

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: August 1, 2021
To: Milwaukee County ARPA Task Force
From: ARPA Task Force Co-Chairs Ricardo Diaz and Shawn Rolland
Subject: ARPA Task Force timeline
File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

Co-Chairs are requesting approval of an outreach plan to engage broad and diverse input from the community, especially from underrepresented neighborhoods, and from representatives of the major functional areas of the county, including: Legislative and Executive, General, Administrative, Courts and Judiciary, Public Safety, Transportation, Health and Human Services, and Recreation and Culture.”

POLICY

Milwaukee County Board file 21-555: “A resolution to create a Task Force to review and recommend funding allocations to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors for monies received by the County in the Federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021”

BACKGROUND

On July 13, 2021, County Executive David Crowley signed file 21-555, a resolution sponsored by Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson, creating the Milwaukee County ARPA Task Force.

The resolution calls on the Task Force to:

“Utilize a process that engages broad and diverse input from the community... especially from underrepresented neighborhoods, and from representatives of the major functional areas of the county, including: Legislative and Executive, General, Administrative, Courts and Judiciary, Public Safety, Transportation, Health and Human Services, and Recreation and Culture,” and

“Review funding recommendations... and develop non-binding recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors that help to achieve the County’s vision: “By achieving racial equity, Milwaukee is the healthiest county in Wisconsin.”

It is recommended that the ARPA Task Force generally adhere to the following timeline for its work.

Phase 1: Soliciting for eligible ideas – July 13 to September 30, 2021. On September 30 at 11:59 pm, the window for idea collection closes.

Phase 2: Analyzing ideas for eligibility, practicality, completeness, and alignment mission, vision and values – July 13 to Oct. 14, 2021.

Phase 3: Finalizing initial recommendation for Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors – Oct. 15 to Oct. 28, 2021.

Phase 4: Project tracking and reporting – Q4 2021 to 2026.

On or before Oct. 28, 2021, the ARPA Task Force should hold a news conference and send out a news release to announce its joint recommendation.

After the Task Force makes its recommendation, it is suggested that the recommendation be shared with the County Board's Finance Committee on Monday, Nov. 1, 2021 at 9:30 AM as an informational report. Further, it is recommended that the County Board consider feedback from the public on the ARPA proposal during its Annual Public Meeting planned for Monday, Nov. 1, 2021, at 6:00 PM.

Additionally, it is recommended that the initial ARPA Task Force proposal be heard and considered by the entire Milwaukee County Board during its meeting on Thursday, Nov. 4 at 9:30 AM.

Lastly, it is recommended that the ARPA Task Force restart its processes in Q2 of each following year until ARPA monies are fully allocated.

OVERVIEW OF PHASE 1: Soliciting for eligible ideas (July 13 to Sep. 30, 2021)

The following outreach plan is being proposed by the Task Force Co-Chairs:

Outreach to County department leadership

Over the past weeks, Milwaukee County Director of Grants and Special Projects (and ARPA Task Force member) Ashley Adsit has been proactively reaching out to County department directors for their thoughts on how the ARPA monies could be allocated to support their eligible workstreams.

These concepts have been added to an online repository and dashboard created by Director Adsit and her colleagues. At a later date, the Task Force and the entire County Board can access the entire directory of ideas to inform their decisions related to allocating the ARPA monies.

Outreach to Milwaukee County Boards and Commissions

It is recommended that ARPA Task Force Co-Chairs Ricardo Diaz and Shawn Rolland pen a formal letter requesting each Milwaukee County Board or Commission to indicate their preferred, eligible use of the ARPA funding. Upon approval, Co-Chairs Diaz and Rolland will collaborate on a formal letter that will be sent by Tuesday, August 17, 2021.

Outreach to Milwaukee County's general public

It is recommended that the ARPA Task Force hold three events during the month of September to collect ideas from the public. While in-person events would be preferred, it is unclear if these events will be able to be held safely anywhere indoors amidst today's pandemic. However, it is possible that covered, outdoor venues like county park pavilions may allow for residents to gather safely. It is recommended that at least one listening event be held virtually.

