

**Porter County American Rescue Plan  
Sub Committee Behavioral Health and Social Services Subcommittee  
Thursday, March 31, 2022, 5 p.m.  
Commissioners' Meeting Room Chambers  
Porter County Administration Center 155 Indiana Ave., Valparaiso IN 46383**

Voting Members Present:

Jim Biggs  
Greg Simms  
Robyn Lane  
Mike Brickner - Absent  
Craig Nordstrom- Resigned at end of meeting

Citizen Members Present:

Jesse Harper  
Brendan Clancy  
George Topoll  
Edward Morales

Vicki Urbanik addressed the Committee. These first meetings are going to be organizational. The first order of business is election of the Subcommittee Chair.

**Motion:** Robyn Lane moved to nominate Jim Biggs as Chair of the Behavioral Health and Social Services Subcommittee. Greg Simms seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

**Motion:** Jim Biggs nominated Greg Simms as Vice Chair of the Behavioral Health and Social Services Subcommittee. Robyn Lane seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

**General Organizational Matters**

Decisions the Steering Committee made for the subcommittees.

Stick to schedule set by County Commissioners. April and May meet to review proposals that have been submitted. Shoot to have all recommendations made by the end of May. Steering Committee will then review and get input on the recommendations. They will prepare a plan and present it to the Commissioners. Ultimately it goes to the Commissioners for approval and the County Council for appropriation of the funds. They would like to have this process near completion by budget time. The subcommittees will be working through Vicki as well as the Commissioners office to get rooms reserved, agendas prepared and the flow of information.

The Steering Committee wants the ability for Public Comment at every meeting. They suggest opening for public comment at the end of each meeting. Public Comments should be directed to the Subcommittee and not the applicants.

The Steering Committee wants the subcommittee to rank each of the proposals. The subcommittee will have to devise what type of scoring system they are going to use. If there are any proposals that are questionable, it is up to the applicant to justify the request.

The Steering Committee is working on a project checklist. When each subcommittee gets their final recommendations ready, they will use a form that will show the ranking and justification.

### **Project Priority Considerations**

The Steering Committee adopted General Priority Considerations. This is the list of the priorities the Steering Committee wants to see in the recommended projects.

1. They have to be an eligible use of ARPA funds.
2. That they leverage matching funds to the extent possible.
3. They are from organizations or companies that are in Porter County.
4. That they are an effective and impacted use of the ARPA money.
5. They want the subcommittee to ask all of the proposals, will you be able to commit to obligating the funds by the end of 2024. If funds are not contracted by the end of 2024 the County loses the money.
6. They want the subcommittee to ask all of the proposals, will you accept less.

Attorney Scott McClure further explained the need to have funds contracted by the end of 2024. If a project cannot meet that deadline, the County needs to know so they can make other plans.

Jim Biggs discussed the creation of a scoring system that needs to be fair. Vicki Urbanik added the Steering Committee left it up to the subcommittees to develop a scoring plan on their own. Jim asked that everyone come to the next meeting with their idea of how this should be accomplished. Greg Simms asked how the Steering Committee will decide from all of the subcommittees' recommendations. Jim Biggs added it is his opinion that the subcommittee recommendations will carry a lot of weight. Attorney McClure added Vicki will be tasked with sitting in front of the Commissioners and explaining this is the recommendations, this is what the Steering Committee said and then the Commissioners will decide. The same thing happens in front of the Council for funding.

Greg Simms asked if this committee will be able to see the other subcommittee's method of scoring. Attorney McClure stated nothing is secrete so it will be possible to see what other committees are doing.

