

RICHLAND COUNTY
CORONAVIRUS AD HOC COMMITTEE

AGENDA



TUESDAY OCTOBER 17, 2023

3:00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Richland County Council 2023



Deirek Pugh
District 2



Jason Branham
District 1



Gretchen Barron
District 7



Yvonne McBride
District 3



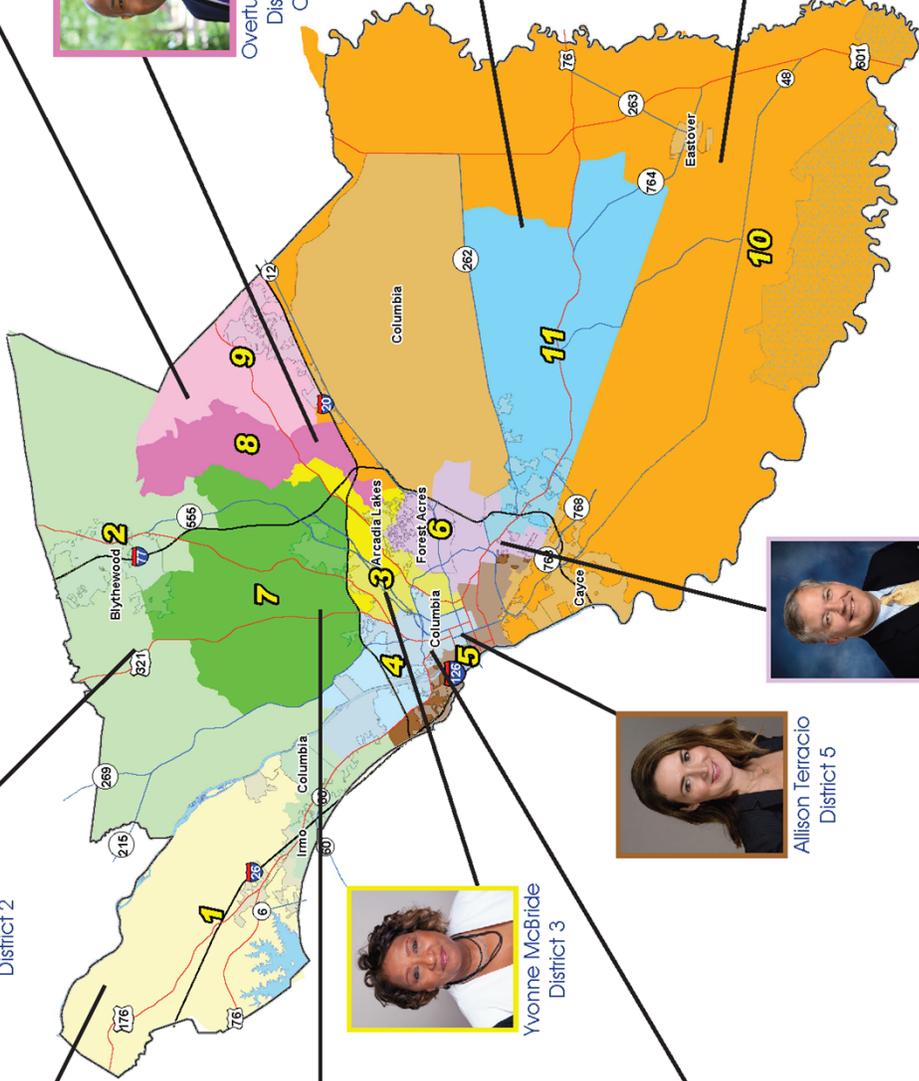
Paul Livingston
District 4



Allison Terracio
District 5



Don Weaver
District 6



Overture Walker
District 8
Chair



Chakisse Newton
District 11



Cheryl English
District 10



Jessica Mackey
District 9
Vice Chair



**Richland County
Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee**

AGENDA

October 17, 2023 - 3:00 PM
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

The Honorable Jason Branham County Council District 1	The Honorable Gretchen Barron, Chair County Council District 7	The Honorable Chakisse Newton County Council District 11
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1. **Call to Order** The Honorable Gretchen Barron

