

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE  
OCTOBER 22, 2018

The Board of Community Assistance of Upper Merion Township met for its regular meeting on Monday, October 22, 2018 in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present were: Greg Waks, Board of Supervisors Liaison; Lydia Dan Sardinas, Chairperson; Brett Montich, Member; David Zerfing, VFCR Representative, and Angela Caramenico, Assistant to the Township Manager. David Karen was absent.

Meeting Minutes:

It was moved by Mr. Montich, seconded by Mr. Zerfing, all voting "Aye" to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 26, 2018 and May 14, 2018 as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 3-0.

Review of Application Form/Process/Procedure, etc.

A discussion ensued about proposed changes to the applications and application process. Mr. Montich stated he met with Eric Enters, Guidance Counselor for UM High School to better understand how the high school utilizes the program, understanding that the application applies to any student who lives within the district. Mr. Montich advised he would like to get more in depth information regarding students' financial aid, and he noted that Mr. Enters recommended pushing back the application date to when the students have their actual acceptances and tentative financial aid packages. Mr. Montich proposed having a split deadline, with sports and organizations earlier, and then moving back scholarships as late as we could feasibly do it.

It was Mr. Zerfing's opinion that knowing the cost of some of the schools, unless significant amount of money is awarded, the financial aid won't make a huge difference since almost everyone is need base.

Mr. Montich stated the additional information may level the field. He also noted that a number of kids incorrectly filled out the finance portion of the application. He suggested trying to clear this up with a financial needs cover page.

It was Mr. Waks opinion that one benefit to submitting financial aid letters is if a student does not fully disclose everything going on, the financial letter will unmask some of it.

Mr. Zerfing added that early action students will know by December-January, and regular application kids will know by the end of March.

Mr. Montich noted that if a student receives a college financial need letter, there is no need for an acceptance letter.

A discussion ensued about the criteria for receiving a scholarship grant, and the following criteria was approved by all Board members:

- 1) Eligibility
- 2) Service Project
- 3) Quality of Application
- 4) Extending Circumstances
- 5) Financial Need
- 6) Past Services / Extracurricular
- 7) Academics

A discussion then ensued about the scholarship application and some proposed changes. Mr. Zerfing suggested that all the lines on page 5 of the scholarship application be aligned underneath each other to provide a better read. Mr. Waks concurred that a more technical redesign of page 5 would be beneficial.

With regard to tuition/ funds, it was recommended that the following list be inserted:

College  
Tuition  
Room board  
Book fees  
Total college cost  
Minus scholarships  
Minus grants  
Minus other college funding options  
Total net college cost

Some other proposed changes included rewording of the section of community service hours as well as changes regarding required documents to include a Financial Aid Cover Letter and a signed letter by the recipient of the project acknowledging they are aware of the proposed project and will accept the work of the student.

It was noted that at the last meeting a suggestion was made to do blind submissions. After a brief discussion, the Board concurred to leave the process as is.

With regard to organization applications, some verbage was changed/clarified especially to avoid giving grants to the same organization every year for the same project.

The Board also concurred that the date for both applications (organizations and scholarships) will be changed to receive applications from December 1, 2019 to 5:00 pm on April 1, 2019.

It was also noted that a further discussion is needed to revamp/review slide shows.

The below is a tentative list of upcoming meetings:

BCA reorganization – January 16, 2019

School board meeting in February 4<sup>th</sup>

BoS – BCA to speak about application at a BoS meeting either January 17<sup>th</sup> or February 21, 2019

BoS – BCA to make recommendations to BoS in early May

BoS – Joint meeting April 11<sup>th</sup>

BCA regular meeting – April 11<sup>th</sup> (same day as Joint meeting)

Ivy Day at UM High School- June 7th at 10 a.m.

This is an awards day for UM students (Dave Z will handle)

BCA Awards Ceremony – Dave Z to get date, usually the first week in June prior to graduation

Ms. Caramenico referred to two handouts:

1) Elmwood Zoo – the letter from the Zoo was read for the record

2) McGOPA – A thank you letter

Mr. Montich referred to the conditional grant awarded to the Soccer Club in 2018. He advised that the Club had to cancel their tournament due to weather, and that is where they get most of their revenue.

He continued that he spoke to Dr. Wellington and he is not sure if the bathroom upgrades can be done but will send the BCA a letter of their status in the process, cognizant that they have not given the BCA what was asked.

Mr. Waks noted that this is a conditional grant, the money was put aside, was not given to them as yet.

The BCA members concurred that the time frame for completion of projects should be six months for scholarship recipients and one year for organization recipients.

Adjournment:

It was moved by Mr. Montich, seconded by Mr. Zerfing, all voting aye to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm.



SALLY A. SLOOK  
ACTING TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:

Minutes Entered: