

AMERICAN RESCUE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Task Force Meeting 1 minutes- Thursday October 7, 2021 at the Joseph Yenni Building—Council Chamber—9:00 a.m.

1. Introduction and Election of Chair or Co-Chairs

- The meeting began with the members of the task force introducing themselves, advising who appointed them and a brief introduction of themselves.
- Discussion regarding the resolution establishing the task force, assigned support staff to provide technical assistance and support the work of the members, and each of member/support staff were introduced.
- Nominations for the Chair of the task force were requested. Jim Martin moved to nominate Council District 4 appointee Mike Quigley which was seconded by Council at Large Division B Chief of Staff Brian Grenrod. All members present voted “yea” for the selection of Mike Quigley to serve as chairman. Mr. Quigley stated he was honored and will be glad to serve as Chairman.

2. Selection of Meeting Locations, Dates and Times

- A discussion was held in regard to where the meetings should be held. The council chambers are designed for a council meeting format. A task force will be better served in a large meeting type room. Such rooms are available at the Yenni Building, The GGB and Jerry Bologna offered the use of the JEDCO meeting facilities. Task force members agreed that these would be the more appropriate venues, and meetings will be scheduled accordingly.
- Discussions were held in regard to the best days and times for the meetings. It was agreed that one hour meetings on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. is the best choice. We hope to meet bi-weekly to meet time constraints.
- The Parish Attorney’s Office would provide an opinion if official votes by task force members could be sent via Zoom when not in person. If votes cannot be counted via Zoom, then we will hold all meetings in person.

- Considering the tight schedule for expending the funds, the task force needs to conclude its work and deliver its report as soon as possible. The resolution creating the task force sets the deadline of December 9, 2021 but we agreed that this would need to be extended via Council resolution.

3. Format of how Task Force will Conduct Business

- Jefferson Parish will receive \$84 million half of which is already in hand the remaining 50% will be remitted via reimbursements. The funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. The Act includes but is not limited to: Response efforts to the COVID-19 emergency to decrease the spread of the virus and to bring the pandemic under control, including vaccination efforts; Replace lost public sector revenue to extent the reduction in revenue was experienced due to the pandemic in order to facilitate and strengthen support for vital public services and help retain jobs; Address negative economic impacts including economic harm to households, small businesses, nonprofits, impacted industries such as tourism and hospitality, and the public sector; Provide premium pay for essential workers; and, Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and storm water infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.
- We agreed to that this is onetime funding that should not be used for reoccurring expense(s). The goal of the committee should be to fund programs that *Move the Needle* and be transformative. Todd Murphy commented it was wise for the council not to just divide the funds 5 ways but to expend the funding to make it a game changer for our Parish.
- Victor LaRocca advised that the Parish has already received 50% of the funding and would receive the other half once the Parish had obligated projects.

- The basic format of the task force will be to conduct the meetings similar to a budget hearing whereby different entities will present a vision of where the funds should go. They can make their case for the best use of the funds.
- Potential presenters to the task force will be the Administration, Jefferson Chamber, Jedco, Jefferson Business Council, Jefferson Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Jefferson Finance Authority and each Council member. In addition it was suggested by Todd Murphy that those municipalities receiving funding should be invited so that the Parish could leverage funds for a specific project in a city.
- A discussion was held to determine the role of the public at the task force meetings. Based on the advice of Bob Evans it was decided that the work of the task force members is primary and that public comment should be allowed at the end of the meeting. During the meeting only members and the invited presenters will be allowed to conduct business. When the report is being finalized, a specific meeting will be held to accommodate public input.

4. Discussion of any Support Services Required for Task Force

- Adams and Reese the Parish's Federal Lobbyists in Washington D.C. was represented at the meeting by Johnny Domiano and Jeff Brooks. They have agreed to advise the task force in regard to the specifications on what the funds can be allocated.
- Steve Lachute advised that the Parish has an accounting firm that will also give guidance in the proper use of the funds.

5. Plan Agenda for the 1st Business Meeting

- The Jefferson Parish Administration will be the first presenters to the task force. They will prepare a presentation that will give an overview of the Jefferson Parish finances and will present their preferred plan for the use of the funds.
- The task force requested a written document of the presentation to be forwarded to the members prior to the next meeting.

