



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

2018-07-16 LAG

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Reading Arpa Advisory Committee

Date: 2022-05-11

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Public Library

Location: Community Room

Address: 64 Middlesex Avenue

Agenda:

Purpose: Open Session

Meeting Called By: Chair Marianne Downing

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting will be held in-person at the Reading Public Library Community Room, and remotely via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84868405168>

Meeting ID: 848 6840 5168

One tap mobile

+16465189805,,84868405168# US (New York)

+16465588656,,84868405168# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 646 518 9805 US (New York)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 848 6840 5168

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kdPsfL8hg2>

AGENDA:

Start and end times are approximate.

7:00-7:05	Call to Order
7:05-7:10	Public Comment
7:10-7:40	PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/VOTE - Reading Public Schools to present on time sensitive asks for RPS funding out of ARPA for RAAC approval to send on to Reading Select Board for their 4/17 meeting
7:40-8:00	PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - Reading Elder Services to address RAAC re: possible Elder Services uses for ARPA funding

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

8:00-8:20	PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/VOTE - Town manager to present water rate information relating to RAAC vote to allocate \$650,000 from ARPA to the water enterprise funds for RAAC discussion and vote to send on to Reading Select Board for 4/17 meeting
8:20-9:00	PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION VOTE -RAAC SURVEY 1. Review and discuss draft survey format and questions as prepared by Jayne Wellman, revise as necessary. 2. Decide on release date, survey deadline, where to distribute paper copies and where they will be collected. 3. Determine who will review results, who has access. 4. Vote to approve 1-3 above.
9:00-9:10	Discuss future agenda items
9:10-9:15	Review/Approve minutes from 4/11/2022 meeting
9:15	Adjourn

Presentation to RAAC Committee

May 11, 2022





ARPA SPENDING BUCKETS

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

\$1.75
MILLION

WATER & SEWER

\$2 MILLION

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

DEFINED BY
RAAC;
SIDEWALKS,
HOUSING,
MENTAL
HEALTH

WATER & SEWER

CAPITAL
PROJECTS FY23
& FY24
MINIMIZE RATE
INCREASES

\$1.5 MILLION

ATHLETICS RECREATION

\$2 MILLION

SCHOOL PRIORITIES

Early Literacy,
HS Pathways,
Pandemic-
Related
Interventions
and Supports

ATHLETICS RECREATION

BIRCH
MEADOW
MASTER PLAN
PHASE I

SCHOOL PRIORITIES



School Connections to ARPA Guidelines

- “Assistance to address the impact of learning loss for K-12 students (e.g. high-quality tutoring, **differentiated instruction**)”
- “Services to **address educational disparities**, including assistance to high-poverty school districts & **educational and evidence-based services to address student academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.**”



Our Context

Goal: All students will be grade-level readers.

- New understanding of literacy instructional practices
- [EdReports](#), DESE
- Demands on teachers for planning and preparation
- Pandemic context
- Grant Funding: [Accelerating Literacy Grant](#), ARPA
- Reading in Reading Committee



Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS 2016-17 through 2020-21

	ELA Grades 3-8	ELA Grades 10
2020-21	64%	84%
2019-20	No MCAS	
2018-19	68%	70%
2017-18	68%	96%
2016-17	63%	95%



Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS by Subgroup Spring 2021

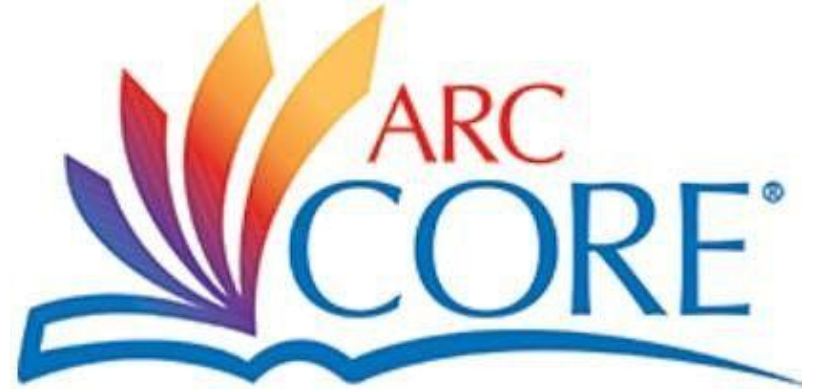
Grades 3-8 % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	
	ELA
All Students	64
Reported Subgroups	
Econ. Disadvantaged	39
Students w/ Disabilities	25
High Needs	33
Race/Ethnicity	
African Amer./Black	32
Asian	74
Hispanic/Latino	41
Multi-Race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	63
White	65

Grade 10 % Meeting or Exceeding Expectations	
	ELA
All Students	84
Reported Subgroups	
Econ. Disadvantaged	69
Students w/ Disabilities	41
High Needs	51
Asian	94
White	86



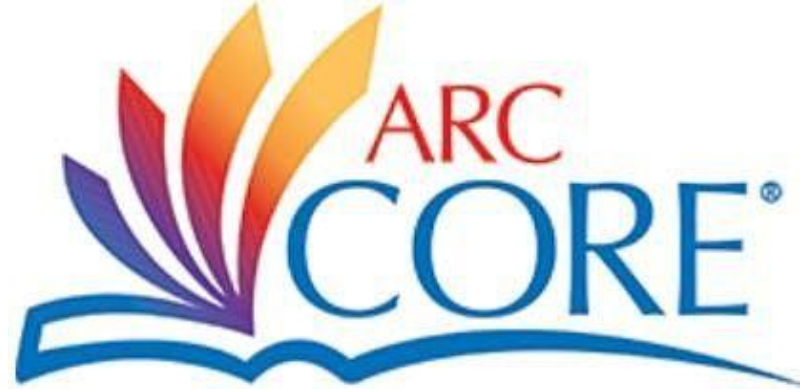
American Reading Company (ARC) Core

ARC Core is a comprehensive program that includes instruction and materials for all aspects of literacy instruction including: Foundational skills, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, reading comprehension, writing in response to reading, and writing across genres.

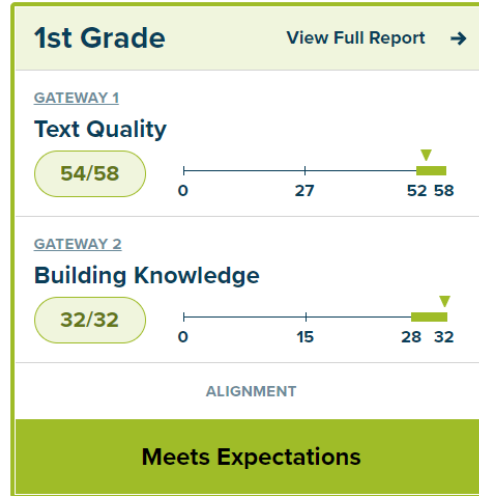
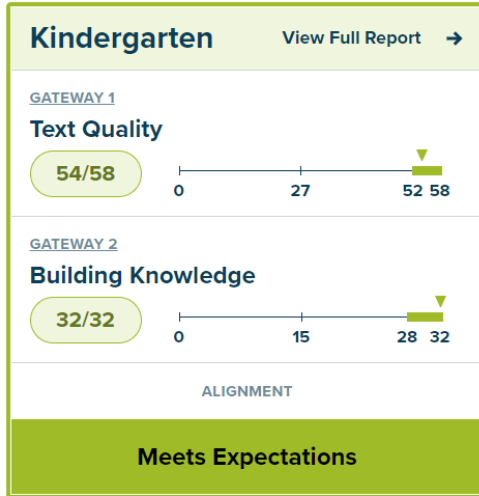


Why American Reading Company (ARC) Core?

