

## Board Liaison Report

October 22, 2020

### GRANTS:

- Unfortunately, we were not approved for the Cultural Facilities Grant. Only 50 percent of the applicants received awards. I did develop a nice relationship with the grant manager, and she will be providing me feedback on our application. This will be very helpful for future proposals. This grant was from the Vermont Arts Council, and I plan to apply for their next round of grants. One idea I had was to get funding to commission an artist(s) to do an art installation at the new town hall when it is built, like a mural.
- LGER: I bulked up the ask on the LGER grant to approx.. 26k on the advice of one of the grant managers. This way we can be sure we don't have any overage on our purchases. Chuck has initiated the purchase of the extra laptops and the videoconferencing equipment. Also, all of his labor in setting up everything is reimbursable. Linda is handling cell phone purchases. I am writing the language for explaining how these purchases are the result of Covid for Linda to submit when she submits for reimbursements. Again, this is for:
  - Town Clerk laptop and cell phone
  - Treasurer laptop and cell phone
  - Zoning Administrator laptop
  - Listers shared laptop and cell phone
  - New printer
  - Cost of Zoom to end of calendar year
  - Executive Assistant's cell phone
  - Board Liaison's laptop and cell phone
  - Video conferencing system, which includes monitor, microphones, speakers, etc...
  - Cost of labor for setting up all new technologies.
  - If there is amount left on the grant, I believe we can also submit for things such as printer cartridges for those of us that work from home due to lack of space at Town Hall
- Digitization: nothing new, but the deadline for having everything done is November 1 in order to get the reimbursement.
- Pownal Parks and Rec has applied for a Spark Grant for the purpose of setting up a temporary ice skating rink on the old tennis court. We budgeted for a rink "kit" that can be re-used in future years, a portable water tank for smoothing the ice, brooms and shovels, and materials for fire pits.
- The BCRC just sent out a list of the next round of "economic recovery" grants. Starting next week I am going to set aside time to research those and see if we might qualify for any of them.
- A note on something we are experiencing as we work on these grants, and then the actual implementing of them. I am seeing evidence of our "lack of capacity". It is really great to get these new resources and funding, but it does burden our already burdened office with extra work on the back end. There are only so many hours in a day, and with the part-time "in office" schedule that constricts people even more to be able to do the work required to facilitate new programs and implementation of resources. Ongoing, we need to really re-evaluate before

applying for a grant if we have the ability to facilitate them. New resources are wonderful, but if it disrupts the regular operation of the office, we have to look at why that is happening.

#### **TOWN HALL:**

- Last week I compiled (and Linda shipped) our drawings from Preferred Builders stamped by the architect and also the adjusted engineering drawings (adjustments were needed based on the changes the architect had to make). All changes made to the plans were pre-cleared with Fire and Safety, so I anticipate no issues getting our building permits. He stated he was reviewing this week. Our application fee was paid last year. Fire and Safety told us we had to increase our fee to them because of the added expense of the architect, but once I explained that cost was being covered as a back end reimbursement from Preferred Builders, they were good with it. So, no extra fees required.
- I am presently working with Linda on a project to quantify ALL numbers for ALL aspects of this project. We brought on Joyce Held from the Pownal Historical Society to help Pauline gather documentation for everything. We also brought on Tom Shuey to help from his experience as a builder. He is helping to put everything into a spreadsheet, and to make sure we are asking all relevant questions as we go through this process. We hope to have this prepared in the next week or two.
- At this point, we are looking at April 1 ground breaking as a goal.

#### **Fundraising for the Center Street Church Historical Preservation:**

- The Church is hosting a “harvest fair” this Sunday 11am-4pm. There will be a tag sale, goodie bags for kids, a “fall photo” op set up for family pics, and also a Bake Sale table set up by the Pownal Regulators. All proceeds go towards the work of replacing the roof, repair of siding, and new paint.
- In the next couple weeks, we are going to create the “scrapbook” that will be given to people in exchange of a donation of a particular amount. We still need to figure out how we can receive donations, etc... I have an email out to Ellen, and I will have everything set up and organized at the same time as completing the scrapbook.
- **REQUEST FOR ACTION:** I would like to ask the Board to approve our treasurer to set up an account where donation monies can be held.

#### **Fiscal Year Audit 2019:**

- I heard from Bonadio Group today, and Joe Heroux is finalizing this audit. He sends first to quality control, then it comes to us as a final report. I should either have the final report or a date for its arrival by the next meeting.

#### **Mediation Training:**

- I am asking the Board to consider allowing me to use some staff training funds towards a program I am enrolled in at Champlain College. The entire program is called “The Artful Mediator” and it leads towards a Professional Certification in Conflict Management. I plan to do the entire program, which will likely take about 2 years. However, the first workshop, which is Basic Mediation, is also a “stand-alone” workshop that can serve as training for people to use in their present workplace. They offered me a not-for-profit discount (because I work for the Town). The reduced tuition is 900 dollars, which I will pay in 3 payments of 300 each. I am committed to paying for and doing this program no matter if the Board chooses to support the training.
- I would say about 85 percent of my work involves mediation of some kind. Sometimes overt mediation, where I need to help two conflicting parties communicate or come to a common goal and understanding, but also as someone who mostly communicates with various entities (State, foundations, citizens...) on behalf of the Board and Town, mediation skills come in handy.
- Description of the Basic Workshop:

## **Introduction to the fundamentals of the mediation process**

Cost: \$1100

**November 10 - December 1**

The Fall 2020 Basic Mediation Workshop is back! If you manage conflict in your work, are exploring mediation as a possible future vocation or want to learn about mediation as a resource for clients, this workshop in basic mediation techniques is for you. A mediator guides difficult discussions, encouraging people to find a satisfactory outcome. Mediation can help resolve disputes among co-workers, neighbors, business partners or business owners and clients.

Participants in this workshop will learn and practice skills in:

- Identifying and framing issues
  - Listening for interests
  - Controlling the process
  - Helping disputants solve problems
  - Finalizing agreements
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- My final “selling point” is that I believe this training will not only be a benefit to me personally and professionally, but it will ultimately be of good use to the Town of Pownal to have someone with this kind of training. Once I finish the entire program, this has the potentiality of helping the town save money on legal fees as well. Having someone versed in mediation can help prevent costly legal conflicts.

- **Request for Action:** I am asking that the Board consider supporting this basic training workshop (at least in part, perhaps one payment of 300?) from our training budget. As you know, I have worked many unbilled hours for the Town, so I am hoping you can consider that in your decision to support this educational opportunity.