

Hunterdon Commissioners Plan Conservative Fiscal Approach And Community Outreach For American Rescue Grant

While Hunterdon County's Board of Commissioners await finalized U.S. Treasury rules providing direction for the use of American Rescue Funds (ARF), the County has banked the \$12 million grant from the federal government, has the financial controls in place to manage the grant, and is developing a community outreach plan for input on the uses of the funds, County Commissioner Matt Holt has reported.

The Board of Commissioners, at the July 20th Board meeting, acted to establish a mechanism for the expenditure of the funds under New Jersey Budget Law, approving a 'Chapter 159' resolution. "As I have previously stated, we take the responsibility for the use of these funds most seriously and will apply our high standard of fiscal integrity to the process," Commissioner Holt, a member of the ARF Committee, stated.

Holt pointed out, "The comment period on the Treasury Department rules governing the use of the funds only recently closed on July 16. The next step is the issuance of final rules. At that point, I believe we all agree that there should be input on the use of the funds through a community outreach process. Plans are being developed for that process."

Commissioner Shaun C. Van Doren, who also serves on the ARF Committee, said, "The American Rescue funds are the largest federal grant ever made available to the county, creating a significant responsibility. Given this Board's financial track record over the years, the public can be assured that every penny will be well used and tracked appropriately."

Board Director Susan J. Soloway stated, "The funds use is limited to those County expenditures and programs necessary for response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to supporting businesses, non-profits and social services agencies that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

It is a substantial amount of money and the Board will bring to its expenditure the same conservative approach and the same level of deliberation which we have extended to all County finances."