- High ratings in [CURATE](#) and [EdReports](#)
- Highest program as rated by teachers on Literacy Leadership Team
- Differentiated instruction is at the heart of the program
- Knowledge-building curriculum
- Embedded social-emotional learning and critical thinking



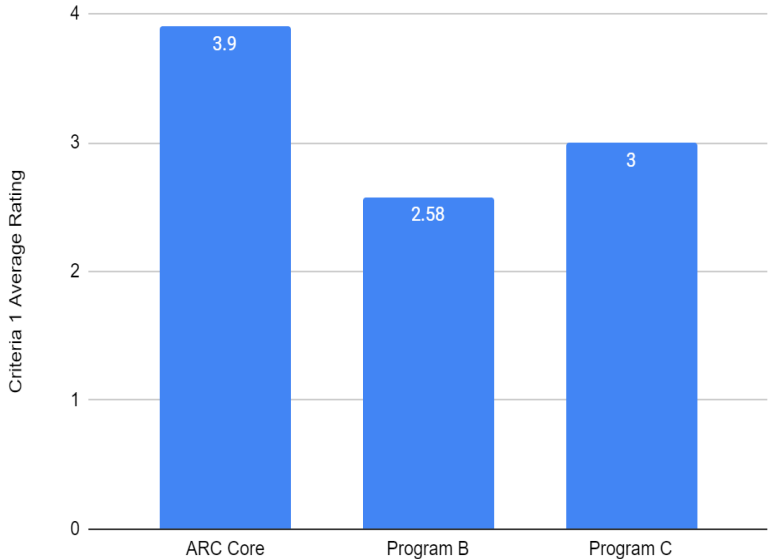
EdReports Rating



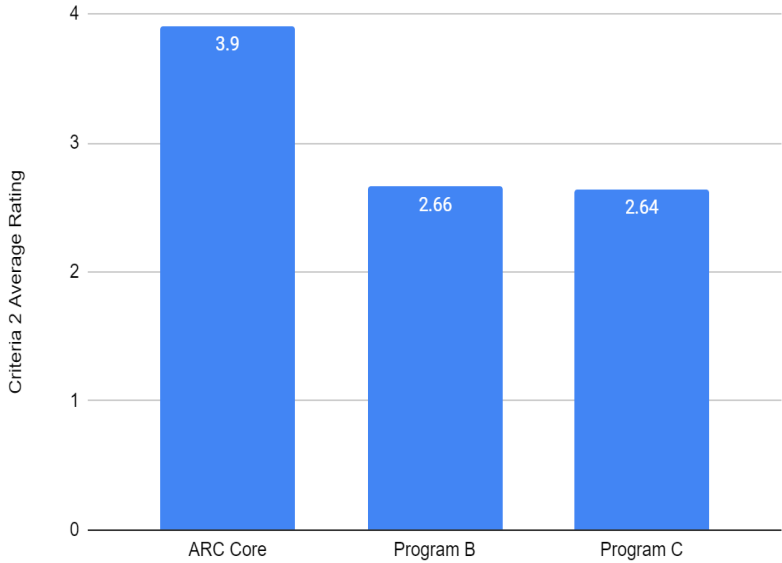
EdReports Rating



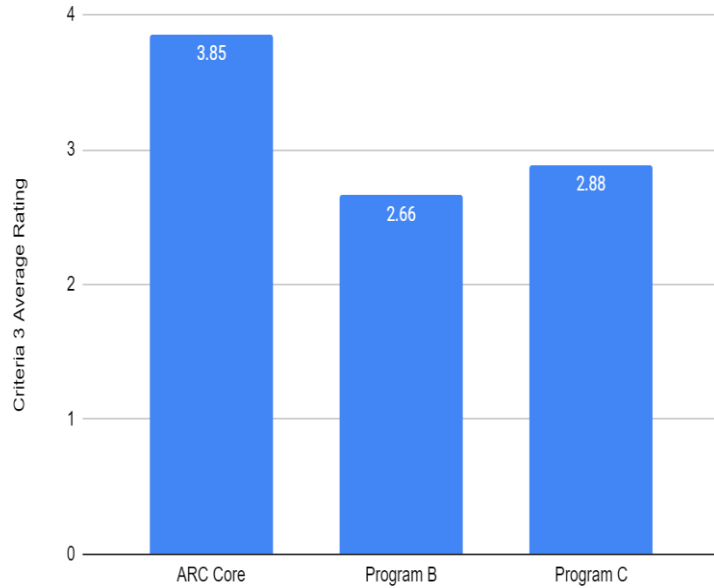
Criteria 1: Student Engagement and Culturally Responsive



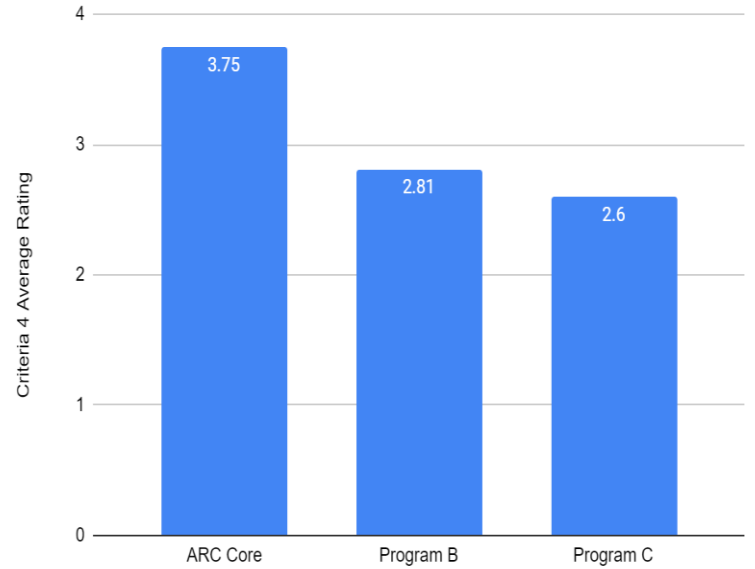
Criteria 2: Access for All and Equity Centered



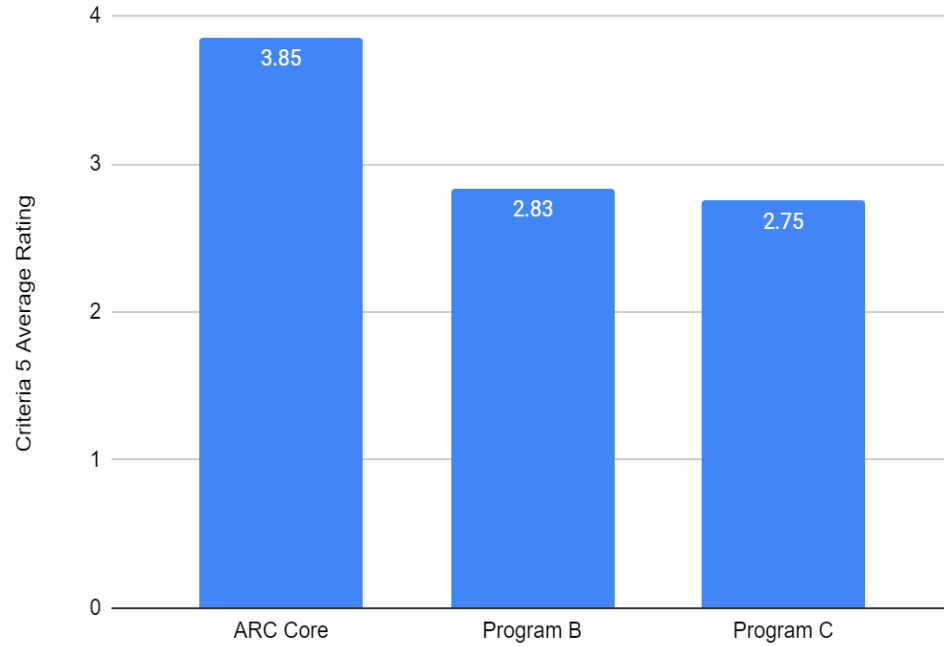
Criteria 3: Content



Criteria 4: Assessment



Criteria 5: Teacher Accessibility



Professional Development

Year 1

- 10-15 days of teacher PD per school
- 10 days of Leadership Learning Series per district

Year 2

- 10 days of teacher PD per school
- 10 days of Leadership Learning Series per district

Year 3

- 5-8 days of teacher PD per school
- 10 days of Leadership Learning Series per district



Initial Investment: ARC Core Estimated Costs Years 1 through Year 4

Year	Grades	Phase	Expense Categories	Estimated Cost
Year 1 - FY23	3-5	Implementation	PD, Digital Licensing, Materials	715,900
Obligate in FY22			<i>FY 22 DESE Literacy Grant</i>	<i>(195,050)</i>
			<i>FY22 Operating Budget</i>	<i>(87,280)</i>
			Subtotal Year 1	433,570
Year 2 - FY24	3-5	Continuation	PD, Digital Licensing, Material Replenishment	166,050
Obligate in FY23	K-2	Implementation	PD, Digital Licensing, Materials	625,375
			Subtotal Year 2	791,425
Year 3 - FY25	3-5	Continuation	Digital Licensing, Material	165,790
Obligate in FY24	K-2	Continuation	PD, Digital Licensing, Material Replenishment	238,175
			Subtotal Year 3	403,965
Year 4- FY26	3-5	Ongoing Renewal	Digital Licensing, Material Replenishment	136,365
Obligate in FY25 (by December, 2024)	K-2	Continuation	Digital Licensing, Material Replenishment	234,675
			Subtotal Year 4	371,040
Years 1 through 4		Total K-5		2,000,000



Ongoing Investment: ARC Core Year 5 and Beyond - Steady State

Year	Grades	Phase	Expense Categories	Estimated Cost
Year 5 - FY27	K-5	Ongoing Renewal/Steady State	Digital Licensing, Material Replenishment	\$43,000 to \$150,000



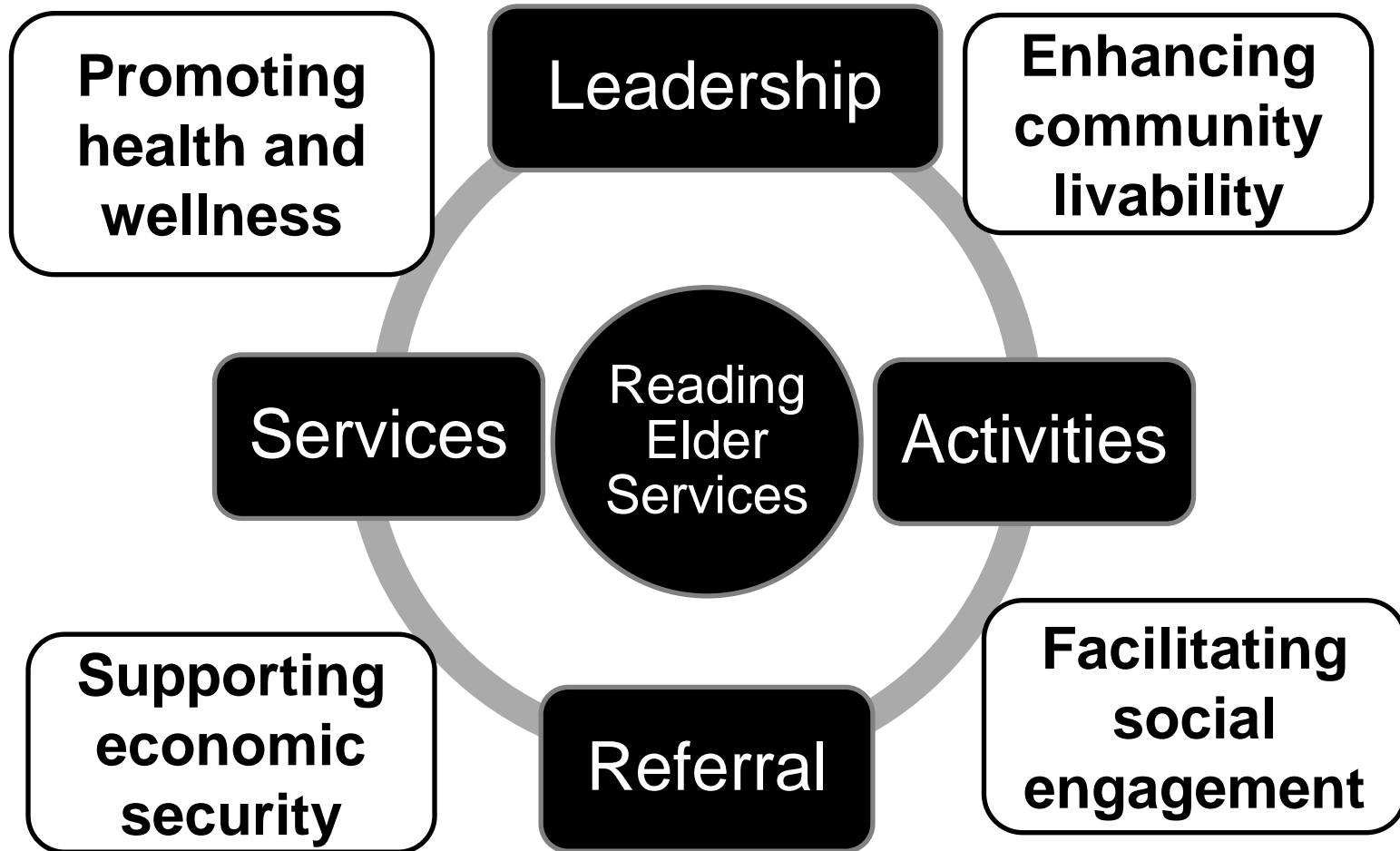


Town of Reading - Elder Human Services





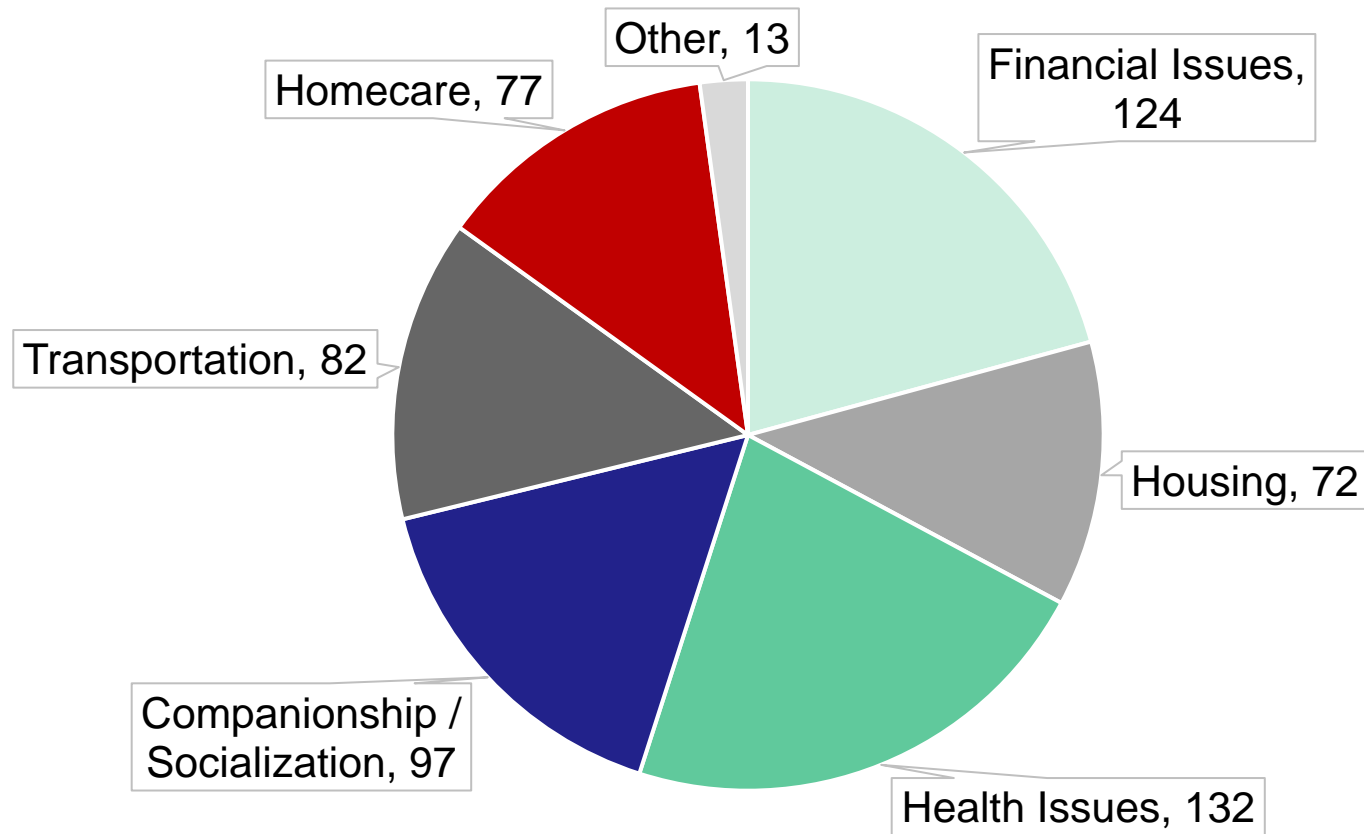
Elder Services in Reading





Greatest Challenge Facing Reading Seniors

(source: Needs Assessment, 2017)





Background

- **2017** - Needs Assessment – Time to Begin Planning for a New Center
- **2018** – Updates made to the PSC
- **2019** – Staffing and COVID – Holding Pattern
- **2021, 2022** – Added the Tent to the PSC
- **2021** – SB appoints ReCalc and hire UMass Gerontology Institute
- **2022** – ReCalc meets bi-monthly and visits 21 centers
- Hired UMass Gerontology Institute to lead community engagement (Public Forms, Surveys, Focus Groups)



ReCalc Effort

- **Vision** – A far reaching vision for the future is needed to plan for the needs of the community.
- **Community Needs** – (Needs Assessment, Umass Gerontology Institute, 2017)
 - Expand Staffing
 - Enhance Transportation Services
 - Add Programming to Prevent Social Isolation
 - Support Aging in Place
 - Strengthen Mental Health and Behavior Health Services
- **Pleasant Street Center has outlived its useful life**
 - Demographic Trends - Growing Population (27%) - Residents age 60+
 - Layout/Size/Lack of 1st Fl Bathroom
 - Space Constraints limit programming AND create a barrier to hiring more staff
- **Impact on Service Delivery** - A dedicated staff having difficulty meeting the demands of the community
- **Limited Capacity** - Some residents leave town for programs



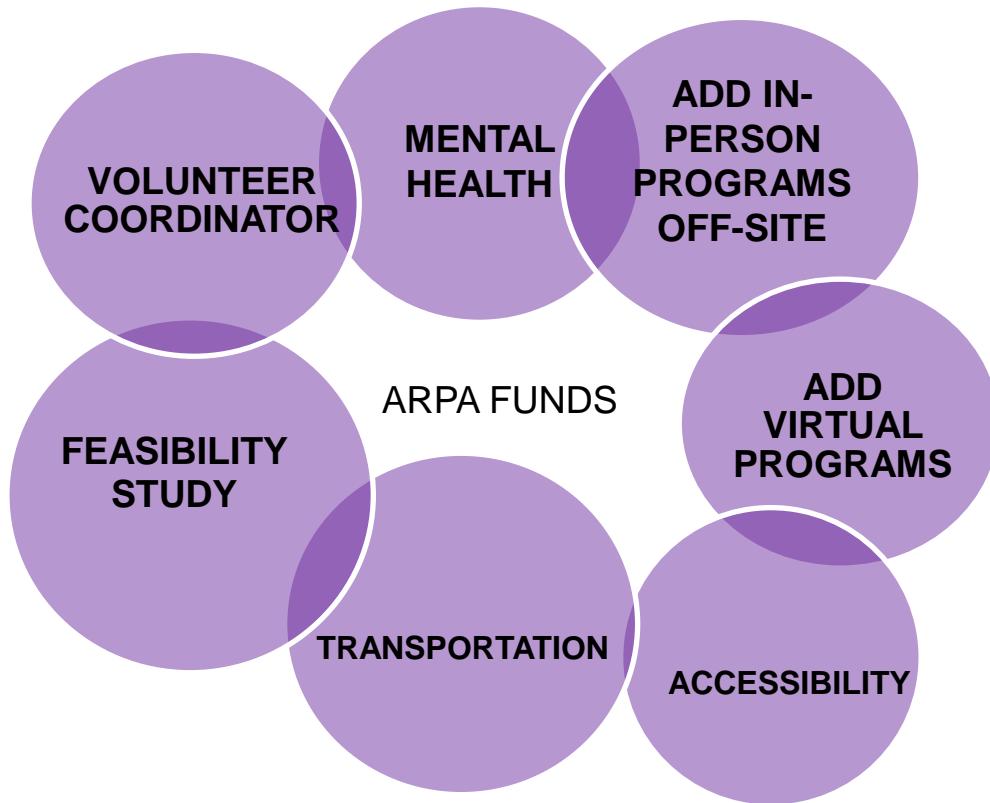


Planning for New Center

- **Re-Calc & UMass** – Benchmarking & Community Engagement – “Pre-Feasibility Study”
- **Public Forum #3** – 6/1/22 7:00 p.m. RPL
- **ReCalc/UMass Data Collection** - inform the next steps
- **Feasibility Study Cost** - \$300,000 (est.)



COA Feedback - Use of ARPA Funds





ARPA Funds as a Resource for EHS

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Enhance PSC as focal point for services, information, resources, activities, socialization, volunteerism
- Develop supplemental programming off-site, partner first with Library etc., expand bus trips, add virtual programs, events under the tent.
- Continue to pursue expanding transportation services.
- Add mental health services (outsourcing).
- Fund Feasibility Study for new Center.



ARPA FUND REQUEST

1. Feasibility Study	\$300,000
2. Supplemental Programming/Space	\$250,000
3. More Transportation/Trips (subsize)	\$150,000
4. Outsourced Mental Health Services	\$ 75,000
5. Virtual Programming	\$ 25,000
6. Volunteer Coordinator	\$ 50,000
7. Accessibility Improvements	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
	\$900,000



Questions?

Jean Delios
Assistant Town Manager
idelios@ci.reading.ma.us
781-942-6612



Town of Reading



**Reading ARPA Advisory Committee
May 11, 2022**



ARPA SPENDING BUCKETS

**COMMUNITY
PRIORITIES**

\$1.75
MILLION

**WATER &
SEWER**

\$2 MILLION

\$1.5 MILLION

**ATHLETICS
RECREATION**

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**SCHOOL
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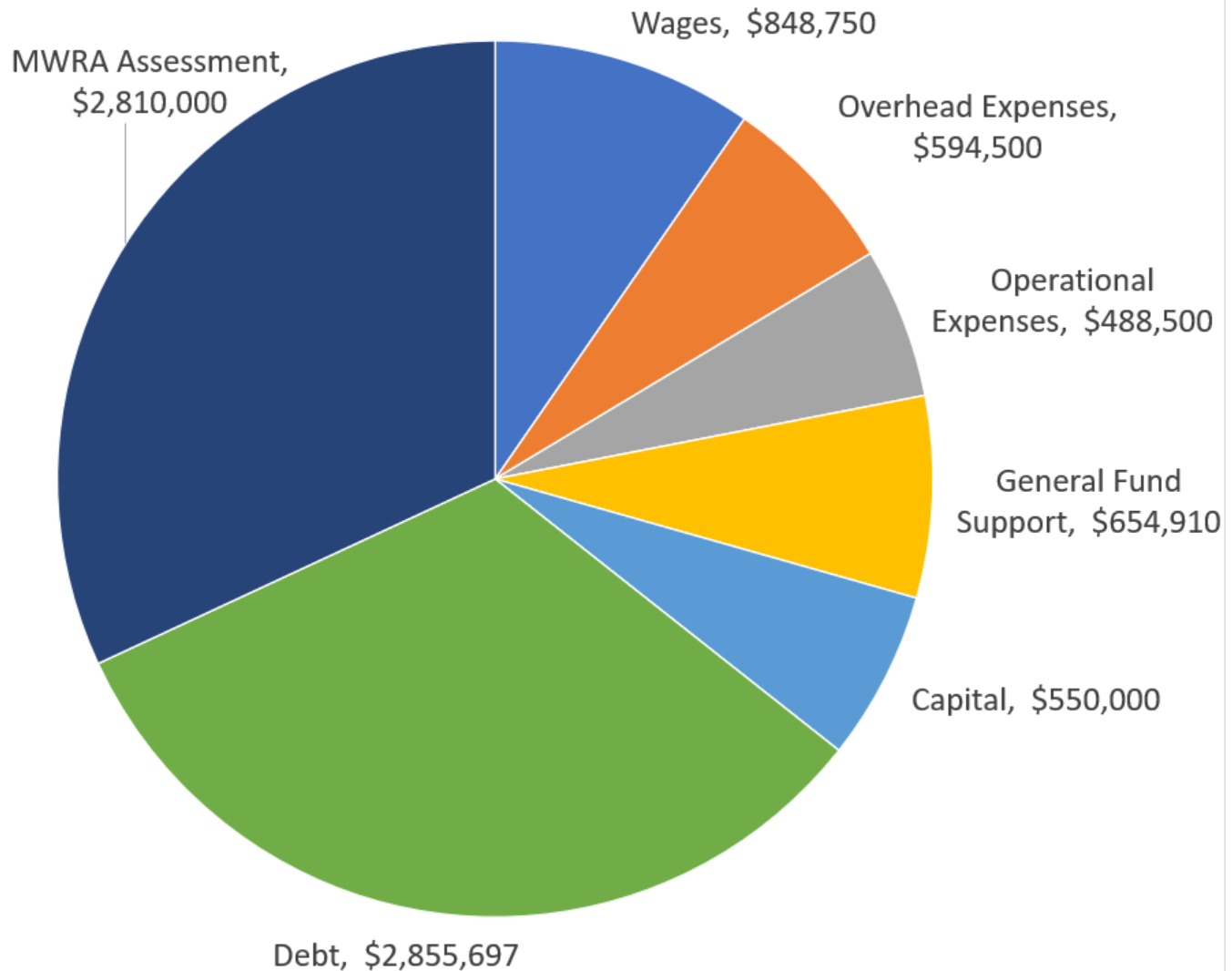
**ATHLETICS
RECREATION**

BIRCH
MEADOW
MASTER PLAN
PHASE I



FY23 Water Enterprise Budget

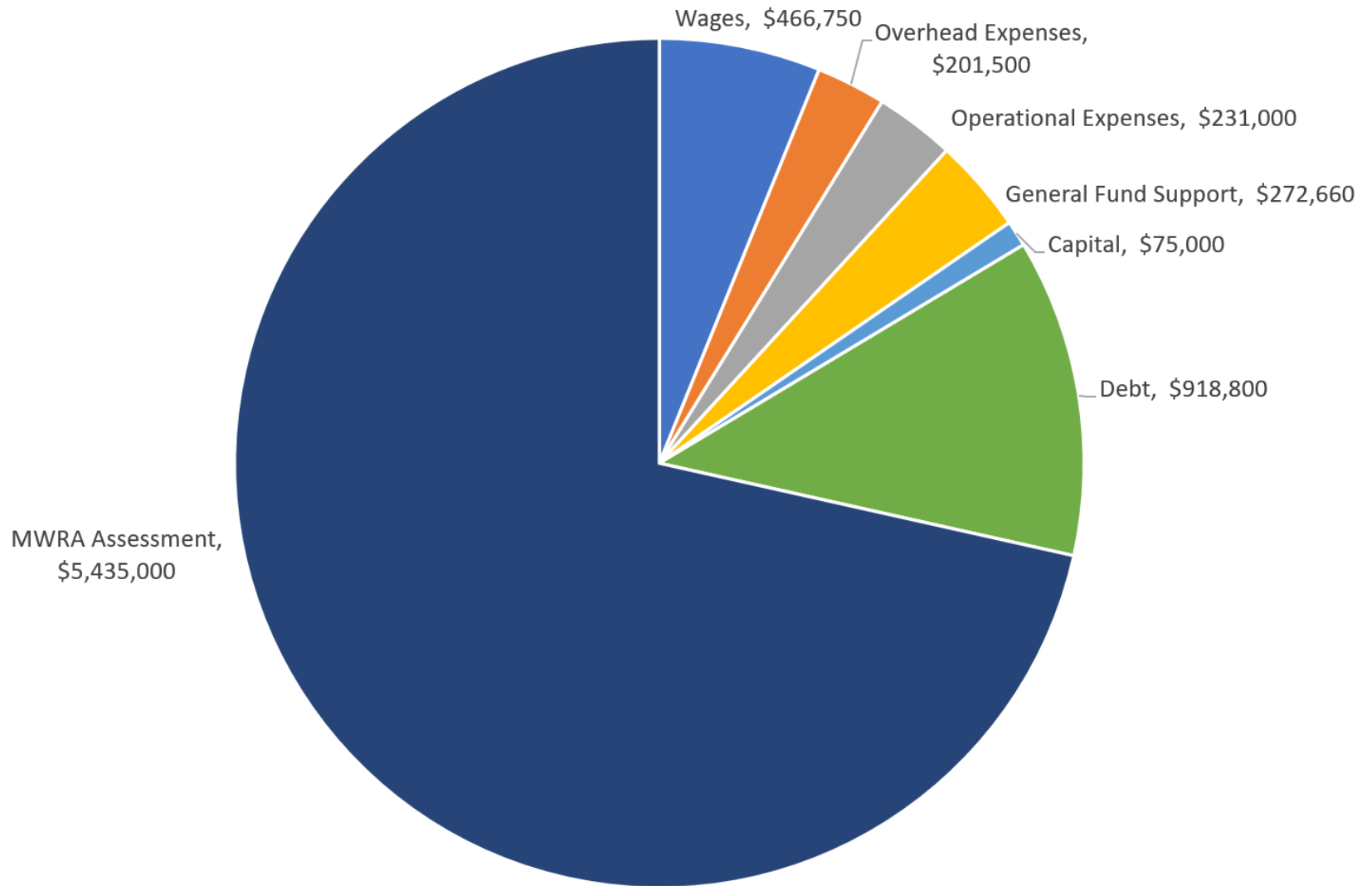
\$8,802,357





FY23 Sewer Enterprise Budget

\$7,600,710





Proposed Sewer Rate for FY23

FY23 Sewer Enterprise Budget	\$ 7,500,710
Reserves Used to Lower Rates	\$ (450,000)
Allowance (4%) for Lien	\$ 282,028
Total Required Billing	\$ 7,332,738
Estimated Annual Water Consumption (100 Cu Ft)	675,000
FY23 Sewer Rate per 100 Cu Ft	\$ 10.86
FY22 Sewer Rate per 100 Cu Ft	\$ 10.90
% Increase FY22 to FY23	-0.3%



Proposed Water Rate for FY23

	OPTION 2
FY23 Water Enterprise Budget	\$ 8,702,357
Reserves Used to Lower Rates	\$ (650,000)
ARPA Used to Lower Rates	\$ (650,000)
Allowance (4%) for Lien	\$ 296,094
Total Required Billing	\$ 7,698,451
Estimated Annual Water	675,000
FY23 Water Rate/100CuFt	\$ 11.41
FY22 Water Rate/100CuFt	\$ 10.90
% Increase FY22 to FY23	4.6%



Recommendation for Water & Sewer Rates for FY23

Description	Rate	% Increase
FY23 Water Rate/100 Cu Ft	\$ 11.41	4.6%
FY23 Sewer Rate/100 Cu Ft	\$ 10.86	-0.3%
FY23 Combined Rate	\$ 22.27	2.2%


Annual Combined Water and Sewer Costs Single Family - Annual Consumption of 120 HCF	
Water Cost Per Month	\$114.10
Sewer Cost Per Month	\$108.60
2022 Annual Combined	\$2,616.00
2023 Annual Combined	\$2,672.40



Look at Structural Change for FY24

- **Wakefield completed Water Rate Study to implement Tiered Water and Sewer Billing**

**Wakefield
Data**



Tiers	Start	End	Water	Sewer
1	1	1,000	\$7.30	\$11.20
2	1,001	2,500	\$7.72	\$11.70
3	2,501	6,000	\$8.15	\$12.21
4	6,001	+	\$8.99	\$13.22

- **65 gallons per person per day (8.7 cubic feet) used as basis for setting tiers**
- **Tier 1 captures person living alone, senior couples, and other small users**
- **Tier 2 captures average residential user (approx. 1,950 cubic feet) and three-person households**
- **Tier 3 threshold allows commercial accounts and larger residential users to conserve to avoid or limit tier 4 consumption**



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

2016-09-22 LAG

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Reading Arpa Advisory Committee

Date: 2022-04-12

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Open Session

Version: Draft

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Chair Marianne Downing, Vice Chair Mark Dockser, Joe McDonagh, Tom Wise, Geoffrey Coram, Chris Haley, Shawn Brandt

Members - Not Present:

Andrew Grimes

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, Town Accountant Sharon Angstrom (remote), Assistant Town Manager Jean Delios (remote), Community Services Director Kevin Bohmiller (remote), Recreation Administrator Jenna Fiorente, Recreation Coordinator Shannon Fratto (remote), Stephen Crisafulli - Activitas (remote), Chuck Robinson, Karen Herrick, Angela Binda, John Douglass - Rotary, Tim Kelley, Bob Holmes, Emily Sisson, Michael Lee, Josh Graciela, Bruce Ayer, Richard Abate, William McDaniel

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Jacquelyn LaVerde

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in-person at the Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room and remotely via Zoom.

Chair Marianne Downing called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and reviewed the evening's agenda.

Select Board Chair Karen Gately Herrick called the Select Board to order at 7:03 pm.

Public Comment:

Tim Kelley of the Rotary Club, joined by John Douglass, Club President, requested that the RAAC consider the Fall Street Faire as a recipient of some ARPA funds. Ms. Downing asked Mr. Kelley to submit a memo to the Committee, with more details and a dollar amount, for discussion at the next meeting on May 11th.

Rich Abate of the Reading Police, joined by other first responders, noted that the group read a joint statement in September at the Financial Forum, requesting to allocate some of the ARPA funds for first responders. He made the request again to the Select Board at their March 22nd meeting, and is again making the request to the RAAC for consideration. Ms. Downing noted that first responders are included in the discussion, and requested a memo with a percent or an amount to guide the Committee's discussion at a future meeting.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: Reading Recreation to address RAAC re: REC category uses for ARPA funding, including any time sensitive uses:

Recreation Administrator Jenna Fiorente thanked the Committee for considering Recreation for ARPA funding, and noted that a significant impact of COVID showed the need for people to get outside and have passive spaces to safely gather. After looking over documents, conducting surveys, and interviewing stakeholders, priorities included passive recreation, restrooms, concessions and lighting for safety. Ms. Fiorente and Stephen Crisafulli, Landscape Architect for Activitas, presented the conceptual design of the Birch Meadow Master Plan and highlighted projects that would benefit from ARPA funds:

- Central Spine with walkway, restrooms, and pavilion for an estimated \$700,000-\$900,000
- Lacrosse Wall for an estimated \$125,000-\$175,000
- Parking and wetland restoration of the former Imagination Station for an estimated \$550,000-\$650,000

The walkway will be ADA compliant. The parking lot will also feature electric vehicle parking.

The Committee discussed concerns regarding the loss of parking spaces at the Imagination Station parking lot, as parking is already an issue, especially on Saturdays when sport seasons are in full swing, and improvements to the area will make it an even more desirable destination. Ms. Fiorente stated that in the overall Birch Meadow Master Plan, additional parking will be added across from Castine Field. She stated that she would provide the Committee with the current parking statistics and the total spaces to be gained.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION - Reading Elder Services to address RAAC re: possible Elder Services uses for ARPA funding:

Mr. Dockser stated that he asked the Council on Aging (COA) to come up with proposals last week, but the COA requested to defer their presentation to the next RAAC meeting. Community Services Director Kevin Bohmiller noted that the Council will send their requests to him for him to present at the next meeting.