### **Review of the US Treasury's Final Rule as it applies to the Behavioral Health and Social Services Subcommittee**

Vicki Urbanik read *"Focusing on behavioral health and social services, including substance use, preventing and responding to violence, assistance to eligible households, and housing."* This is the mission statement for this subcommittee. Each subcommittee is focused on different things. How the Final Rule affects what each committee might be different from a different subcommittee. The Final Rule was issued by US Treasury on January 6<sup>th</sup>. This is the guidance the Treasury is giving all of the

recipients. This is the Guide Book. The US Treasury also prepared an Overview of the Final Rule. This is available on line or she can get copies. There are four main expenditure categories. This subcommittee will deal with Public Health and Negative Economic Impacts. This category is broken down into eight subcategories. The categories this subcommittee will focus on are: Projects - what projects should Porter County carry out using the funds. The County doesn't have the staffing to do some of these projects. So what the County will enter into contracts with other groups to carry out these projects. These will be called sub-recipients. The funds they receive will be called sub-awards. What makes this subcommittee different from the sister committee – Nonprofit and Small Business subcommittee, is they will be looking to see if there is negative economic harm or impact and looking for direct beneficiaries to give the money to. Subrecipients are carrying out a project on behalf of the County. Beneficiaries are receiving a direct cash assistance because they suffered economic harm. The County will have to monitor and report on the subrecipient. A Federal Audit goes through subawards.

If someone submits a request Vicki will go through them and make sure they are being submitted to the right subcommittee. All proposals will be public very soon.

Craig Nordstrom stated he is on the Board of two organizations in Porter County. He asked if he has to recuse himself if one of them applies or should he just resign from the subcommittee right now? He knows that one of them has applied for funds. Attorney McClure explained the Commissioners do not want any conflict. Jesse Harper said this is Porter County and he feels it would be hard to find someone to serve who is not going to know someone else involved in the process. He feels Craig Nordstrom should recuse himself when it is a conflict. Jim Biggs added Craig Nordstrom has a deep background in this issue. That is why he was chosen for this subcommittee. He does not see it as a problem for him to recuse himself on some votes. He feels this is a decision for the Commissioners and Council.

Brendan Clancy stated in the beginning none of the Trustees were sure what their role would be in this process. He and Jesse Harper brought together a bunch of groups that deal with homelessness. They wanted to make sure decisions were not regional. He and Jesse asked the groups to present proposals so they could learn what the needs are. This could be a conflict. Attorney McClure explained this is why the Trustees were asked to be on the subcommittees and are non-voting members. Their knowledge will help with the decisions to be made.

### **Schedule Subcommittee Meetings for April and May**

After discussion it was decided the next meetings will be April 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

**Motion:** Robyn Lane moved to have the next two meetings on April 7, 2022 and April 21, 2022 at 5:00 pm in the Commissioners Chambers. Greg Simms seconded the motion and so approved with a 4-0 vote.

Vicki Urbanik asked if they wanted to see presentations right away or have another planning meeting. It was decided they will do more planning on the 7<sup>th</sup>. This will include scoring. The proposals will be online in five days. The subcommittee will need to decide how they want the proposals presented. Length of time, power point, etc.

Jim Biggs asked each committee member to provide their best method of contact. Vicki Urbanik will distribute a list of contacts to each member. This will also have her cell phone number on it.

## **Public Comment**

Susie Talevski – She could not easily find where it was listed this meeting would take place. Vicki Urbanik replied it was posted where normal County meetings are posted. It is under the Meetings and Agenda section and was advertised in the newspaper. She asked about the deadline. She feels this is a quick turnaround. A lot of people do not know about it. She is not sure there will be enough applicants. She would like the submission date extended. Jim Biggs said it was advertised heavily. If they extend the deadline, then those that were on time have an issue. Attorney McClure said as of 4:14 today they have \$55 Million in requests. She stated she was at the Commissioner’s meeting, and they said it would be a conflict. She feels it is better to stick to that decision.

Craig Nordstrom advised he will resign from the Board immediately and left the meeting.

Lisa Franko - The County has an amazing text system. It is easy to use and advises of all meetings.

CC Payne – She wants the subcommittee to know that Craig Nordstrom was new to their Board last month.

There being no more business the meeting adjourned.