



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

FINAL MINUTES of September 20, 2017

Members Present: Donna Robbins, Donna Lusignan, Michael Knapp, Karol Coffin,
Lorraine Alves, Lisa Aiken
Minutes by Lisa Aiken, Clerk

6:02pm – Chairman D. Lusignan opened the meeting.

6:03pm – The Committee welcomed Ms. Lorraine Alves, the new Pathfinder Regional Representative.

Committee Vacancy –Letter of Interest: The deadline to submit letters of interest to the Board of Selectmen was September 6th. In August, a letter of interest was received from Ms. Erica Rose, a Belchertown resident and former graduate of the Belchertown schools. She has had experience with running scholarship programs. The committee members reviewed her application and voted unanimously (6:0:0) to welcome Erica to serve as an at-large member on the committee. D. Lusignan will issue a letter of recommendation to the Board of Selectmen requesting her appointment effective immediately and until the term ends on June 30, 2018.

Meeting Minutes: K. Coffin made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 16th, 2017 as read. M. Knapp seconded. All present at the August meeting were in favor (4:0:2). Abstentions were due to absence at August meeting.

Scholarship Fund Account Balance –Update: The balance of the scholarship fund as pf Sept.6, 2017 is now \$3,399.16. (+ 1153.10 since August 8, 2017)

Discussion Items:

- Belchertown Fair, Old Town Hall Exhibit: The Scholarship Committee's Belchertown Fair Exhibit Hall static display in the Old Town Hall will be set up and taken down by L. Aiken. D. Lusignan supplied her with copies of the donation form that was originally enclosed in the last tax billing cycle and other informational materials to be placed on the table throughout the fair's open hours Friday 9/22 through Sunday 9/24. This table will be unmanned, serve as informational only and will not have a container for accepting donations at the fair.
- Press Release: D. Lusignan submitted the "One Buck" press release discussed in August to the Sentinel. M. Knapp noted that the submission appeared in the letters to the editor section of this week's newspaper. Attached at the end of these minutes is a copy of the submission.
- IT/Web Address Portal: D. Lusignan spoke with Kevin Hannon, Belchertown's IT Director of Information Systems(MIS), who suggested using Google Drive on the schools main website. The scholarship application files on drive will be read-only accessible. Student applications uploaded will be kept confidential. Each scholarship committee member will be provided a password to

enter the portal to access the applications and no changes will be allowed by anyone. The Committee will decide how many years of applications will be kept on file, should the amount become cumbersome. D. Lusignan and K. Hannon agreed that keeping 2-3 years of old applications would be sufficient and there would be enough space in the drive to retain them. The application process would require students to upload all their information at once. The committee plans to access the applications directly on-line without printing materials and to use a rubric/checklist for consistency in reviewing submissions. The committee will devise the checklist in forthcoming meetings.

Scholarship Fund Application Discussion:

- M. Knapp suggested to keep the application recipient criteria as close to the original as possible – “graduating senior with acceptances at recognized institutions.” After this year, the idea of allowing non-traditional applicants will be revisited.
- The application criteria of the old application needs to be reviewed in detail and we will begin focusing on its criteria, procedures and requirements at the next meeting. D. Lusignan has asked all committee members to review the old scholarship application and present their changes and comments at the next meeting slated for October 18, 2017, and in order to begin the update process.
- Questions were raised as to how Belchertown students not enrolled in BHS will know how to access this program. L. Alves will check with Pathfinder to see who would be a liaison. A press release submitted to the Sentinel would be a source for getting the word out.
- L. Alves asked whether Pathfinder’s trimesters would cause problems with submitting an application since Pathfinder applicants may not have their second trimester grades by the application deadline. Setting the deadline date and application criteria will be discussed at future meetings.
- K. Coffin suggested that we set a minimum and maximum word count for essays as they have proven lengthy in the past.
- Approximately 30 applications were submitted two years ago when the Committee last awarded funds.

Decision Deadline for Awarding Scholarships: The Committee needs to have recipient decisions finalized by the end of April, 2018. Scholarship recipients will be awarded at the BHS Senior Awards Night usually held in mid-May. The Board would additionally extend an invitation for non-BHS recipients to attend the BHS Senior Awards Night and that recipients that attend Pathfinder would attend Pathfinder award night if held after BHS Senior Awards Night.

Monthly Meetings: D. Lusignan provided each member with a monthly meeting schedule and noted with the impending appointment of a new At-large member the committee would be fulfilled at a seven member status. A quorum of 4 is needed.

6:59 D. Lusignan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Knapp seconded. All were in favor (6:0:0).

CAN YOU SPARE JUST "ONE BUCK"?

The Town of Belchertown Scholarship Committee provides Scholarships annually to students who meet application criteria based on financial need, academic grades, character references, active community service and participation in school-related extracurricular activities.

However, Scholarships have not been available to students in past years due to depleted funds. The Scholarship Committee recognizes the need to support students who seek higher education opportunities and we are asking for your support.

There are 14,649 residents in Belchertown. If everyone could donate just "ONE BUCK", we could provide many students some financial support that could make a difference in their future.

Please show your support for Belchertown's Students of tomorrow by mailing your check donation in any amount to:

The Town of Belchertown, Treasurer's Office,
P.O. Box 607, Belchertown, Ma . 01007.

And remember, just "One Buck" is all it takes.

Gratefully yours,
Belchertown Scholarship Committee