2. **Approval of Minutes** The Honorable Gretchen Barron
 - a. September 19, 2023 [\[PAGES 5-7\]](#)

3. **Adoption of Agenda** The Honorable Gretchen Barron

4. **Discussion Items** The Honorable Gretchen Barron
 - a. Youth and Recreation Category [\[PAGES 8-10\]](#)
 - b. Affordable Housing Funding Plan [\[PAGES 10-15\]](#)

5. **Adjournment** The Honorable Gretchen Barron



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Richland County Council
Coronavirus AD Hoc Committee Meeting
MINUTES
September 19, 2023 – 2:30 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Gretchen Barron, Chair, Jason Branham, and Chakisse Newton

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Onley, Sarah Harris, Leonardo Brown, Anette Kirylo, Patrick Wright, Dan Cole, Stacey Hamm, Dante Roberts, Abhijit Deshpande, Jennifer Wladischkin, and Ashiya Myers

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairwoman Gretchen Barron called the meeting to order at approximately 2:30 PM.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. June 27, 2023 – Ms. Barron moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Branham.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Mr. Branham moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Ms. Barron.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.
4. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION**
 - a. Small Business Category Considerations – Ms. Barron stated in the past several months, this committee, along with Council, put out \$16M to local non-profits and small business owners. All categories except Small Business, Youth and Recreation, and Affordable Housing have been awarded. Regarding Affordable Housing, those funds have been disbursed in another portion of our budget. We will come back at a later date to discuss the plans for those funds and how we want to disseminate them. We will also have to come back and revisit how we would like to move forward with the Youth and Recreation Services category. At today's meeting, she is requesting staff to update the committee on what we received and the recommendations we received from Guidehouse. After that, a discussion about potential opportunities to disburse the funds. When we get into the specifics of the businesses, we will go into Executive Session.

The Assistant County Administrator, Lori Thomas, stated when Guidehouse began the process, we had approximately 140 applicants in the Small Business category that requested over \$10M. However, in Guidehouse's process, there were two components. First was a risk stratification. The risk stratification was based on Guidehouse's requirements to ensure the County would not put itself at significant risk by affording specific projects. The scale was 1 – 25, with 25 being the best you could get. The lower the score, the riskier it was for the County. In the risk stratification, we only had 14 applicants in the Small Business category that were 15 or greater. When the scores were compiled, based on the scoring rubric, the scores in this area were somewhat low. Since then, we have been trying to determine another methodology to stratify these results. Based on that, Guidehouse recommended reimbursement for a portion of lost revenue could be a consideration for the businesses. Most of the applicants on file did not disclose their lost revenue or enough information to disseminate the lost revenue. So, we started looking for other resources to come to a determination.

Ms. Barron indicated the committee has been provided with a list of potential applicants/grantees that could be considered. At this point, she believes it would be appropriate to go into Executive Session to discuss the private information regarding the specific businesses.

Ms. Newton moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Barron.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

***The Committee went into Executive Session at approximately 2:39 PM
and came out at approximately 3:14 PM***

Ms. Newton moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Barron.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

Mr. Branham moved to advance Caughman and Co, LLC and Thrift Store of Greenville, Inc. (dba Sunshine Thrift) to Council with a recommendation that the entities be able to move forward in the desk review process. The maximum award to each entity would not exceed \$25,000. Ms. Barron seconded the motion.

Ms. Barron stated when we look at the risk factors, the higher the risk, the greater exposure to the County, which means if this applicant defaults, the County would be responsible for paying those funds back through the General Fund. If that were to happen, the County would have to raise taxes. She maintained she was adamant about awarding something in this category. She indicated that she would have applied if she had not been on Council. She wants to ensure that we put forth the effort to get the funds back into the hands of the community.

Mr. Branham inquired if the amounts requested by the entities are public information.

Ms. Thomas indicated the amounts requested were not a part of the public agenda packet.

Ms. Barron stated Caughman & Co. requested \$60,000, and Thrift Store of Greenville, Inc. requested \$49,920.

