



To: Kaukauna Public Library Board of Trustees
From: Library Director Ashley Thiem-Menning
Date: 5/20/22
Re: ARPA Update

On May 16 a presentation of potential uses for ARPA funds went before the Personnel and Finance Committee. 16 projects were included, which were the most impactful ranked out of all the recommendations that came in. Each project included a description sheet for Council members. During the meeting, Department heads took questions regarding each of the projects. The current list of 16 is over the ARPA allotment, so further vetting will need to be done to get to the ARPA award figure.

At the recommendation of Alderperson Thiele, we did submit for a Community Resource Specialist, more commonly referred to as a social worker. This was the only project submitted that would likely have an ongoing cost after ARPA funds were expended. It was also only budgeted in the ARPA packet for one year of service, however, ARPA funds could potentially cover up to three years of the salary. There were a lot of questions regarding this position from Council.

Wisconsin currently has three libraries that employ full time social workers, Racine, Eau Claire and La Crosse. I do anticipate that this will be a normal practice for public libraries within the next decade.

This topic will go back to committee for further discussion after Council has the opportunity to spend some time thinking about how to allocate the funds. I do not anticipate it being approved, but it should be on the radar for the future staffing needs for this facility or the City, for the betterment of Kaukauna.

Lower on the list of ARPA funds, we also put in a request for a bookmobile. Given our geographic location, specifically a lack of libraries in Sherwood and Freedom, a bookmobile would certainly help us reach our neighbors with library services. The smallest available bookmobile was quoted at 205K. There is currently a one year wait for production.