

**MINUTES  
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT TASK FORCE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 23, 2022**

Present: Mayor Ben Florsheim; Majority Leader Gene Nocera; Minority Leader Phil Pessina; Pamela Steele; Rev. Robyn Anderson; Rev. Moses Harvill; Cynthia Clegg; Bobbye Knoll Peterson; Bryan Skowera; Christina Heckart; Diana Doyle; Brig Smith; Joe Fazzino; Kevin Elak

Public: Ramona Burkey, Cathy Lechowicz, Kisha Michaels, Jaz McDaniel

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m.

**2. Public Comment**

None

**3. New Business**

**A. Discussion of Working Group**

Brig Smith explained that he received interest from four Task Force members who are willing to serve as a subgroup to review applications. Those members are Bobbye Peterson, Cynthia Clegg, Christina Heckart, and Gene Nocera.

Gene Nocera made a MOTION to approve the four members to serve as the working group. Phil Pessina seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**B. Discussion of Rubric for Application**

Mayor Florsheim explained how the working group would use the rubric to evaluate the applications and make recommendations to the Task Force.

**C. Presentations by Applicants**

- i. Russell Library – Ramona Burkey gave an infrastructure proposal presentation regarding rebuilding the community connections at the Russell Library. The library would collaborate with Middletown’s Recreation and Community Services and Arts and Culture divisions to provide the critical infrastructure necessary to create a safe, healthy space for people of all ages to gather in-person, free of charge, in order to build back trust, connection, and support networks.
- ii. City of Middletown Recreation of Community Services Department – Cathy Lechowicz and Kisha Michaels-- gave a presentation on a program

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aimed at healing the heart, mind, and soul of the city. It would include pop-up events throughout the community to create social opportunities that rebuild a sense of community and provide healthy activities.

**4. Other**

The Mayor asked that Brig send an email to the working group to set up a meeting to start reviewing the applications.

Phil Pessina suggested adding approval of minutes to the agenda whether the ARPA meeting is a special or regular meeting going forward.

More discussion ensued regarding the rubric and the Mayor and Brig explained how the rubric would work and how the working group would review the applications to forward to the Task Force for finalization.

**5. Adjournment**

MOTION to adjourn made by Phil Pessina and seconded by Bryan Skowera. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting ended.