Mr. Branham indicated the suggested funding amount in his motion reflects the amounts the entities requested and their risk score.

Ms. Newton noted for those businesses that did not receive funding, the County has to adhere to strict guidelines. She requested staff to speak about how the desk review process will work.

Ms. Sarah Harris, Director of Grants, indicated the County has worked with the third-party vendor Guidehouse to establish guidelines, which are strictly based upon U. S. Treasury standards. She welcomed businesses to contact her as she understands it has been a complicated process. She noted we did not reach a lot of the scores necessary for this particular process; therefore, it has been refined. Once the selected candidates move to the desk review process, Guidehouse will evaluate the criteria of additional supporting documentation for financial purposes. We will be looking for if the business lost significant amounts of funding during this time. They will move on to see if the business is qualified to manage a grant. The final guideline is complex; therefore, Guidehouse has assisted the County with that process.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **NEXT STEPS** – Ms. Barron noted the committee’s recommendation on this item will be forwarded to Council for action. She indicated at the committee’s next meeting, they will begin to discuss how to move forward with the Affordable Housing and Youth and Recreation categories.
6. **STAFF UPDATES** – Ms. Harris stated there have been two rounds of desk reviews. There are currently 26 desk reviews in progress with Guidehouse. The desk reviews are intense, and there is a bit of back and forth to acclimate the entities to the grant process and gather information. Her goal is to complete the desk reviews in the next 5-6 weeks.

Ms. Barron inquired about the next step after the desk reviews are completed.

Ms. Harris replied once the desk reviews are completed, we will execute contract agreements with the applicant. We walk through an informational guide for each applicant. Even though she provides oversight, ARPA has its own set of conditions for reimbursement processes.

Ms. Barron noted the County is operating under federal guidelines. These are not rules the County created; therefore, we have to adhere to those things. Whereas it does appear to take a long time, she believes once the funds get into the hands of the non-profits, it will be worth it.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – Ms. Newton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Branham.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:31 PM.

Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee Minutes

Excerpts from April 5, 2023 Meeting:

Youth and Recreational Services – Ms. Barron stated it was a stretch for her on one or two of the applications and whether they are in the correct category. She noted there is a lot of personnel included in it. It concerns her whether the listed personnel will be 100% for the projects or if we are funding additional personnel doing other tasks. As she mentioned in the work session, the intent was not to create new positions that will go away when the funding goes away, negatively impacting the community.

Ms. Newton stated that similar to affordable housing, where the proposals that were ranked the highest did not correspond to the vision for the service, youth and recreation services falls here. She advocated and increased the funds to \$1M because the youth in the community needs so much right now. We were going to provide services and recreation to young people to help them get off the streets. There are some proposals where the closest they get to youth is that they were young at some point, which is not what we are trying to do. She does not feel good about allocating the funds here and it does not fill the intent of what she was recommending. She would be willing to discuss the proposal from the Midlands Mediation Center because that proposal is about training an army of volunteers who can go out into the community and teach people conflict resolution skills. She has experience helping to support narrative mediation training for youth, and she was able to see how they interacted with people differently. Some of these people's long-standing conflicts were resolved on the spot. Even though this is not what she had in mind, she would like to discuss this proposal because our people need to know how to handle conflict better. Regarding the other grant proposals, she is not in a position to support them because she does not feel like it does the intent of what she advocated for.

Mr. Branham stated that the spirit of the Able SC application is wonderful, but at the same time, so much of the funds are proposed for salaries for new positions.

Ms. Newton acknowledged these are excellent organizations, and her comments in no way imply the work they are proposing is not noble work or organizations but does not meet the intent or spirit of which she was advocating for funds.

Ms. Barron noted she is a big fan of the Big Red Barn. The work they are doing for first responders and veterans is amazing. Her concern is that this category is for youth and recreation, and she does not think this application is in the proper location. She indicated she could support the Healthy Learners, although their application is salary heavy. Therefore, she cannot support their application as submitted. If an organization is not in the proper location, she would like us to entertain moving the entity to a more appropriate area. For the record, she can support Healthy Learners, Able SC, and Midlands Mediation Center.

