

Youth Services Committee Meeting

March 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

**In Attendance:** Marge T., Pat B., Amy H., Carol Y., Cal D., George B., Dick B., Sarah M., Ashley S., John W., Ade O.

**New Business: Contract Review**

Below is the list of votes for FY18 Contracts:

RIVER FOREST:

- **River Forest Library connections:**
  - Motion to fund at \$7,558.00 made by Dick B.
  - Motion seconded by Amy H.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Committee members felt like this program was well run. They like the partnership between the library and the schools and felt like it filled a need especially on school half days. Since the start of this program, the number of calls for police during after school hours in the area significantly decreased. Members would like program administrators to provide a more accurate and detailed attendance record so they can see how many kids are being served on a regular basis, not just for special events.

- **River Forest Police Department - ISearch:**
  - Motion to fund at the full requested amount \$8,500.00 made by Amy H.
  - Motion seconded by Sarah M.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: This program offers unduplicated services. It is well run, well received and reaches a lot of students. It has a great reputation and youth enthusiastically and positively talk about their participation in this program unsolicited.

JOINT:

- **OPRFHS Intramurals:**
  - Motion to fund at \$8,000.00 made by Marge T.
  - Motion seconded by Sarah M.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Members believe this program makes the most of the money and has a great long running history, but did question if the High School would be willing to put any money towards the program. Previously, the Township was the sole funder of the program. The committee would really like to see OPRFHS commit to setting aside money for this program as well. Upon review of last year's invoices (FY16), the committee decided to offer a comparable amount to what they billed for in FY6 and decided upon \$8,000.00. Because this is Ricky Baker's last year, the committee also stipulated that their contract would be contingent upon identifying the new leader of the program.

- **OPRFHS Snowball:**
  - Motion to fund at \$8,000.00 made by Pat B.
  - Motion seconded by Carol Y.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Committee members really support the goals of this program and its long history of success. They would specifically like the majority of this grant to go towards offering as many scholarships as possible to students. The \$8,000.00 is to be distributed in the following manner; \$6,000 towards scholarships and \$2,000.00 towards t-shirt supplies with a specific request that the Oak Park River Forest Township Logo be included on the t-shirt as a sponsor.

- **PaperHeART**
  - The committee decided to table this contract at this time as they still have some questions about information provided in the request. Specifically, there are some concerns with the amount of contact hours. Members did not come to the same calculations as the budget outlined. Other concerns included feasibility issues, especially regarding their projected River Forest numbers and they were disappointed to see that unlike FY16, this program would not be offered in the summer.
  - Members would like have a direct follow up with Tye Johnson, Agency Supervisor and Program Administrator, in order to get some of their questions answered.
  
- **Concordia Robotics**
  - Motion to fund at \$13,488.00 made by Pat B.
  - Motion seconded by Carol Y.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: This program has seen exponential growth. The presentation made, by program administrator Dr. G, at a previous committee meeting was especially moving for committee member as it gave them an inside perspective on the program. The program has really stepped up to overcome funding and transportation challenges with the additional support provided by Concordia. This program also conducts (and does not bill for) weekly mentoring sessions every Friday. They have seen both Mentors and mentees benefit from this “phenomenal mentoring model.” Mentors are involved for the right reasons and overall they have a great infrastructure. The connections made at the camp are incredibly strong and the relationships between the youth and mentors is very tight and members loved seeing first-hand what a great support system this program has provided.

- **Apprentice Scholars Program**
  - Motion to fund at \$9,229.00 made by Pat B.
  - Motion seconded by Carol Y.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Committee members received a memo follow up from Program Administrators to help answer questions that arose during the January and February meeting. Members had questions on what the exact goals of the Apprentice Scholars Program was and there was concern over the the lack of support to get students to the program.

During a meeting with Phil Prale and his team, Phil proposed the idea of working with Concordia to get high school students (2/3 Oak Park, 1/3 River Forest Students) in the Summer Bridge Program from OPRFHS to Concordia to use this as a multi-literacy enrichment program. The advantage of this would be that the Apprentice Scholars Program would have access to these students, unlike in the past where there has been difficulty in receiving referrals to program. A follow up meeting is happening in the next couple of weeks to finalize details on how to integrate the Apprentice Scholars Program and the Summer Bridge Program. Deacon Wiley Samuels has also been asked to partner with this program.

Members are really passionate about the idea that students would be taken out into a college environment with this taking place at Concordia. A major strength this program has is their student mentors (similar to the Concordia Robotics program). While it is still a work in progress, members feel optimistic about the partnerships forming between OPRFHS, Concordia and District 97 in order to make this program a success and to help solve previous issues regarding referrals.

- **JIM**

- Committee Members think this program takes a creative approach and has a good program design, but decided to table this contract at this time because they have concerns about the following issues:
  - How are kids getting referred to this program? Based on FY17 reports, this program has seen a decline in Elementary Schools wanting to participate in this program
  - Transportation
  - What members would like to know before voting:
    - Would they consider a summer model?
    - What has been happening in the program from October – now? (As of this time, the program did not submit their January report).
    - What is the level of commitment from partners?
    - What is their plan for transportation?

OAK PARK:

- **Longfellow Rainbows:**

- Motion to fund at \$2,208.75 made by Marge T.
- Motion seconded by George B.
- Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Members feel this is a great program that serves students who need social/emotional support. They would like to see this program grow and be offered at all schools.

- **Lincoln Media Program:**

- Motion to fund at \$6,937.50 made by George B.
- Motion seconded by Marge T.
- Upon further review of the budget, a math error was found and Marge rescinds her second motion
- Amended Motion to fund at \$6,400.00 made by George B.
- Motion seconded by Marge T.
- Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Members believe the program has a great potential to position children to learn multi-literacy.

