

Cheshire County Delegation Approves Over \$7.2 Million in American Rescue Plan Act Expenditures for Calendar Year 2021.

August 19, 2021

(Keene, NH) — On August 9, Cheshire County’s State Representatives voted to approve the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expenditures proposed by the County Commissioners. Included in those expenditures is money for Cheshire County’s municipalities, small businesses, nonprofits, and county operations. Cheshire County approved spending over \$7.2 million of the total ARPA award (\$14,778,619) for Calendar Year 2021.

Included in this year’s county ARPA expenditures:

- Over \$1 million in additional support to the Maplewood Nursing Home Reconstruction Project, which was heavily impacted by COVID-19 work delays and material costs.
- Over \$2.3 million for energy upgrades across all three county campuses to replace antiquated systems and significantly lower energy costs.
- \$1 million to be distributed among Cheshire County’s towns and the City of Keene for qualifying municipal improvement projects and unplanned COVID-19 costs, easing the burden on local property taxpayers.
- \$750,000 for staff salaries in recognition of their hard work and sacrifices during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring that no county employee makes less than \$15 per hour.
- \$6,500 for a Summer Concert Series that will welcome people back into the county’s public spaces.
- \$1 million to provide emergency grants to the county’s businesses and nonprofits that have been financially impacted by the pandemic.

“COVID-19 and years of state cost-downshifting have had a disastrous impact on local property taxes,” **said County Commissioner Jack Wozmak**. “By voting to approve the County’s proposed ARPA 2021 expenditures, Cheshire County Commissioners and State Representatives have shown that they take seriously their fiscal responsibilities as community leaders.”

“This historic investment represents the culmination of thoughtful, hard work from New Hampshire’s Senators, Sen. Shaheen and Sen. Hassan; New Hampshire’s Congresspersons, Rep. Kuster and Rep. Pappas; the Cheshire County Commissioners; and Cheshire County’s State Representatives,” **said Chairman of the Cheshire County Delegation, Rep. Dan Eaton**. “The American Rescue Plan Act has made it possible for Cheshire County to deliver timely relief to its residents without incurring an additional tax burden. As approved, this budget keeps county taxes unchanged from 2020.”

“Cheshire County is not immune from the effects of COVID-19,” **said County Commissioner Bob Englund**. “This funding through the American Rescue Plan Act and the budget passed by Cheshire County’s State Representatives will be crucial in combatting and recovering from COVID-19 and its variants.”

“Families, businesses, and organizations throughout Cheshire County have been forced to weather the storm of COVID-19 alongside actual storms, made worse by climate change,” **said County Commissioner Terry Clark**. “Cheshire County’s 2021 budget—as made possible by the

American Rescue Plan Act— will help our communities fight and recover from COVID-19 in ways that are sustainable, which is fundamental to a 21st century economy.

Cheshire County recognizes the one-time nature of this funding and the need to coordinate with state, municipal, business, and nonprofit leaders. The County remains committed to making additional sustainable investments in the coming years to assist all county communities with federal planning, administration, and compliance.

Cheshire County looks forward to facilitating and participating in those efforts with the help of the American Rescue Plan Act and creative, sustainable investments in all our communities.

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