his opinion there was a strong potential to obtain grant funds for the historic building survey.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked what the corridor neighborhood planning would entail. Mr. Childers explained it would focus on the corridors identified in the Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Gage noted this was specific to do some of the needed work outlined in the Forward SGF plan. Mr. Childers noted Public Works had already started on some of those projects, and the additional funding would help complete the top three projects. Councilmember McGull asked for confirmation the corridor neighborhood planning would complement Forward SGF. Mr. Gage responded affirmatively.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked David Pennington, Fire Chief, to provide details on the request for decontamination stations for Fire Stations #2, #3, #6, and #9 and the request for the aerial awareness tethered drone. Chief Pennington responded the new fire stations have a decontamination station similar to that found in a chemistry laboratory in a university setting. Most of the stations do not have those stations and use a job-site type piece of equipment, and the result is not the same. Chief Pennington explained the tethered drone would assist with situational awareness and the ability to observe large fires or large community events.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked if there were any one-time funding requests from the Springfield Police Department. Collin Quigley, Deputy City Manager, responded those requests had all been funded.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted a Parks Department representative was in attendance and explained the Bear Boardwalk at the Dickerson Park Zoo had been closed for a number of years. He asked about the cost of the project and the status of funding. Miles Park, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, said Parks was working with an engineering firm, and the design phase of the project was nearing completion. He noted the existing boardwalk was an elevated structure which had been in place since approximately 1984 and was past its useful life. He explained there were three animal exhibits under the boardwalk so additional safety features had to be considered. He further noted due to the location of the boardwalk and the pedestrian route, visitors had to loop all the way back due to the unavailability of the boardwalk, which was detrimental to the Zoo experience.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked about the anticipated cost of the Bear Boardwalk project. Mr. Park responded the engineer's estimate was approximately $580,000, including demolition of the current boardwalk.

Councilmember McGull asked about a leaking pond at the Zoo. Mr. Park responded staff members were working with another contractor on that project to determine the most cost-efficient and effective way to address the issue. He explained the contractor had submitted a proposal, and Parks staff members were waiting until July 1 to initiate work on the project.

Councilmember McGull asked if that project would affect the train. Mr. Park responded the train was in the same area, so there was a potential for the project to impact the train. Councilmember McGull asked about the cost of the project. Mr. Park responded the cost was approximately $160,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted the anticipated cost for the boardwalk replacement was $580,000 and asked if a funding source had been identified. Mr. Park responded funds had not been identified and noted it was a critical item.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson asked Mary Collette, Commercial Club President, to provide information regarding her request.

Ms. Collette explained the request was for signage, security cameras, and dumpster pads and enclosures. She noted there were five shared dumpsters on Frisco Lane which were located on the City right of way. The City required the construction of dumpster pads and secure enclosures. She further noted the Community Improvement District funds were supposed to be used for promotional items to make area more attractive and appealing. She added the dumpster pads and enclosures would be a pilot project since there was a similar issue in the downtown area.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson summarized the Committee still had approximately $595,000 to allocate if $100,000 were added to the FORVIS contract for compliance services.

Councilmember McGull expressed his opinion funding should be allocated for the decontamination stations, the tethered drone, and neighborhood cleanups. He asked if these would be additional cleanups besides the ongoing cleanups. Mr. Gage responded it would be a clear expansion of the current program. He noted it would be costly to have a cleanup for every neighborhood and suggested reviewing the possibility of having overall cleanups.

Councilmember McGull noted there was also a communal impact to the neighborhood cleanups, with neighbors working together. He noted he had received positive feedback regarding several neighborhood cleanups. Mr. Gage noted these were one-time funds, and additional funds may not be available in the future; however, there could be citizen anticipation that the additional cleanups would continue.

Cora Scott, Director of Public Information and Civic Engagement, noted the Planning Department had been facilitating the neighborhood cleanups for over a decade, coordinating with the Community Partnership of the Ozarks. She explained she and Mr. Childers had been discussing the possibility of combining efforts to strategize on the best way to meet all of the goals; this could include combining the Clean Green initiative with the neighborhood cleanups.

Councilmember Hardinger asked about the request for additional funds for Historic City Hall, specifically asking if these funds would help bridge gaps in the project. Jennifer Swan, Registered Architect, responded affirmatively. She explained the hazardous material abatement and selective demolition was scheduled for June 18. She noted approximately $750,000 was budgeted for this, but that amount still left a deficit of approximately $280,000 in the overall project budget. Mr. Gage noted there would be more clarity as work on the project progressed and explained any additional funds which could be allocated for that project would help.

Mr. Holtmann explained staff members had designated funding for the Historic City Hall project from several sources. He noted the project was very important and was just in the early stages.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson expressed his agreement the Historic City Hall project was important and one which had already received a large amount of funding; over $4.5 million in ARPA funds had already been allocated to the project. He expressed a desire to allocate ARPA funds in a way which closely aligned to the citizen priorities listed in the survey.

Councilmember Hardinger asked for details about the animal shelter project. Ms. Swan responded current estimates showed the project to be $150,000 to $200,000 over budget. She also noted staff members were working very closely with the consultant to design the building to be as efficient as possible. Ms. Towns noted everything that would be considered nonessential had been stripped out of the plan for the facility, and the facility had been reduced in size compared to the original intent. She explained this was the department's only General Fund program, and there were no funds available from the Health Department budget to assist with the facility.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted there could be an opportunity to obtain grant funding to complete the first three projects listed on the spreadsheet in the planning projects category. For the same amount estimated for those, the Committee could fund both of the HUD plans which were in line with the Housing Priority and fund the corridor neighborhood planning which aligned with Forward SGF. Councilmember Hardinger expressed her support for the Fire Station decontamination stations, the aerial drone, the CID budget request, and neighborhood cleanups.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted the cost for all three Planning projects, the decontamination stations, the aerial awareness tethered drone, the Commercial Street CID budget request, and the neighborhood cleanups would total $512,000.

Councilmember Hardinger asked if there were any projects which could not be completely funded but could benefit from some additional funding. Mayor Pro Tem Simpson responded any of the capital projects which had been discussed could use funding.

Councilmember Carroll asked if there were any additional projects at the Zoo other than the pond and the Bear Boardwalk. Mr. Park responded those were the two most urgent matters. Mr. Gage reminded everyone the funds have to be under contract by the end of the year.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted updated information should be available in July. Councilmember Hardinger suggested saving the $80,000 in unallocated funds and adding it to other funds which would need to be re-allocated. Ms. Vernon noted there should more clarity on the external projects by mid July.

Councilmember Hardinger moved to recommend funding for the HUD required 5-year consolidated plan to support housing programs Part 1, the HUD required consolidated plan Part 2, Corridor Neighborhood Planning, decontamination stations for Fire Stations #2, #3, #6, and #9, the aerial awareness tethered drone, the Commercial Street CID budget request, neighborhood cleanups, and expenditure auditing (FORVIS). Councilmember Carroll seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Hardinger, Carroll, McGull, and Simpson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

Mayor Pro Tem Simpson noted the Committee could revisit the project status at the next meeting and make recommendations regarding remaining funds.

Councilmember McGull asked if there were any Public Works projects which could be obligated at any time. Mr. Gage responded affirmatively.

Councilmember Hardinger moved to adjourn. Councilmember Carroll seconded the motion, and it was approved with the following vote: Ayes: Carroll, McGull, Hardinger, and Simpson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.

There being no further business to come before the Council ARPA Review Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:04 p.m.

Prepared by Julie Greer

Approved by the Council Review
Committee on August 16, 2024