If approved, Co-Chairs Diaz and Rolland will work with Brian Rothgery, Amelia Berendt, Robert Hullum, Biltu Hamda and others to formalize, announce and promote a series of events, enabling community members to share their ideas with the ARPA Task Force. This series of listening sessions will be promoted to local media via a news release and targeted outreach to media and community organizations. Given the aggressive timeline, it's possible that all Task Force members will not be able to participate in all listening sessions. However, all Task Force members will be encouraged to join the events, watch any event replays and review related notes taken at each event.

As part of the promotional effort, County Board Supervisors will be encouraged to promote the event(s) to their constituents and attend the events. Each supervisor will be provided template language to promote the events to their constituents and key stakeholders via email, community flyers, and social media posts, among other tactics. Facebook events will also be created for each event.

Per the ARPA Task Force resolution, venues in underrepresented neighborhoods will be equitably prioritized.

OVERVIEW OF PHASE 2: Analyzing ideas (July 13 to Oct. 14, 2021)

The following actions are recommended during this phase:

Assessment of ideas by County leadership

Throughout Phase 1, it is strongly advised that County leadership provide their feedback regarding any ideas solicited from the County and the general public. It will be important for the Task Force to understand helpful context including:

- what might be required to enact a particular idea (in procurement, in labor, etc.) and what challenges or obstacles might inhibit it from launching
- how impactful an idea might be to advance the county's strategic plan

- if partnerships between the county and another entity (municipalities, philanthropy, etc.) have been considered

Assessment of County's financial situation by Comptroller and Budget Director

To inform the Task Force's work, Milwaukee County Comptroller Scott Manske and Milwaukee County Budget Director Joe Lamers will provide the Task Force with an overview of the County's fiscal situation. The leaders will also brief Task Force members on the Milwaukee County's ARPA funds that are eligible for use to defer revenue losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These facts and figures will be helpful to the Task Force to make an informed, strategic decision.

OVERVIEW OF PHASE 3: Finalizing recommendation (Oct. 14 to Oct. 28, 2021)

The Task Force will develop a process to rank or score ideas based on their alignment to strategy, impact, immediacy, and other relevant criteria. It is recommended that Director of the Office on African American Affairs Jeff Roman develop and share a definition of racial equity and provide guidelines clarifying if a given idea drives racial equity based on Milwaukee County's definition.

It's quite likely that all of the ARPA monies will not be allocated at this time. Guidelines by the U.S. Department of the Treasury note that recovery funds can be obligated until December 31, 2024.

OVERVIEW OF PHASE 4: Project tracking and reporting (Q4 2021 to 2026)

The Task Force will seek to report out at least quarterly on ARPA project progress until all ARPA-related work is complete. According to guidance from the U.S. Department of the Treasury, all work funded by ARPA monies must be completed by Dec. 31, 2026.

It is recommended that Milwaukee County identify an evaluation partner to design an evaluation plan that will allow leaders to analyze data and measure short, intermediate, and long-term progress toward our vision to become the healthiest county in Milwaukee by achieving racial equity.

PROCESS TO IMMEDIATELY APPROVE IDEAS (July 13, 2021 to Dec. 31, 2024)

During the course of its work, the ARPA Task Force may be presented with an idea that merits urgent consideration by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. If such an idea or situation should arise, it is recommended that a ARPA Task Force member should prepare a resolution for the expenditure, which could be considered at the next ARPA Task Force meeting. If rejected by the Task Force, the item could be proposed to the County Board's Finance Committee for consideration.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the ARPA Task Force timeline as well as “Phase 1” strategies to solicit for ideas from County leaders and the general public, especially from underrepresented neighborhoods, and “Phase 2” strategies to analyze ideas for alignment, impact and relevance. Specifics regarding “Phase 3” will be shared at a future meeting for consideration.

FISCAL EFFECT

N/A

TERMS

The term of the ARPA Task Force began on July 13, 2021. The Task Force will endure until all of the ARPA monies are fully allocated.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

NA

PREPARED BY:

ARPA Task Force Co-Chairs Ricardo Diaz and Shawn Rolland

APPROVED BY:

NA

ATTACHMENTS:

[Links to files 21-555](#), [21-515](#), [21-232](#)

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk