

ARPA Phase 1 Proposal

Attn: Jennifer Silpe-Katy

Re: American Rescue Plan Funds

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in ideas of how to spend the money given to the town by the rescue plan.

These funds will be a blessing to the town of Underhill to help its residents at such a critical time of shortages in many areas.

This is a perfect time to create an organization of volunteers called Neighbors helping Neighbors.

There are many caring people who want to help others but do not know how or where to start.

I feel a good portion of the resources should be used for helping our neighbors. We may never again have an abundance of funds set aside to use just for this purpose. If the funds for this program are placed in a financial institution, with the understanding to generate revenue, it will be able to sustain itself. What funds are used can be replaced to continue the programs.

Senior citizens, handicapped individuals or families who do not have transportation due to various reasons may not qualify for the SSTA bus program. Perhaps the town could reach an agreement with Mt. Mansfield Villages. They are also volunteers. The Villages can provide many services

doctor visits, shopping etc. In order for them to provide these services they have a yearly fee for the service. Some residents can afford the fee \$240.00 single, \$300.00 family, \$120.00 sponsor. Many people are on a limited budget and rely on social security or other benefits.

If the Town could arrange a viable solution for both parties, it would benefit the villages, town of Underhill, and the residents, building on what is already available.

You may reach them at 802-858-5381
or contact Betsy Harper 802-844-5691 EMAIL [@gmail.com](mailto:MOUNTMAINSfieldVillages.org)

There are families who are experiencing extreme burdens concerning food, heat, and the necessities of life, seniors and children especially. Some seniors can and do cook but are unable to afford what would keep them warm and well. There is a program called **Backpack for Kids** to help families feed them over the weekends. No person or child should ever be hungry in this country. I understand there is a program for kids set up at Camel Hump Middle School in Richmond and Jericho Congregational Church in Jericho would also have some input into the programs available. Hence, Underhill's neighbor helping neighbor, the Town's hands and feet to implement the best programs available and appropriate.

I recently received a flyer in the mail from **Wood 4 Good**. This group of mostly young men from Jericho donate firewood to families who are experiencing very hard times. Some of them must choose between food, medicine, and heat. I called Eric Ophelrod, 802-310-1949 <sup>Wood 4 Good
14 Bullwink Lane
Jericho, VE</sup> and asked him if he would mind if I suggested his program. He was very appreciative. I will personally be donating to this program.

I would also like to address a concern, as with any help given, it must be handled in such a way that the person or family do not feel beholden, or feel they are accepting charity; but simply a helping hand. Neighbors helping neighbors, as it was done years ago. We all need help at one point or another. The only requirement is for them to pass it forward.

Perhaps the neighbor helping neighbor (volunteers) could sponsor an Exchange Club for families. Every spring and fall have a fair with goodies, games and drinks. This would be a time for mothers to clean out closets, of clothes that do not fit and exchange with others. Children's clothes are very expensive. Every one wins. If there are clothes left over, bundle them up and give them to the Jeffersonville Church for their families.

For those seniors who love to knit have a special fund for yarn to be used for shawls or lap blankets to be given to the elderly or ailing people. Every newborn baby receives a blanket made with love.

Our seniors will be part of the giving to help others. Everyone wants to be helpful and needed and are needed.

I hope that these ideas will be helpful, when you are planning the use of this unexpected gift.

Sincerely

Jan Robertson
802-899-2580