Mr. Livingston inquired if we could use these funds for a comprehensive summer job program which he knows the youth will benefit from.

Ms. Barron noted she believes that was the intent. We were talking about parks, activities, and things for the youth to do. What this body has to determine is if there is money left over after we allocate the

funds, what do we do with the residual funds? It could be that we have another look at the applications on file or have a blank motion that says all leftover funding goes to a particular place.

Mr. Brown indicated, in some instances, applicants did not put down a particular category. If there was someone you wanted to look at funding and send to the desk review process, you certainly could do that. In addition, many people may have applied under non-profit, and the third-party review determined it was an ineligible use, so they attempted to find the next best place for the application to go so it would not get lost.

Ms. Newton stated Mr. Brown's statement concerns her a lot. She would like clarity on whether the categories we are looking at represent categories selected by applicants or a third party. She noted we are here evaluating specific buckets, so to say we are going to move funding from this bucket to the other bucket may mean that a bucket where there is enough funding for everybody now becomes a bucket where there is not enough funding or alter previous recommendations. She was operating under the assumption that people put themselves in this category. If they put themselves in that category, then it is one thing to say we asked for "apples," and you are a "cumquat."

Mr. Brown stated early on we discussed that one of the reasons why it took so long for the reviews is because, in some incidences, people did not select a category.

Ms. Newton stated, at least with the organizations that have been put forward, to understand if they put themselves in the category. For her, that affects how she moves forward. Secondly, she will be prepared, at the appropriate time, to make a motion for what to do with categories where we do not expend all the funds. Because of how far we are off the mark with youth and recreation services, she would like to put it aside. For the other categories, she would like to apply any unallocated funds to the DSS facility.

Ms. Newton moved forward a recommendation to Council to fund the Midlands Mediation Center and reserve the remaining funds in the Youth and Recreation Services category to be allocated at a later date as consistent with the Federal ARPA guidelines.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Branham stated he sees violence prevention, crime reduction, and community relations specifically targeting young people as valid, but so much of the funding relates to salaries. He understands that people's time is the essence of the project, but he understood a small amount would go toward rental spaces for listening and mediation sessions. He would like to support it but cannot at this level.

Ms. Barron reminded the committee there is still the desk review. Based on her expertise in grants, many of them will not receive full funding.

Ms. Newton noted that if you are training volunteers, someone has to train them, which is how she looked at it. The way we have been approaching this is to make a motion to approve something and send it to Council. She inquired if there was an opportunity, since we have more questions about a particular application, to have someone talk with the applicant and get more information.

Mr. Brown stated to the extent that you were considering their application for potential funding, getting clarity from them that only they can provide would be reasonable.

Ms. Newton inquired if it would be most appropriate to table this and gave more directive questions to Administration so they could be specifically asked.

Ms. Barron indicated we could direct staff to ask whatever questions we have and bring it back to the committee before we make a recommendation.

Ms. Newton noted she does not know if she has enough questions about other groups to slow down the process.

Mr. Branham stated he was content with tabling this item. We have shared some prevailing concerns that have commonality across applications. With a little time, we may be able to provide additional guidance or set a policy that relates to salaries.

Ms. Barron stated if we are going to move forward, we need to be specific about what we are requesting staff to do.

Ms. Newton inquired if we are talking about all categories.

Ms. Barron responded she was specifically referring to the Youth and Recreation Services category.

Ms. Newton suggested sending specific questions to staff by the end of the week.

Affordable Housing – Ms. Barron stated there was some conversation about the expectations of the committee and Council and what we received. She noted that with these housing projects, we are looking at applicants requesting funds to purchase land and build within the timeframe. Now that she has set with the applications, there is a concern that any of the projects can get off the ground, implemented, and have all the steps completed within our time period. We had applicants marked at a higher risk for the County because their projects would not be completed within the time period. When we look at the applications we have set forth and the ones that may have been eliminated, she thinks they are all in the same category. She wants us to be able to support affordable housing, but when we look at this pot of money, we do have constraints on how we need to move forward when we are awarding these dollars. She does not want us to award dollars that we know will not be able to meet the deadline.

Mr. Branham stated the consultant expressed there were additional restrictions related to the spending of these funds to purchase property.

Ms. Thomas indicated there is a concern with acquiring property and transferring that property to another individual. You go from sub-recipient to beneficiary, and who determines the beneficiary? With these funds, there would be quite a few guidelines the Federal government would impose on those. As Ms. Barron pointed out, some of the other applications did not meet the risk threshold because we would be at risk of not completing the projects and potentially putting the loss of funds at risk.

Mr. Branham stated from what he sees in the notes on the grants, none of them risk the acquisition of property as part of the proposal.

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative. These applicants proposed some sort of service. The concern from the work session was that it was not adding additional units.

Ms. Newton stated she wants to ensure we adhere carefully to the Federal guidelines and only do things for which we will be reimbursed. Her desire and thoughts, when we approve these dollars, is that we would increase the number of units. She noted \$4M would not increase the number tremendously because that amount does not get you what it used to. There was a time when Mr. Brown mentioned there might be alternate structures we could look at to achieve the goal. For example, do we say we will allocate funds from the General Fund in this amount where we have greater control and can influence affordable housing units and do something with the guidelines with the ARPA dollars? For her, that is what she would like to explore. She does not know that it has been thought through enough where we can direct the Administrator to go forth, but where there is a motion to request a proposal on how to achieve that. The applicants we have before us are worthy of funding, but she would not recommend funding any of these projects but investigating some alternate way to put the same number of dollars into increasing the number of units. She also noted that Richland County has already expended millions of dollars for some of these services (i.e., rental assistance) but has not addressed increasing the number of units.

Mr. Livingston noted what he had hoped when we started talking about affordable housing: we could use these funds to develop a housing trust fund and to be able to leverage these funds with private funds and grants. If there is any creative way we can realize these funds and this process to engage and start a housing trust fund, it would be great.

Ms. Barron indicated the goal was increasing the number of houses or the workforce market. A lot of it has come through community advocates like More Justice. Council finds this important, which is why we allotted the \$4M. For us to be true to the process, or intent, she would like us to devise creative ways to do what we set out to do, whether Council desires to create a housing trust or help to fund one. This is the largest pot of money Council set aside. This was our biggest investment, and we have to get it right.

Mr. Brown stated that if the committee desires to do that, they should articulate that so it can be captured as a part of their motion. Whoever makes the motion should direct the Administrator to provide a mechanism or process allowing \$4M allocated through ARPA funds to be dollar-for-dollar exchanged, where possible, with General Fund dollars to an affordable housing trust fund. The idea is that whatever funds you want to utilize to pursue the affordable housing trust fund potentially would be exchanged for General Fund dollars. We would utilize the ARPA funds in other areas and allow you the flexibility to do what you want to do to add affordable housing units. He wants to ensure you do not think it would be these dollars plus General Fund dollars because that is not something we could sustain.

Mr. Branham inquired if we could identify funds that had been appropriated for something that would qualify for ARPA funds and be able to switch that out in a targeted way so the \$4M is not floating there open-ended, but that it has to be spent within an ARPA timeframe, and on an ARPA qualifying purpose.

Mr. Brown stated we have a portion of the ARP dollars that are considered to fall under the loss revenue column. The loss revenue column allows for those that are under the umbrella but they do not have a specified use. We want to ensure the funds we use in the loss revenue column are applicable projects. The loss revenue column is general and allows for more flexibility for the County so that we have more access to do that, but the sources will be items the County has identified as priorities. We do not want to tailor it too narrowly, so you reduce the ability to meet the threshold for the \$4M.

Mr. Branham stated he fully supports maximizing the value of the \$4M to expand available, affordable housing units. He wanted to ensure we were not consequently expanding the budget.

Mr. Brown noted we would not be creating any additional uses that have not already been considered in the recommended budget for the purpose of the General Fund and ARPA dollars exchange.

Ms. Terracio stated she is not sure she would want to limit the motion to just the trust fund but rather be able to explore the mechanisms that would best serve the County.

Ms. Newton indicated there had been a lot of confusion about the way trust funds work, and that may not be the vehicle that achieves the goal. There may be applications that were not considered because they were deemed riskier because of the land acquisition process. She does not think we should rule out the applications that were vetted but a slight altering of the rubric.

Mr. Brown noted if there is a motion that allows for the exchange so that General Fund dollars become the dollars that are used, and you talk about the myriad options, you want to consider, you then would come back to address those applications.

Ms. Barron stated we need to be clear in the motion what our options are. If that is to explore housing trust or prioritize those applications we already have on file, that is where we need to start. She noted our being vague during this process has now come back to us. She does not want this to come back to us, but be specific in what we ask for.

Mr. Branham noted it appeared when the Greenville Housing Fund's application was submitted the fund did not yet own the 200-unit affordable housing complex. The application was submitted with the contemplation of acquiring it and replacing the roof. He indicated it sounded like it would be new affordable housing units.

Ms. Thomas responded the units already existed.

Mr. Branham inquired if the Greenville Housing Fund currently owns them.

Ms. Thomas replied she did not know, which was the contemplation.

For clarification, Mr. Branham stated that the units already exist as affordable housing.

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Terracio stated she hoped that this body could allocate funds to improve the living conditions for those individuals residing in these units. In essence, we would create new units and improve the living conditions of existing affordable housing units.

For clarification, Ms. Barron stated Ms. Terracio supports additional affordable housing and repairs.

Ms. Terracio replied in the affirmative. She indicated her understanding is that we are not just creating new units but also making units livable. She also would not like to exclude the option of working with entities that have come before us, perhaps just not in this particular way.

Ms. Barron stated she believes this category intended to create additional housing, which is where the challenge comes in with the existing list. If the body would like to include that in the motion, then most definitely.

Mr. Livingston noted he is concerned that if we focus on repairing units, we will not get any new ones. He suggested splitting the funding for new and vacated units, so we will know it is an available unit that is not presently being used.

Ms. Newton stated that the goal for her is new units, not repairing or alleviating existing ones. She advocates for stronger regulations so that can happen through the appropriate channels.

Mr. Brown indicated the language staff is providing will allow us to comply with the American Rescue Plan Act dollars use and also address what the committee is asking to potentially do to utilize dollars to address the specific need under affordable housing.

Ms. Thomas stated the intent here is for Council to invest \$4M in affordable housing. Perhaps the motion could be to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M in affordable housing in new units, etc. Staff could then bring forward a plan showing the funding mechanisms.

Ms. Barron moved to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M into affordable housing by adding new and/or vacated units.

Ms. Newton inquired about what a vacated unit is.

Mr. Livingston noted we have abandoned apartment units that could be made available for individuals who do not have a home.

Ms. Newton stated, for clarification, if no one is using it and then it becomes an affordable housing unit, it would be a new affordable housing unit without the need to specify that it was vacated.

Mr. Livingston stated that some people may not say it is a new unit.

For clarification, Ms. Terracio noted we are not just limiting the new units to new construction.

Ms. Newton moved to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M in affordable housing, specifically to add new affordable housing units to the market, seconded by Mr. Branham.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

Excerpts from the May 16, 2023 Meeting:

Affordable Housing – Mr. Brown noted, in reviewing this process, one of the things they found was that we want to set Council up for success. To move this item forward, they recommend Council allow staff to utilize available funding in the County's budget to address affordable housing. Staff would then address the method determined by Council. Staff does not want you to limit yourself as a body.

Ms. Barron indicated we have already decided to disburse the funds through the budget, but we need to be able to authorize staff to do so. We need to determine if we want the available funding and the methodology to go forward together or separate them.

Ms. Newton stated she would recommend taking them separately. As a part of allocating the available funding for affordable housing, do you feel we need to commemorate that we are spending those General Fund dollars via motion?

Mr. Brown responded there is a level of understanding in the staff's recommendation. We understand there is flexibility within the budget, and we will stay within the budget's constraints. No additional funds will be utilized other than what has been authorized.

