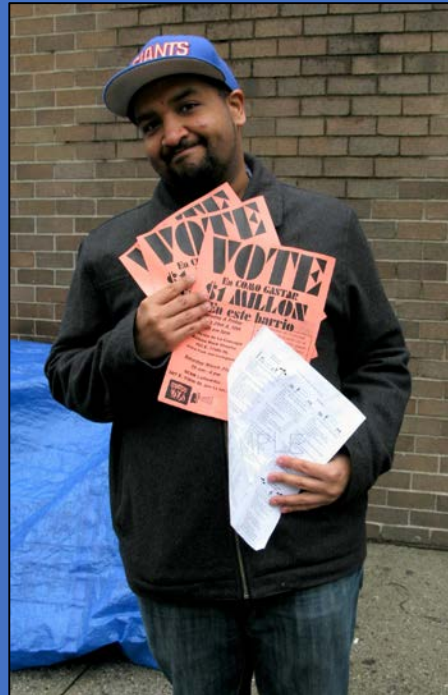


# Report of Participatory Budgeting Commission

Amherst, MA

June 28, 2021



Our report:

a.. What is Participatory Budgeting –

b. In light of pandemic, Commission  
recommendations

Short term

Long term

# What is Participatory Budgeting?



Participatory Budgeting is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget.



# Examples of PB



Gym renovation



Community garden plots



Potty project



Improve our school



School garden





# WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?



## **REQUIREMENTS for SUCCESS**

- **Capital expense...or**
- **One-time operating expense**
- **Staff and volunteer support**
- **Viable & aligned with town programs**

# Our PB Commission (What we did)

- Interviewed PB projects around the country
- Researched PB resources

# **But, COVID19 changed everything**

- **Suddenly, the wrong time for new expenditures**
- **Therefore, we explored participation in existing town programs:**
  - **Community Preservation Act**
  - **Joint Capital PC: resident proposals**
  - **Community Development Block Grants**



**We found hurdles to increased resident participation**

## **Short term recommendations to enhance participation**

- **Greater transparency**
- **Longer open times for proposals**
- **Coordinate applications periods**
- **More info about criteria**
- **Staff support developing proposals**

# **Our long-term recommendations:**

- **Continue to explore participation**
- **Seek philanthropic support and partnerships with academia**
- **Regular reports from CPOs**
- **Revisit PB for Amherst in the future**