

MINUTES

MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL RECOVERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF CHESTER August 24, 2021 1:00 p.m.

Chester City Hall
Council Chambers
1 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor
Chester, PA 19013
And VIA ZOOM

Present: Michael T. Doweary, Receiver
Kelly Diaz, County of Delaware, Office of the Controller, Sr. Accountant
Vijay Kapoor, Chief of Staff to the Receiver
Cody Deal, Executive Assistant
Kim Bracey, DCED, Executive Director for the Governor's Center for Local Government Services

Absent: Councilman William Jacobs
Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland

The Municipal Financial Recovery Advisory Committee meeting began at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was streamed on the Chester City's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/cityofchester/>.

Minutes of July 13, July 27, and 8/10 MFRAC Meetings

The Receiver noted there was not a quorum for this meeting, pushing the approvals for these to the next MFRAC Meeting.

Public Comments

The Receiver noted 2 comments related to the CWA monetization. Other public recommendations included the construction of a power plant and reutilizing city land not currently generating revenue. A 4th comment from the Graham family suggested a trash truck transit toll lane route, to which the Receiver said he would follow up with the constituents. The last recommendation came from Mr. Cobb, speaking to knocking down abandoned buildings, planting trees, spending money on a public access channel, and better equipment for snow removal and grass cutting. The Receiver thanked him and said his team is thinking along the same lines in many ways, especially with planning the use of the ARPA funds.

The Receiver opened the floor for any comments to which Director Bracey mentioned the states Blight Remediation program that may be able to assist. The Receiver thanked the Director for her recommendation and her assist in providing grant resources in the last few weeks to his team. He confirmed with Mr. Deal that there would be an update on state grants at the next MFRAC.

Director Bracey ended by saying the state continues to appreciate the work the Receiver and the City are doing both in the city and with the recovery plan and that none of it has gone unnoticed. The Receiver thanked her on behalf of his team before passing the floor to Mr. Kapoor for his update.

Recovery Plan Update

Mr. Kapoor started by stating they are currently working on the ARPA planning, with both internal and external expenditures being reviewed. He wanted to clarify for the public that there are many restrictions and the money can not just be thrown anywhere. They are actively working with the City's health department and the DCED on these matters, specifically a vaccination event recently held in the city.

Some other items discussed included grass cutting and bulk trash pickup. He thanked the County for their assistance in financing another contractor for one cut of all the city parks which will alleviate the pressure on the city public works department. He gave another thank you to the Receiver for his approval of the 8 additional employees assisting with the public works efforts, thanking the employees as well.

Two additional items pertaining the internal matters of the city included work on filling some vacant positions, and lastly the summer food program which was a successful project implemented by the city. 4,131 meals were provided to children within the city of Chester. Mr. Kapoor then passed the floor back to the committee to which Director Bracey brought up the ARPA funds again. She asked if it would help the Receiver's team if they spoke with some federal folks involved, congress, liaisons, etc. Mr. Kapoor thanked the Director for her input and stated they are considering having more conversations. Currently the focus is on the revenue replacement aspect of the ARPA funding. Once this is determined the next steps will be taken for further uses of the money. He explained the difficulty with the revenue situation in Chester given we do not have audits and some income was generated while other municipalities lost money.

Receiver Update

The receiver started by thanking all of those involved in the summer food program. His first update was for the upcoming Summit on September 8th, with registration info set to go out to his team's distribution list in the coming days. This summit will be centered around Trauma and Grief relief, which is necessary given the situation in the City, during a pandemic as well.

He also used this opportunity to promote the distribution list, encouraging members of the public to sign up to receive the ongoing communications surrounding receivership. Registration can be done directly through members of his team or via the email address and website.

He also mentioned the ongoing public surveys surrounding the ARPA funding and how the community would like to see it used. Links for the survey can be found on the receivership website.

The last item mentioned by the Receiver was the beginning of the 2022 budgeting process. This is another opportunity for the community to be involved in the process, with all budget meetings

being public hearings. He opened the floor for any member comments or questions, which there were none.

Member Comments

The receiver opened the floor for any closing comments, which there were none.

There being no further business to discuss, the Receiver adjourned the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

The next Municipal Financial Recovery Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14th at 1:00 p.m. at Chester City Hall, City Council Chambers, 1 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor, Chester, PA 19013, and streamed VIA ZOOM through the City’s Facebook page.

Approved this 14th Day of September 2021.

Michael T. Doweary
Receiver for the City of Chester

Secretary – Cody Deal