- **Park District Scholarships:**

- Motion to fund at \$8,000.00 made by Marge T.
- Motion seconded by Carol Y.
- Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Members would like to commend this program on their detailed and timely reports and their great distribution of funds. They are very appreciative of the fact that the Park District makes the funded amount go even further by using their own resources and seeking other contributions as additional support.

- **Beye Morning Exercise Program:**

- Committee members have seen positive results with similar programs (kids seem more attentive and engaged throughout the day), but have the following concerns:
  - About half of the proposed referrals are underage (under the age of 8)
  - Is this the right fit? It doesn't seem like this program fits into the committee's mission or falls into the criteria outlined in the contract request (Multi-literacy, Stem, Social Emotional Learning, Substance abuse/prevention)
  - Overall members don't see enough reasons to justify the requested amount
  - Members would like to see this program re-evaluate their target population and find different ways, beside MAP scores, to measure their success and effectiveness.

- **Holmes POP and Stars:**
  - Motion to fund at \$14,000.00 made by Marge T.
  - Motion seconded by Carol Y.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: POP and stars has proven to be a long-running, successful program. There were some questions regarding the commitment level for the Rising Readers Summer Program, but overall, members like the design of the program, the mentoring and the frequent contact with kids. The committee ultimately decided to fund them at a similar level to FY17.

- **Parentthesis:**
  - Motion to fund at \$12,000.00 made by Marge T.
  - Motion seconded by George B.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: This program serves a specific high risk group and members feel it is important to continue to make this program available. Because they have merged with New Moms, a larger organization, they were able to secure additional funding sources. The committee decided to fund them at the same rate they were awarded for FY17.

- **Beye BOOST:**
  - Motion to fund at \$5,250.00 made by Carol Y.
  - Motion seconded by Pat B.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Members would still like some clarification on who exactly Beye plans to collaborate with. When reviewing their January report, members were very encouraged to hear youth in this program were making improvements on the MAP test, with some exceeding their year-end projections. They believe that this program is definitely targeting an at-risk group. Members also felt like Mr. Ali, Student Support Specialist, at Beye Elementary, is really addressing things he sees at school with both proposals he submitted.

- **Hatch Skill Builder:**
  - Contract tabled at this time.
  - Members did not feel like this contract showed any improvements from previous years.
  - They would like to see some definition on mentoring – their proposal was vague on this area
  - Members would like to know:
    - What specific interventions they are going to do with students?
    - How students are going to be identified?
    - They have 8 teachers budgeted. Why do they need so many for only 30? (This grant will only cover 30 students at the others listed in the contract are under the age of 8).
- **Mann Homework Help Club**
  - Contract tabled at this time.
  - When reviewing their request, members felt like their contract was very vague and incomplete. Questions/concerns the committee would like answered:
    - There is no mentoring component
    - There is no additional instruction offered (ie: supplemental computer programs)
    - What is new to this program from last year?
    - Are they partnering with anybody?
  - Before reviewing again, committee members requested that we reach out and ask them to more thoroughly answer all the questions asked on Page 11 of the contract request.

- **Whittier Homework Helper:**
  - Contract tabled at this time.
  - Committee Questions / Comments:
    - How are they doing mentoring?
    - More answers need on question “J” on Page 11 of the contract request regarding their program design.
    - Committee members support the tradition of the program, but would like to see enhancements made that support the focus of the committee – specifically regarding partnerships and mentoring.
  
- **Longfellow Homework Helper Group**
  - Motion to fund at \$5,875.00 made by Marge T.
  - Motion seconded by George B.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: Committee members like this programs attention to mentoring and their partnership with Concordia University. When reviewing the budget closer, a mathematical mistake was found. The total requested amount actually came out to \$5,875.00 which Marge motioned to fund at.

- **Irving SLAM**
  - Contract tabled at this time
  - Questions / Concerns
    - More specifics needed on what mentoring they are doing.
    - Conflict in identifying students. Page 11 of the contract states that they are targeting students who are Tier II and do not qualify for additional services from an IEP, but page 17 states most SLAM students have IEP’s.
    - Budget adjustment needed – contractual staff should be listed at a rate of \$31.25, not \$32.00.
  
- **Brooks LAB**
  - Contract request tabled at this time
  - Committee Questions / comments / concerns:
    - Members are overall disappointed and do not get a sense of any coordination in this program.
    - During a site visit last year, members did not see a lot happening. The community volunteer who was supposed to run the program was a no show, there was no direction for the kids and members noticed kids left on their own with no teachers or mentors present.
    - Though well intentioned, the program lacks support and is ineffective.
    - Members acknowledge that teachers are under a lot of pressure and overwhelmed with expectations, but would overall like to see direction given to both students and instructors and more ownership being taken for this program.
    - Members suggested having a meeting to negotiate an agreement in order to continue working with Brooks and these kids. They would like to reach out and see if Principal Khan has any kind of initiative that she’s designed that the committee’s work with Peace Circles, Social emotional learning or mentoring could compliment as opposed to adding those components on to a program that doesn’t seem to be effective. Looking to form more of a partnership, drawing on each side’s strengths to build a better model to build on.

- **Julian Leadership Council**
  - Contract tabled at this time.
  - Committee Questions / comments / concerns:
    - Clarification needed on what a “peer led” group is.
    - More specifics needed on what their program goals are and how they plan to measure them. (Question “I” in contract request).
  
- **Friday Night Place**
  - Motion to fund at \$52,114.00 made by Marge T.
  - Motion seconded by George B.
  - Motion passes unanimously

Rationale: This is a successful, long-running program that has a very strong mentoring component. Members specifically like that three of the facilitators were youth who participated in the program. This shows the strong relationships formed.