



PRESS RELEASE

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Little Rock Adopts Initial Plan for Federal COVID Aid Funds

LITTLE ROCK – The Little Rock Board of Directors on Tuesday night approved spending a portion of the city’s first tranche of \$18.8 million received from the U.S. Treasury Department as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. Following federal guidelines, the funding will support ongoing COVID-19 response efforts, as well as crime prevention, new firefighting apparatus, and lost revenue due to the pandemic.

“I appreciate the Board for supporting the resolution to direct these one-time resources where our city has immediate need,” Mayor Frank Scott, Jr. said. “Thanks to the leadership of Little Rock’s Director of Strategic Operations Emily Cox, Chief Financial Officer Sara Lenehan, Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Moore, and Senior Adviser Kendra Pruitt, Little Rock is better positioned to handle this third surge of the pandemic we are currently experiencing. These monies prioritize public safety and the health and welfare of Little Rock residents and our city employees. I look forward to further discussion with the Board surrounding other pressing needs such as infrastructure and broadband access.”

The Board’s initial approval of \$11.6 million was divided as follows:

- \$3.4 million for critical IT infrastructure and cybersecurity upgrades
- \$2.2 million for firefighting apparatus
- \$1.5 million for community violence intervention programs
- \$700,000 for COVID mitigation, vaccine distribution and community education
- Up to \$3.2 million to fund a one-time bonus of \$1,500 or \$750 for full- and part-time, non-seasonal city employees, respectively, hired before March 1, 2021, including police and firefighter cadets who graduated training in July
- \$605,000 to fund administration of federal aid

City staff will continue to refine a plan for spending the remainder of the tranche, which will be subject to Board approval. Plans include potential funding for programs to assist residents with job training, after school care, affordable housing, broadband and wireless internet access in city parks and park facilities, equipment to support virtual public meetings, software purchases for the Procurement and Planning and Development Departments, drainage projects, and water and wastewater infrastructure improvements.

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