

**Town of Hinesburg
Agency Request Review Committee (ARRC)
Meeting Minutes – November 5, 2013**

Present:

Kate Dodge, Amanda Van Vranken, *Co-Chairs*
Katherine Hikel, *outgoing Secretary*
Sue Marino, *incoming Secretary*
Kristin Miskavage
Kathleen Newton
Kate Schubart

Intro & Overview:

The Committee welcomed new members Sue Marino and Kathy Newton, and appointed Sue Marino as secretary, to replace Katharine Hikel, whose resignation was accepted upon her retirement. The Committee extended a warm farewell to Katharine Hikel, for whom service on this Committee has been a privilege and a pleasure. Committee members are appointed to three-year terms.

We reviewed the history of the Committee, which was created in 2009. As the volume, complexity, and dollar amount of requests increased, the Select Board, which previously reviewed all agency requests, determined that these requests warranted the focused attention and scrutiny of a committee.

We reviewed the work of the committee:

- Maintain and update the ARRC page on the town web site
- Annual review of mission statement and description of work
- Roster of members and their terms of service
- Meeting minutes (Secretary)
- Announcements of vacancies
- Procedure for application for grants
- Forms for grant applicants
- Schedule of application, notification of awards, and disbursement
- Annual report (co-chairs)
- Review and edit request forms
- Review requests, and make recommendations to Select Board
- Discuss funding recommendations with Select Board and community at January meeting

Grant Recommendations:

Annual grant awards made since 2009 have been in the \$28,000 to \$32,000 range; or \$6-\$7 per person. The committee's approach is to try for level funding, with consideration of both clients and taxpayers - with awareness that in an ongoing economic recession, there may be increased client need, with local agencies covering reductions to federal programs, and strained taxpayer resources, as wages may not keep up with overall cost increases.

We reviewed 16 applications, with priority of awards given to agencies which serve the greatest number of Hinesburg residents. All applicants were tax-exempt nonprofit 501(c)3 agencies that serve vulnerable populations in Hinesburg. We tried to reduce duplication of funding, whether for types of service or to affiliated agencies. We considered the level of service to Hinesburg residents; thoroughness and timeliness of applications; history of services provided; and circumstances such as projected need (such as decreased food security in an economic recession.) We took into account which agencies receive robust funding from other sources.

A final number was not decided on at the meeting due to follow up work needed by committee members. ARRC also received an email after our November 5th meeting from the Town Administrator suggesting we be fiscally conservative in our funding decisions. During the review process, we carefully evaluated agency requests to emphasize direct services over advocacy. We reviewed mission statements and other information and made some cuts to requests from those agencies that focus solely on advocacy work. While the committee is very much aware of the critical role that advocacy and education play in raising awareness of community needs, this year, in order to make the most of the funds available in the Town budget, we gave precedence to requests for funding of critically needed direct services.

Follow up work:

1) Committee members had questions about duplication of services delivered by food shelves. Kathy Newton and Kate Schubart followed up with those organizations over the phone with the following conclusions.

- Kathy Newton spoke with Laura Hoopes from the Hinesburg Community Resource Center, who confirmed that the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf is open to all Chittenden County, and that people from Hinesburg may go there instead of, or in addition to, Hinesburg's food shelf, as the hours may be more convenient. Donations to the Vermont Food Bank allow the Food Shelf to purchase food at discounted rates.
- Kate Schubart contacted Marissa Parisi, the Executive Director of Hunger Free Vermont, who said that Shaw's stopped their food rescue program this year with the Vermont Food Bank, which was a loss of \$1 million in food donations for food shelves this year. With recent ARRA cuts in place for all 3SquaresVT recipients, all food shelves will see more demand. With this information, the committee agreed to fully fund food shelf requests.

2) Website & application changes:

- Clarify what sometimes appears to be shared or duplicated services from applicants by including this new language:
‘If you deliver a service that other organizations also provide, please clarify what role you play. Meals on Wheels is an example of what appears to be a duplicative service.’
- Include recent grant history with dollar amounts distributed.
- Update November 2014 meeting date to ‘1st week in November’.

3) Support from Town Administration

- Renae to send out a reminder to former applicants when the next year's application is complete and online, but no further reminders are expected or required.
- Award letters should continue to notify applicants about the disbursement date (July 1st) in the following fiscal year, so that they may coordinate disbursement.
- We will encourage residents at Town Meeting to further support the organizations dearest to their hearts.

4) ARRC reports to the town:

- The Committee's Annual and Grant Allocation Reports are due to the Select Board January 2, 2014.
- The Committee will convene prior to the January 6th Select Board meeting if necessary.
- Members of ARRC will be present at Annual Town Meeting, March 2, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
Katharine Hikel
Secretary Emerita