

Finance Committee

5/17/2022

Topic: Wonderfeet Kid's Museum.

Members present: Davis, Etori, Savage, Talbott, Whitcomb

Others present: Danielle Monroe, Dean Pearce, Paul Gallo,

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm.

The meeting opened with Danielle reviewing Wonderfeet Kids's Museum development plan, including a move to a new location within Rutland City. Danielle provided detail regarding the attractions they intended to include, partnerships with local stakeholders, and discussed the increased traffic they anticipate bringing into Rutland City. Danielle explained that the majority of construction would begin toward the end of summer 2022 with an anticipated completion date of early 2023.

Alderwoman Savage inquired as to why the request from the city had increased to \$150,000 compared to the original \$100,000. Danielle explained that in the planning process it became apparent that the total project cost was going to exceed initial projections.

Alderman Etori noted that he previously served on the Wonderfeet board. He noted that there is no current conflict of interest. Alderman Etori spoke to how the Museum both helped with economic development as well as early childhood development. Danielle noted that she viewed Wonderfeet as an engine for families to make connections in Rutland, especially new families to the area.

Alderwoman Davis noted that she had concerns related to the \$50,000 dollar increase. She indicated she would support \$100,000.

Paul Gallo discussed with the committee the way in which Wonderfeet helps provide preventative care to young children and ultimately aids in their development. Paul cited that investing in early childhood development allows for cost savings to the school system in the long run. Alderwoman Davis reiterated her concern with the increased amount, citing that there were many other requests before the city that needed to still be considered. In addition to childhood development Paul cited the positive economic impact he believed this would result from this project.

Alderman Talbott expressed his support for the project, citing the plan as a good use of ARPA funding.

Alderman Talbott moved to recommend to the full board the approval of \$150,000 for the Wonderfeet Kids Museum from the fund formally know as ARPA. The motion passed 4-1.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50pm.