CONTINUED GROUP WORKING LIST DISCUSSION - Go over master list of ARPA funding items and Draft set of classifications into buckets - to further sub classify and/or rank from 1 to 5 (1-lowest, 5-highest) based on:

- 1. Time sensitivity**
- 2. Is plan for use specific (e.g., ready to go or start, or purchase/spend) or general**
- 3. Cost - can we fund all or part**
- 4. Is this one hit wonder/quick win/low hanging fruit that can get done completely and quickly with a portion of ARPA?**
- 5. Does this spend save us money in future?**
- 6. Priorities within buckets**

Ms. Downing shared the "bucket list" of requests to date, with proposed dollar figures where available, which so far adds up to a little over \$15 million. She suggested the group try to apply some sort of ranking criteria. The Committee discussed the many different items listed at length, and suggested criteria considerations for ranking projects including: being "shovel-ready", unable to be done without ARPA funds, percent of residents that would benefit, costs, responsibility for implementing, additional hiring needed to complete the work, how long it will take to complete, easy to do, whether there are challenges such as supply chain delays, long-term budget savings, whether there are alternate sources of funding such as grants, pandemic impact, and whether sustainable when ARPA funds are gone.

CONTINUED SURVEY DISCUSSION:

- 1. Follow up costs from various providers, timing**
- 2. Decide on survey questions and type of survey - decide how much of working list to include**
- 3. Goal to have survey ready for release after 5/11 meeting.**

Mr. Dockser stated that he contacted Flash Vote, the company that conducted Sudbury's ARPA survey. The company can do a one-time polling survey, or a six-survey package. The

price for either is \$10,000. Ms. Downing noted that the Committee should be capable of coming up with something using the less costly Survey Monkey or Google Polls.

Mr. Maltez stated that he would work with Business Administrator Jayne Wellman to help craft a survey. The Committee agreed that the format should be available both electronically and hard paper copy for those without computer access. The Committee also agreed the content of the survey should be brief and include: basic demographics such as age, and whether a resident, business owner, or employee/visitor in Reading; a ranking of the proposed project "buckets"; the question of how the respondent would divide \$100 among proposed projects; and an open ended question such as what the respondent feels are Reading's strengths.

Discuss future agenda items:

Ms. Downing recapped future agenda topics including: Schools, Elder and Human Services, and asking Business Administrator Jayne Wellman to advise on the survey. The next meeting is scheduled for May 11th.

Mr. Brandt suggested having a vote for preliminary recommendations for time sensitive requests on the next agenda.

Review/Approve minutes from 3/29/2022 meeting:

On a motion by Mark Dockser, and seconded by Tom Wise, the Reading ARPA Advisory Committee voted 7-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes of March 29, 2022 as presented.

On a motion by Mark Dockser, and seconded by Chris Haley, the Reading ARPA Advisory Committee voted 7-0-0 to adjourn at 9:29 pm.

On a motion by Karen Gately Herrick, and seconded by Chris Haley, the Select Board voted 3-0-0 to adjourn at 9:30 pm.



April 20, 2022

16 Lowell Street, Reading, MA 01867

Re: Request for Arpa Funding

Dear Mr. Maltez and Select Board,

For more than 30 years the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce has played a critical role in fostering a strong economic climate in the towns of Reading and North Reading and advancing “The Readings” as desirable places to work, live and visit. The Reading Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1989 and merged with the North Reading Business Association to form the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce in January 2000. The Chamber provides members with referrals, networking, educational and promotional opportunities.

The mission of the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce is to foster a thriving business community that facilitates connections between businesses, engagement between businesses and residents, and long-term economic growth in our community. We do this by:

- Promoting and supporting businesses through advocacy, marketing, and outreach
- Assisting businesses in their professional development by providing education, support, and resources
- Providing opportunities to make business and social connections and build relationships
- Create a collaborative environment among businesses, community, and government within the Readings
- Connect businesses with the local community via events and visibility

At the onset of the pandemic, the Chamber Board immediately agreed that it was important to support all Reading and North Reading businesses, not just Chamber members, during what was an extremely stressful time. We created a new landing page on our website with COVID resources and updated it regularly with local, state, and federal resources, hosted webinars and fielded daily questions about PPP, EIDL grants, working remotely, and orchestrated the bulk purchase of masks and distributed them to all local businesses. To further support all local businesses, we applied for and were granted a Mass Office of Travel and Tourism grant of \$24,745 to create a new Shop Local program: “Shop the Readings”. Further we were able to

increase that budget by and doubled the project budget through support from the North Reading Economic Development Committee and local sponsors to create Shop the Readings, an inclusive business database of all local businesses (not just chamber members) with key features such as contactless pickup, ordering online, and special shopping hours for high-risk individuals. It is worth noting that we were able to offer this level of support with just 1 full time and one part time employee, as well as the efforts of our all-volunteer Board of Directors. Instead of canceling our holiday tree lighting celebrations completely, we instead offered “Santa’s Holiday Tour”, a traveling parade that traveled 20+ miles through the neighborhoods of Reading and North Reading, to allow families to continue to kick off the holiday season with a community event that was safe and child centered.

Two years later, the Chamber membership has lost 90 members, many due to business closures and the inability of some members to pay membership dues. Despite this, we have worked hard to maintain a level of service to all businesses and offer guidance and support. We have worked to secure alternative sources of funding to sustain our initiatives. We have pivoted and offered safe, outdoor activities such as our Outdoor Drive-In Movie Night and our Santa’s Holiday Tour parade when our traditional events were not safe. Once COVID restrictions began to ease we created a new event, Winterfest, which we held in March on Reading Common and was very well received and attended.

In the coming years we hope to continue to expand these efforts as well as to play a major role in the revitalization of our Main Street businesses by focusing resources in recruiting new business to Reading and North Reading and to help fill empty storefronts and restaurants. Neighboring towns will be planning to do the same, and we to positively impact our communities by creating new jobs, increasing civic pride and community engagement. We plan to use a portion of the funding to stabilize our budget to pre-pandemic levels. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

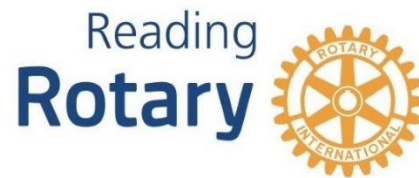
Lisa

Lisa Egan, Executive Director
 On behalf of the Reading-North Reading Chamber of Commerce

Item	Description	Year One Request
Programming/Education	The Chamber will expand programming to offer more educational and networking opportunities to local businesses. Examples	\$5,000

	include: job programs including hiring and workforce retention, in-person and virtual seminars on marketing, digital analytics, use of social media, and insurance.	
Business Support	<p>The Chamber will offer complimentary memberships to businesses, both brick and mortar and home-based, so we can continue to support those who need it most and not drop those businesses who cannot afford dues. Priority will be given to businesses with under 12 employees and those which are minority or woman owned, so that they may take advantage of programming to help recover from the negative impact of the pandemic.</p> <p>This is a year one request that the activities may extend into years two and three.</p>	\$12,500
Shop the Readings	<p>Expand the website to include more local events, resources and add new businesses that have opened over the past 18 months. Create new marketing campaign to educate consumers on the importance and value of shopping locally as well as to provide one spot to allow residents and visitors to discover the many services available right in town.</p>	\$20,000
Professional 30-second Videos	Videos are the most important tool for social media and visibility for small businesses, but they are very expensive to create, and most businesses do not have	\$10,000

	<p>the proper equipment or editing tools. We aim to hire a professional video company to create 50 videos for local businesses over the course of 18 months, 25 of Reading Businesses and 25 for North Reading businesses. These would be complimentary for all local businesses, not just Chamber Members. Videos are key for social media and awareness. We will do a raffle to select the businesses if more than 50 sign up. This is a year one request with the expectation we will extend the expenditure into year two.</p>	
Social Media	<p>The Chamber recognizes the value of a regular social media engagement and seek to partner with a local agency to create and execute our social media on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.</p> <p>This is a year one request with the expectation that we may be extend the expenditure into year two.</p>	\$7,500
Total		\$55,000



May 1, 2022

16 Lowell Street, Reading, MA 01867

Re: Request for ARPA Funding

Dear Ms. McLaughlin-Downing, Chair, Mr. Dockser, Vice Chair;

The Reading Fall Street Faire was started as a small celebration of our downtown by the Economic Development Committee. It was then taken over by the Town itself, and when the Town no longer had the capacity to run the event, it turned to the Rotary volunteers. Now, going into its 14th year, it achieves two important town wide objectives: positive community building and support of downtown businesses.

