



FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE STUDY SESSION

RE: American Rescue Act Funding

County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

Tuesday, April 27, 2021 – ***6:00 P.M. *PLEASE NOTE TIME**

Brookens Administrative Center/Zoom

1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois

MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on June 15, 2021

Members Present via Zoom:	Titianna Ammons, Samantha Carter, Jim Goss, Mary King, Jenny Lokshin, Jim McGuire, Diane Michaels, Brad Passalacqua, Kyle Patterson, Emily Rodriguez, Chris Stohr, Jennifer Straub, Steve Summers, Leah Taylor, Eric Thorsland, Jodi Wolken Stephanie Fortado
Members Physically Present:	
Members Absent:	Lorraine Cowart, Aaron Esry, Stan Harper, Jordan Humphrey, Jacob Paul,
Others Present:	Darlene Kloepel (County Executive), Tami Ogden (Deputy Director of Finance), Megan Robison (Recording Secretary), Dalitso Sulamoyo (Chief Executive Officer, Regional Planning Commission), Dustin Heuerman (Sheriff), Kari May (Executive Director, Children's Advocacy Center), Lynn Canfield (Executive Director, MHB/DDB), Susan Monte (Planner, Planning & Zoning)

Agenda Items

I. Call to Order

Chair Fortado called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. *Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Read Notice of Meeting

Notice of the meeting was not required for a committee study session.

IV. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Mr. Thorsland to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Goss. Upon roll call vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

V. Public Participation

Ms. Canfield sent an email to all Board members with ideas that are important to the Mental Health Board. She attended a workshop about using funds for permanent supportive housing and

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believes it would be a successful investment in Champaign County. She stated there is a clear correlation between housing and mental health and would like to see funds used for this purpose.

Bradley Uken, Manager of the Champaign County Farm Bureau, spoke about the need for broadband services in the rural areas. The Farm Bureau is requesting the County Board set aside 15 million dollars from the ARPA funds for a matching grant program.

Marlon Mitchell, Founder and Executive Director of First Followers, addressed the issue of community gun violence. Urbana is currently reporting one shooting in every four days and Champaign is reporting one shooting in every 1.4 days. He would like to propose that 10% of the ARPA funds be used for violence prevention strategies.

Lee Ann Kelly, Board Chair of the Trauma Resilience Initiative, would like to ask the Board to use 10% of the ARPA funds towards violence prevention. They don't want to add programming, but they would like to use the funds to establish an infrastructure that addresses the social determinants of health together through a trauma informed approach.

Susan Monte, Volunteer Executive Director of Champaign County Environmental Stewards, is requesting \$25,000 to complete a project to reduce the reliance on single-use plastics.

Terrance Thomas, Pastor of Bethel AME Church, supporting the request to fund violence prevention. He believes 10% would be an appropriate level of funding. He does not want to add more programming but is advocating to add a county infrastructure that addresses this issue on all levels with wrap-around services.

Kari May, Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Center, would like to ask the Board to appropriate \$25,000 for CAC employee bonuses/hazard pay along with funding for new flooring and easy to clean furniture.

Mr. Patterson joined the meeting during public participation.

Chair Fortado let everyone know they will be taking more time, during the May meeting, to hear more dialogue from the public. She also asked the Board members to have conversations with their constituents and to bring those comments back to the Board.

VI. Discussion – ARPA Funding

Ms. Ogden gave a presentation of high-level information to provide a framework for future discussion until the official guidance is released. She explained how the 1.9 trillion dollars would be disbursed throughout the country and also listed the specific amounts going to local governments. Listing the current eligible uses for the funds, she stated we will want to avoid spending duplication to maximize the use of all funding types. Ms. Ogden believes the County does not currently have the capacity to manage these funds and all the additional added processes to meet the requirements. She wrapped up the presentation by listing some key considerations, key points of GFOA guidance and the County's lost revenues due to COVID-19.

Discussion followed regarding some questions the Board had about the presentation. In response to their questions, Ms. Ogden explained the County had losses in several revenue lines, related to the pandemic, and after recouping the lost revenue, those funds could then be used towards items that are not ARPA allowable costs. She also hopes the state guidelines will mirror the federal

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guidelines with minor tweaks and explained that regional collaboration is being highly encouraged to leverage this money to the fullest extent. Ms. Ogden also stated that further guidance from the government is needed before they can determine what specific uses may be eligible. She went on to explain that it is not sustainable to fund ongoing programs as this funding will end after a few years. Chair Fortado wrapped up this section of the presentation by giving the Board three items to consider as they continue through this huge undertaking.

Chair Fortado asked if anyone had any issue with moving forward with the process of allocating a portion of this money towards a staff resource. Mr. Stohr stated that he agrees with hiring an administrative staff member but also believes that one or more navigators need to be hired to set up a process for the community to use for submitting applications. Ms. Taylor agreed with everything Mr. Stohr stated. Mr. Thorsland also agreed but urged the County to move quickly to find qualified candidates since other entities will also be looking to fill this same type of position. Mr. McGuire reminded everyone that RPC allocates money from their grants for administrative work and it may be best to ask them about their current structure and how that might work for the County. Mr. Patterson also agreed with this allocation and asked that they discuss where this person will be housed since this is already in RPC's wheelhouse. Ms. Ogden also reminded everyone of the increased tasks on other offices such as the Auditor's Office which may need assistance with additional staff to handle the volume of extra work. No one spoke against moving forward with this process.

Ms. Kloeppel explained that current staff just does not have the capacity to take on this large of a task along with their current duties. She then moved into her presentation by explaining that she has begun speaking with the local municipalities about collaboration and with RPC to contract for someone to manage this funding. She has also reached out to the County Department Heads for ideas on internal needs within the County. Her presentation listed many ideas that have been brought to the table, years for possible funding, estimated cost and possibility of money from other funding.

Chair Fortado suggested that future meetings be spent discussing broadband in a more robust manner and asked everyone to digest all of the information from Ms. Kloeppel and come back to the next meeting with their questions. She then gave the floor to Mr. Sulamoyo from The Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Sulamoyo gave a presentation focused on managing the grant funds. He gave some background about the RPC to explain why they have extensive experience managing grants. He explained in great detail what his department could/would do to manage the grant funds to ensure compliance with government guidelines. Mr. McGuire and Mr. Sulamoyo discussed the rental assistance program, funds for small businesses, assisting with small town sewer projects, and grant reporting. Ms. Rodriguez asked how the conversations regarding the RPC separating from the County affect the transfer of these funds. Mr. Sulamoyo explained why that process would be very complex and it would not be something that would be happening soon. Discussion continued regarding the low number of businesses that received grant funding, the reasons and possibly finding ways to make this easier for businesses. Having the navigator position, mentioned earlier in the meeting, would enable the County to assist people in these situations.

Chair Fortado wrapped up the meeting stating that she believes it is basic human right that people live in safe and healthy communities with access to clean water and safe sewer systems. She also believes that the County internally has some great needs to be addressed. All of this will require extensive conversation to balance all of these needs and she appreciates everyone's participation

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today. She is requesting that a study session be scheduled for May to receive input from the community. Chair Fortado wants this to be a transparent and collaborative process!

VII. Adjournment

Chair Fortado adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.