

## A CITIZEN'S RESPONSE TO ARPA FUNDS COMMUNICATIONS

I am hopeful the day will come when citizens can rely on clear, accurate, and unbiased communications from our elected officials.

I am responding to a posting on social media by Mayor Reverend pertaining to ARPA funds distributions and a "strategic plan" template.

Was the "strategic plan" template presented to the entire Board in close session? I do not see this attachment to any Board agenda, or anywhere else on our website prior to December 2023. I spoke with Board members who do not recall seeing this document. Was this a group assignment (7), or an individual assignment? Did the staff complete this assignment? Did ANY Board member complete this assignment? What were the results?

"The majority of the Board (4) chose NOT to meet and discuss." (ARPA funds) True, BUT, according to Board President, there was not a request for a Board meeting. Individual Board members were asked to meet with Mayor Reverend individually to discuss these public funds. Some members felt uncomfortable with these optics and felt this discussion should be public. So to be clear, four(4) members choose not to meet PRIVATELY with Mayor Reverend. The above statement wording is incomplete. The words 'meet with me' would have been accurate.

"I proposed that \$100,000 to be allocated per Ward to HELP citizens." I 100% disagree with that proposal. I see opportunities for mismanagement and questionable accountability. These public funds should be managed from City Hall, not individuals. What does "HELP" mean? I need HELP right now with yard cleanup. Does that qualify? Vague is an understatement.

"ALL departments have taken advantage of the proposal." This is confusing. No department has ANY authority to approve ANY public funds, so how are they "taking advantage" of this (\$100,000?) proposal unless the Board approves the expenditures? Again, without a current budget (2023-2024 budget). Perhaps I just don't understand this.

I am aware it has become popular to throw the Board of Aldermen under the bus for all that ails our city. From my view, that is unsubstantiated criticism. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but facts are facts. Misleading

words/phrases may make something appear to be something that it isn't, and people often believe what they WANT to believe, but facts are still facts. NO ONE rules: "The mayor AND board of aldermen of each city governed by this chapter shall have the care, management and control of the city and its finances..." Mo.Rev.Stat. 79.110. The word "and" is a conjunction used to connect words that are to be taken JOINTLY. Citizens are not misinformed, they are BEING misinformed. It is past time for "me" and "I." This is OURS. But everybody wants to rule the world. (THIS is why I was removed from social media. LOL!)

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Citizen