

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE
September 16, 2015

The Board of Community Assistance of Upper Merion Township met for its regular meeting on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present were: Greg Waks, Board of Supervisors Liaison; Scott Milner, Chairperson; Robyn Briggs, Vice Chairperson; Lydia Dan Sardinas; Mike Bowman, VFCR; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager. Ira Lubert, VFCR, was absent.

MEETING MINUTES:

It was moved by Ms. Dan Sardinas, seconded by Mr. Bowman, all voting "Aye" to approve the April 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

FEEDBACK FROM AWARD CEREMONY

Mr. Scott Milner, Chairperson, stated the award ceremony was quick, efficient and everything went very well. He expressed appreciation for job well done by the UMGA-TV crew and said the pictures can be compiled each year to expand the photo portfolio.

FURTHER CLARIFY THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Mr. Milner stated the organizational application has worked out well and the applications are now more on point.

The discussion next focused on the scholarship applications since applicants continue to believe past or senior projects will fulfill the volunteer requirement. It was noted that Ms. Dan Sardinas' daughter reviewed the application. There was also some guidance counselor input and both suggestions were helpful to the final product.

Mr. Milner indicated he was inclined to move forward with the changes as drafted by Mrs. Briggs which further refined the previous application.

In accordance with the language suggested by Mrs. Briggs, Mr. Milner asked to have the date after which the community service had to be performed changed to June 1st.

SET TIMELINE FOR 2016 AWARD (WHEN APPLICATION RELEASED, DEADLINES, ETC.)

Mr. Milner stated he thought the timeline worked very well with the opening of the application process on November 15th and the deadline for filing on March 15th.

It was agreed to keep the same timeline and make sure the March 15th deadline does not fall on a weekend.

REMAINDER OF 2015 MEETINGS

There was a discussion about the meeting schedule and it was decided to do the reorganization meeting in early January and then work out the marketing dates for the school board and Board of Supervisors presentation.

CONFIRMING PERFORMANCE OF VOLUNTEER WORK

Mr. Milner said reminders of the confirmation of volunteer work by students and receipts and project summaries of organizations should be sent out by December 31st. He indicated by the January meeting the BCA would have all the information needed to select an organization for project audit.

Mr. Waks suggested encouraging students and organizations to get their applications in as early as possible. He said it might make the BCA's review work a little bit lighter later on in the process and also provide the applicant more time if there is a need to clarify or improve their project.

A discussion followed about the idea of encouraging early application.

Mr. Bowman discussed the importance of a good marketing strategy with an article in the newspaper about the BCA with good statistical information about the number of students and organizations that have been served and the dollar amount of grants and scholarships awarded.

Mr. Waks discussed some of the internal communication resources such as *Township Lines* and the new LED sign which will be viewed by 24,000 vehicles that pass by the intersection of Henderson and Valley Forge Road every day.

A brainstorming session followed during which Mr. Bowman said he could have his writers at the Tourism Bureau draft some articles and all he would need

would be some good statistics. He said the article could eventually become a press release. Mr. Milner suggested obtaining quotes from students and organizations for use in a testimonial. Ms. Slook said the PIO office could do a video clip and even an interview for the cable channel. Additional highlights of the brainstorming session follow:

- Mr. Bowman suggested having all the information for the article ready for the January meeting.
- Mr. Waks suggested having the guidance counselors come to the BCA meeting.
- Ms. Dan Sardinas commented awardees should have to attend the award ceremony in order to get the money.
- Mr. Bowman said it might be a good idea to set a goal for the number of applications the BCA would like to see in 2016. Mr. Milner commented a 10% increase above 2015 would be appropriate.
- Mrs. Briggs mentioned there must be a way the school district can "blast" an email to senior parents about the scholarship application process.
- Ms. Dan Sardinas said the guidance counselor may be helpful since every senior has to meet with them.
- Mr. Bowman suggested telling the school superintendent to get something out earlier through the school system.
- Mr. Milner asked if there are any trade associations that might be helpful in making global announcements. Ms. Slook suggested the Rotary Club.
- Mr. Milner stated something is needed to get the attention of organizations who might be interested in applying. Mr. Bowman pointed out the challenge of keeping it in Upper Merion Township since it "bleeds" out all the time.
- Ms. Slook noted the new community center is opening soon and will provide an opportunity to post flyers. The new marketing manager would also be helpful in facilitating additional outreach since she has created lists of companies that have agreed to be part of the mailing list. Ms. Slook also indicated there will be many promotions for the community center and there could be an advertisement for the BCA included.
- Mr. Bowman said it would be helpful to have a generic message that could be included in various kinds of messaging at the community center, ball fiends, schools to launch the 2016 BCA application process.

Mr. Milner commented about the earlier suggestion to encourage early application. He said in some ways it is better to have all the applications in hand for comparison purposes; however, he noted it would be helpful to have the applications earlier if they needed remediation in some way. Mr. Milner indicated he likes the idea to get them early and have time to remediate but he spends the bulk of his time evaluating the applications after March 15th.

Mr. Bowman asked if the Community Center has its own website. Ms. Slook responded the township website will be undergoing redesign next year. It is not known if the community center will have its own separate website or if it will be a separate page on the township website.

Mr. Milner stated the next step is to work on getting something drafted that can be pitched to the local newspapers (e-news or physical paper or both). This article will include quotes from Supervisor Waks, organizations, students or parents. BCA will also work on a flyer for the new community center as well as social media, and the LED sign.

Mr. Waks suggested a BCA Facebook page and whoever would administer would have to adhere to the township's social media policy.

Mr. Waks indicated he has compiled all the vital statistics about the BCA. Mr. Bowman asked Mr. Waks to meet with him and a couple of his writers to put together a document that could be used for an article over the holidays. Mr. Bowman noted once the article is drafted language can be lifted for a press release or other communications. This would be called a "Did You Know" document of what has occurred over the past years since the inception of BCA.

Mr. Bowman said Mrs. Briggs could take the document to a school meeting and it could be used in so many other ways. Mr. Milner commented this would be a BCA in review document that could be continually built upon and enhanced.

Mrs. Briggs said she will send out her usual email to the superintendent, principal, etc. urging them to get the word out to the people.

Ms. Slook stated logos are being created for the Upper Merion Foundation and asked if BCA would want a logo to go on the flyers. Mr. Bowman commented that was a great idea. Ms. Slook asked for ideas for the logo and she would talk to Don Herbert and provide him with some guidance. Mr. Bowman said the logo could go on the letterhead as well.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mrs. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Bowman to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 3-0.



DAVID G. KRAYNIK
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved: 1/14/16

Minutes Entered: 1/15/16