It is (we think!) the biggest community event Reading hosts annually, attracting residents from babies through grandparents to come together to enjoy fun, food, and community downtown. Bringing the town together is particularly vital after the isolation and distance created during the covid pandemic.

We all know small local businesses have been seriously hurt during the pandemic and this event is by far the largest community event to get thousands of residents downtown and in front of our local businesses.

RFSF has hit two challenges during the COVID pandemic. Our biggest cost, by far, is the bill we receive from the town of Reading. The town charges the Reading Rotary approximately \$20,000 every year to cover town costs (DPW, Police, Fire, and Health).

Our revenue is entirely dependent on sponsorships and booth rentals from local businesses. As you can imagine, after two years of pandemic, all local businesses are hurting. It's harder and harder for them to support this event.

We believe that by sponsoring the RFSF the Town of Reading will make strides towards accomplishing two of its important goals: help bring the community together after two years of isolation and help support our local business community.

We are asking for \$75,000 (\$25,000 each year - 2022, 2023, and 2024). That represents just 1% of the ARPA funds. This money would be used by the town to cover the DPW, police, and other costs of the RFSF. If we can get this funding, it will allow the Rotary to do three things:

1. We will be able to cut in half the level of donations we require from the local business community. This will make it easier for local businesses to support the event, which in turn benefits them.

2. The funds we don't have to spend on town services can be put into making the Faire even bigger and better! Over the past several years, we haven't been able to expand due to the significant town cost of running the event.

3. Finally, the Rotary is a non-profit and our mission is to give back to the community. If we have any proceeds remaining from the Fall Street Faire, we will commit that 100% of those proceeds will be invested directly back into the Reading Community. This year alone we have made donations to the Washington Arms Apartments, Reading Educational Foundation, and the Reading Food Pantry just to name a few.

On behalf of all our volunteers, we appreciate your consideration.

Thank you,

John Douglass

President, Reading Rotary

Ladies & Gentlemen, good evening.

My name is Bob Forsythe and I am here with Dave Ferreria the President of the Reading Firefighters Association, Richard Abate President of the Reading Police Supervisory Association, Ian Nelson President of the Reading Police Patrol Officers Association and Joe Pagnotta President of the Reading Dispatchers Association. We are also joined by a small number of our members.

On behalf of the public safety professionals that serve our community I want to thank you for allowing me to read this statement.

We are here tonight to speak on a topic that is presently being undertaken by members of town government and influenced by other special interest groups. That issue being the American Rescue Plan Act. The federal law which was designed to infuse Federal Monies, not State or Local tax revenues, back into town as forms of relief and/or compensation due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I would like all of you to think back approximately 19 months ago, mid-March of 2020. It was a time of uncertainty as cases were being detected in the greater Boston area. The "super spreader" Biogen event had just occurred and cases in Reading were rising. The schools closed, lockdowns began, non-essential employees were put on leave and many employees were sent home to work from home. Thank goodness for Zoom!

However, as Firefighters, as Police Officers, as 911 Dispatchers, we came to work every day and continued to provide a vital service, one which could not be Zoomed, at the onset of an unknown pandemic, with what protections we could put in place. We were issued masks, gowns, face shields and antiseptic wipes. Our vehicles and workspaces were constantly cleaned, however, at the same time we had no idea how the virus was spread. We had no idea if we were taking it home to our families. We were changing our uniforms in basements and garages. We were taking whatever steps we could to help us feel as safe as possible during these most trying times. We were masking/gloving/gowning up and we were answering calls. We were going into houses known to be COVID positive to transport sick patients to get the care they needed and deserved. In fact, to date we have answered the community's call over 6,300 times.

And we were contracting COVID. Multiple members of the police and fire unions, as well as their families, wives, children, parents... even a pregnant wife, came down with the illness as a result of a first responder working in mostly unknown bio-hazardous conditions.

Thankfully the government, on many levels, had protocols and guidelines to protect other workers while not punishing those that were infected. However, these cases continued to put additional stress on us and our families.

Again, while others had the opportunity to work from home, we did not.

One of the key aspects and intent of the legislation is for direct compensation to be paid to eligible first line responders, the exact individuals we four unions represent. Compensation for hours worked during the most trying times of this pandemic, from its onset to the rollout of the lifesaving vaccines.

Under the State and Local Assistance portion of the law, it allows for premium pay for Essential Workers, as designated by local officials. We, as defined by the statute, clearly fall under the umbrella of essential workers. It allows for back pay for hours worked, up to a \$13.00 hourly increase for the hours, with a maximum dollar cap, during the many months of the pandemic. We ask that this body first discuss this allocation of the funds and then make the correct decision to compensate the emergency service employees of Reading for their past actions.

We are asking that the Town of Reading recognizes us for those efforts and provides us with a reasonable relief for the outstanding job done by all Public safety personnel. If this was 19 months ago, I am confident that government leaders would happily vote to do so, using funds that place no further burden on the residents of Reading. 19 months ago, we did our jobs without hesitation, we did not ask for special pay, though it was common talk in the newspapers and social media. In the past 19 months, other legislation has been passed to address areas of relief or compensation for other parts of society, this is the first legislation that addresses the front-line public safety workers and gives the elected officials the opportunity to compensate their work. Today, we ask that we be compensated. Compensated by Federal funds that cost this town nothing, for the essential work we performed for over a year for this Town and its residents and visitors.

Thank you for your time. We are glad to answer any questions and I look forward to a response from the leaders of this community.

City/Town	Per First Responder
Amherst	30 min OT pay per shift
Arlington	\$6,000.00
Ashby	\$2,500.00
Brewster	Negotiating \$2,500
Brewster	\$2,000.00
Bridgewater	\$3,500.00
Brockton	\$3,000.00
Canton	Negotiating extra time off
Chicopee	\$5,000.00
Fall River	\$3,000.00
Falmouth	\$2,500.00
Fitchburg	Negotiating \$5,000
Gardner	Under Negotiation for \$5,000
Granby	Under Negotiation for \$5,000
Groton	2-1% payouts not ARPA
H.O.C	\$2,000.00
Hamden	\$1,000.00
Haverhill	\$500 with proof of vaccine
Lawrence	Negotiating \$5,000
Lowell	\$1,500.00
Lynn	Negotiating \$5,000
Mashpee	4 comp days
Methuen	\$1,500.00
Methuen	\$1,500.00
Milford	\$1,000.00
Oxford	\$4,000.00
Quincy	\$1,500.00
South Hampton	\$5,000.00
Springfield	\$5,000.00
Sturbridge	\$3,000.00
Sudbury	Negotiating extra time off
Sutton	\$1,000+ 1hr OT per 8 hr shift
Topsfield	\$1,500.00
Ware	\$7,500.00
Wayland	\$3,500.00
Worcester	\$5,000.00