

BETHLEHEM CARES

Just Be...Caring

Who we are: Committee of 8 members which includes at least one Selectman and the Welfare Director as an ex-officio member.

Mission: To assist Bethlehem residents in times of unexpected financial need.

Vision: To utilize the monetary donations from our caring community to help our friends, neighbors, and strangers (!) who need financial assistance due to unforeseen expenses. In doing so we seek to inspire kindness and compassion that will energize people to pay it forward through their own compassion driven actions to increase unity and connection in our community.

- The fund will be established with donations and possibly grants and fundraisers.
- It will be flexible to meet the diverse needs of individual situations. Examples could be a large car repair bill, orthodontic devices or eyeglasses for children whose insurance doesn't cover it, accessibility costs – ramps, etc. taxes.
- Applicants must be residents of Bethlehem.
- The Welfare Administrator will accept the application to distribute to the other members.
- The Welfare Administrator along with one committee member will conduct the interview with the applicant.
- Monthly meetings will be held. A quorum of committee members (5) must be in attendance to hold the meeting. A decision has to pass by a majority vote of the committee members in attendance. Additional meetings can be scheduled for emergency or time sensitive situations.
- Funds will be issued directly to the service/product supplier, not the applicant.
- The Welfare Administrator will refer and collaborate with other agencies and resources that can provide or help with the requested need.
- All applicant information is confidential.
- All distributed financial information is public and will show amounts paid out and received. **The name of the recipient will be redacted.** The financial records will be part of the Town's yearly audit.
- The applicant will receive a written notice of decision within 10 business days after the meeting.
- The goal is to offer one-time assistance to qualifying applicants. Financial distributions will generally be up to \$1000.
- The applicant may request a reconsideration of the decision and will be able to meet with the committee at their next meeting or an earlier one if needed.

- As part of the vision of paying it forward, the committee strives to create a skill/talent list of people voluntarily willing to assist community members with their skill/talent etc. The Town's only role will be giving out the information of people who have asked to be on the list. All details will be worked out directly between the volunteer and the community member.