

Present: Roger Allman, Roxann Harrington, Greg Mapes, Nick Piccolo (via Zoom), Michelle Pitts, Audra Stahl, and Danny Wernick.

Absent: none.

Others present: Aaron Hale, David Ringle, Lorrie Taylor, Curtis Dancer, Aeris Ripley, and Matt Schooley.

All attendees were physically present in Commission Chambers at 525 E. Superior, except Commissioner Piccolo, who appeared via Zoom from Storm Lake, IA. The purpose of the work session was identification, assessments, and determination of projects that will make the best use of funds allocated to the City of Alma under the American Rescue Plan.

City Manager Matt Schooley called the session to order at 5:30 p.m. He opened with an explanation of the American Rescue Plan provisions. "Entitlement Metropolitan Cities" and Townships with populations over 50,000 will receive federal direct payments. "Non-Entitlement Units" with populations under 50,000 must apply for funds to be distributed through the State of Michigan. At this time, Alma's expected distribution is \$930,000 which will be distributed in two payments. 50% in 2021, and 50% approximately one calendar year later. Funds must be obligated or under contract by December 31, 2024, and projects must be completed by the end of 2026. The estimate of distributions for Michigan is \$1.93 billion. Schooley said he reached out to the MI Department of Treasury with questions but hadn't received a response yet. Legislation for distribution for NEUs has been signed by the Governor. The state will be setting up a program for funding application. Tentative on-line date is July 6.

Schooley then moved to allowable uses and prohibitions as described in the 151 pages of interim final rules. Allowable uses:

- 1) Response to public health emergency or its negative economic impacts
- 2) Provide premium pay for essential workers, within caps
- 3) Provide government services to the extent of revenue lost
- 4) Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure

Prohibitions:

- 1) Pension contributions (does not include portion part of "covered benefits")
- 2) Replenishing budget stabilization fund, rainy day fund, or similar reserve account
- 3) Legal settlements
- 4) Outstanding debt

Schooley said he wants to let people know the parameters for the funding and work to choose projects that will have the most benefit for the community, while keeping in mind that additional funding may be available for some projects from other avenues. He would like to look at every suggestion, make a list, and document decisions.

Commissioner Stahl reminded everyone that the pandemic has added to a behavioral and mental health crisis, and those needs must be considered as well, as those issues also cause an economic impact.

Schooley explained there is time to look at all of the suggestions and make determinations.

Commissioner Allman asked if mass transit was excluded, and Schooley explained that they were receiving funding separately from this plan.

Brief discussion was held about the fiber optic company working in town. Schooley noted broadband could be taken off of the project list, as this is already being accomplished. Mayor Mapes suggested wi-fi in the downtown area. Schooley said he would like to add that possibility to the list.

Commissioner Wernick suggested keeping in mind project costs and planning around rising and falling prices.

Discussion followed about the importance of outdoor spaces, the rail trail, and the Library's story walk.

Schooley asked everyone to begin compiling a list of potential projects. He will send out an email to determine a date for another work session.

The work session concluded at 6:20 p.m.



Sara Anderson, City Clerk, City of Alma



Date of Approval