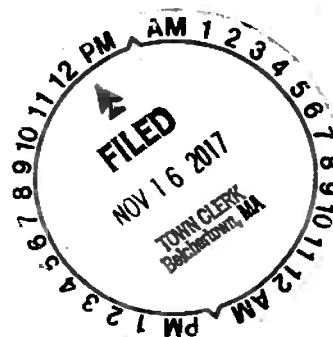


Town of Belchertown
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
School Central Office
14 Maple Street (Rte.202)
Belchertown, MA 01007
Tel: 413-323-0425



FINAL MINUTES of October 18, 2017

Members Present: Donna Lusignan, Michael Knapp, Lorraine Alves, Erica Rose, and Lisa Aiken.
Minutes by Lisa Aiken

6:00 p.m. – Chairman D. Lusignan opened the meeting.

Welcome New At-Large Member: The Committee welcomed Ms. Erica Rose who has filled the recent At-Large vacancy. A copy of the recent Open Meeting Law, Meeting Schedule and other information was provided to her.

Minutes: L. Alves made the motion to approve the minutes of September 20, 2017, as amended. M. Knapp seconded. Vote passed 4:2:1.(* two absent from prior meeting and one new member).

Scholarship Fund Account Balance- D. Lusignan informed the committee the scholarship fund balance (\$3399.16) has remained unchanged since August 1, 2017. No new monies have been accounted for despite the “One Buck” press release /article that appeared in The Sentinel newspaper and the committee’s recent Belchertown Fair Exhibit Hall table.

Discussion Items:

Belchertown Fair Scholarship Table Exhibit: The Scholarship Committee table was in a prominent location in the Exhibit Hall at the Belchertown Fair. L. Aiken was in charge of making the initial contact, setting up the table and removing it. Several brochures were picked up during the weekend. The committee thanked Lisa Aiken for her enthusiastic efforts towards governing this exhibit.

Press Release: The “One Buck” campaign appeared in the September edition of The Sentinel newspaper in the letters to the editor section. This press release furthers the committee’s efforts towards public outreach and information seeking to support student secondary education funding.

IT/Web Address Portal: D. Lusignan and K. Coffin have been corresponding with their respective IT Depts. towards the implementation of a web portal for uploading student applications. Scholarship application will no longer be accepted on paper. Both IT Depts. have agreed this process can be completed and made available for access on the BHS website. The committee is in the process of reviewing the application criteria. Only committee members will be issued private user names to view online applications. The Committee held discussion as to having student’s identity withheld and be identified by an ID Number, in order to avoid conflict of interest criteria. D. Lusignan to contact the IT Dept. to see if the portal can be designed to identify an applicant by number so when the committee members are reviewing submitted applications, the names and addresses associated with the essays and the activities are not revealed. In addition, L. Alves spoke with Mr. Cole Rogers , IT Director for Pathfinder who will be a liaison between the Scholarship Committee and Pathfinder.

Committee Members Participation, Understanding and/or Appearance of Conflict of Interest: D. Lusignan informed committee members of ethical training which is issued by the Town Clerks Office and will be kept informed as to when the next training arises. Each member will have to complete the program and provide the required certificate upon completion. D. Lusignan provided information to members regarding “Conflict of Interest and Appearance of Conflict of Interest” and read some of the criteria in that, “Public employees may not act in a manner that would cause a reasonable person to think that they would show favor toward someone, or that they can be improperly influenced.” and advised public employees and committee members to file the proper disclosure form(s) prior to participating in matters involving a person (student) /entity who they have a private relationship with. D. Lusignan stated that it is the responsibility of each committee member who may have any of these issues to file a record with the Office of the Town Clerk and/or consider recusal from the application process so that there remains no appearance of conflict when choosing recipients.

Scholarship Fund Application Procedures, Information & Instructions: Mass General Law, Chapter 60, Article 34 . The original Belchertown Scholarship Committee application’s wording appears to mirror MGL Chapter 60 which states the town is required to place a request for donations in the property tax or motor vehicle tax bills. L. Aiken suggested a web link be added to the tax bill so that residents can find the Scholarship Committee webpage for information. E. Rose asked whether people paying their property tax bill online have the opportunity to donate to the fund, D. Lusignan will get information.

Devise checklist for Scholarship Applications: The Committee is currently working on devising a checklist for the student application process. This checklist will ensure students are fully prepared to upload the specific documents required as they will not have the opportunity to upload additional material or alter their submittals afterwards. The Committee will begin devising the checklist at their next meeting slated for Wednesday, November 15th, 2017.

6:53 p.m. L. Alves made a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Knapp seconded. All were in favor.