

Scholarship & Education Committee
Meeting Minutes - Draft
Thursday, January 31, 2019
6:00 P.M.
City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street

Called to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Tyler Carlton, James Flynn, Elizabeth McGovern, Cynthia Nina-Soto

Staff Present: Dominick Pangallo (Office of Mayor Driscoll)

1. Welcome and introductions

Members introduced themselves and their affiliations and backgrounds.

2. Review of Committee's mission and authorizing statute

Dominick distributed copies of (a) the City Council Order of June 1987 that adopted Chapter 194 of the Acts of 1986, authorizing the establishment of the Scholarship Fund and committee and (b) MGL Chapter 60, Section 3C, broadening funds and committee to include the Education Fund and specifying more details around the use of the funds. The committee discussed the distinction between the Scholarship Fund and the Education Fund.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The committee voted unanimously to elect Tyler Carlton as Chair of the committee and Cynthia Nina-Soto as Vice Chair.

4. Financial update

Dominick provided the year-to-date finance report for both the Scholarship Fund (current balance \$2,638.99) and the Education Fund (current balance \$21,094.25). He reported on the previous year's scholarship award amounts and quantity (ten awards of \$100 each) and summarized the amount taken into the Scholarship Fund via donations and interest in 2018 (\$858) compared to the amount given out via scholarship awards (\$1,000). The committee discussed concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of awarding more in scholarships than was taken in and expressed a desire to hold to an informal policy limiting the total amount awarded to less than the amount received each year. The committee asked if the two funds could be combined so that donations could be utilized for either purpose; Dominick will look into it with the City Solicitor. Elizabeth also asked for clarification around how the Education Fund monies could be utilized specifically and if there were examples from other communities with the same Fund; Dominick said he will check into it and report back.

5. Addition of donation line to automobile excise bills

While the statute authorizes cities and towns to place donation lines for the Funds on their municipal tax and automobile excise bills, Salem has only had the lines appear on property tax bills in the past. Dominick reported that the City, in its current automobile excise mailing, will include this option for the first time. The bills are being sent out February 6 and are due back by March 8. Tyler asked for any data that might be available at its next meeting to indicate whether or not the new donation option successfully raised additional funds. Cynthia also asked whether or not the donation line could be added to the City's water/sewer bill; Dominick indicated he will look into it.

6. Fundraising plan and targets

The committee discussed the idea of adding an online donation option to the City website, both on the committee's page and on the online bill pay page. There was also interest in establishing a committee Facebook page to promote the fund, encourage additional donations, and encourage scholarship applications. Dominick indicated he will work on setting a page up.

7. Updates to application form

The committee reviewed the current scholarship application form and made several revisions and corrections. The updated form will be posted to the committee's page on the City website and sent to Salem High School and Salem Academy Charter School guidance departments. The committee voted to adjust the scholarship application deadline from July 1 to May 15 and discussed holding an awards celebration event in June to distribute the scholarships and bolster public awareness of the fund. They also wanted to have notification of scholarship awards communicated with the recipients' schools. Dominick indicated he would prepare a news release and notification that could be distributed after the scholarship application form and deadline change were both posted to the website. The committee asked that more details about the background of the funds also be added to the committee's page on the City website.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 28, 2019, 6:30pm, 98 Washington Street

Adjourned: 7:10 p.m.