Ms. Newton noted as we look at the ARPA funding, we allocated \$4M, but ARPA funding was too restrictive to allow us to meet the goals we wanted to meet for affordable housing.

Mr. Brown replied that this is not how the staff views this, and it is not in the best interest of staff to view it that way. We understand the County has committed to serving affordable housing. A specific amount was discussed. In utilizing the entirety of the County's budget, staff has done a review, and we understand the pot of funding should remain up to the amount set aside in ARPA funds. The best method of providing the funds to affect affordable housing will be determined internally with the constraints of the approved budget.

Ms. Newton inquired if the following motion would be appropriate: "Authorizing the Administrator to allocate up to \$4M of available funding for affordable housing."

Mr. Brown responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Livingston indicated he thought, at the last meeting, the committee requested the Administrator to come up with a proposal to appropriate funds for affordable housing.

Mr. Brown replied part of the discussion was the funding opportunity which potentially allows us to address affordable housing in multiple ways. He noted some of the applicants wanted to utilize the dollars to effect physical structures. There were also requests for the County to potentially develop a housing trust fund. One is putting money in a place where it could have some future use, and the other is distributing funds today. Then there is the question of whether affordable housing adds new units versus someone making current units less costly. He noted we potentially have the funding, which allows all of those things, but to get deeper into that would be a discussion about whether you want a multi-prong approach where you want investments and infrastructure.

Mr. Livingston responded he thought we would have staff and those in the affordable housing area come to him with recommendations.

Mr. Brown noted if the takeaway from this meeting is that all things are on the table, we can move forward that way.

Ms. Barron stated in her mind she thought this was a budget item. Because we are no longer going to use ARPA dollars, but in turn, we are going to authorize the Administrator to look within the confines of our budget to allow us to address affordable housing in that area. She believes we need to have additional discussions about giving the Administrator detailed guidance. We may need to have a third-party person assist us with identifying what affordable housing is. As we move forward in the discussion, and if it is to take a two-prong approach, this body will need to come back and have further conversations about the method.

Ms. Newton inquired if there are any notable disadvantages to approving the funding now and following up later with the mechanism.

Mr. Brown responded there is not.

Ms. Newton moved to authorize the Administrator to allocate up to \$4M in available funding for affordable housing, seconded by Ms. Barron.

Mr. Branham stated he is looking for to seeing the County supporting affordable housing, particularly efforts to add new units to the community. He supports the \$4M in ARPA funds for affordable housing, but he would like more details about where the funding is coming from and how it will be budgeted. His understanding is that this is a motion to recommend that Council allocate \$4M from the General Fund for affordable housing, and we would not be voting for ARPA funds on this particular category.

Mr. Brown indicated the motion states “available” funding and does not designate what fund the dollars will be coming from. We can have a more in-depth discussion about why you want the flexibility and provide clarity about what that means. In short, the County is able to address what it wants to do, and its limits are “lifted.” The American Rescue Act funding the County chose to make available for these grants funds are all by choice. You have the ability, within the constraints, to make choices that best reflect what you want to accomplish and make the best use of the dollars you have. Potentially tying yourself to one particular mechanism may not allow you to do as much as you want, so we are trying to broaden that so you can accomplish it. No new dollars are being asked for. Anything funded with the funds would have to be approved by Council.

Mr. Branham noted the motion is too broadly worded for him.

Ms. Newton stated the purpose of the motion is to set aside funds in the budget that we can use once we pick the specific mechanism. She noted it does not remove any obligation we have to thoroughly vet what will come before us. If we do not set aside the money, it would potentially not be available.

Mr. Livingston specified we are using ARPA funds to take care of General Fund matters and supplant those funds to take care of affordable housing. It will not make a negative impact on the General Fund.

Mr. Wright asserted that to a certain extent, with any Federal funds, there will be stringent limitations, time constraints, and the potential of being audited. He indicated many things would be impossible or limited with ARPA funds. This takes those restraints off and does not limit you to ARPA funds.

In Favor: Barron and Newton Opposed: Branham

The vote was in favor.