

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

Fifteen years, \$37+ million

At its committee of the whole meeting last week, Pottstown Council reviewed a proposed 2019 budget that would likely require a 12 percent tax hike.

During the last 10 years, the general fund has increased at nearly triple the rate of inflation, and tax hikes are the result.

With the borough spending so much on basic services, there's virtually nothing left over for quality of life projects.

For that we look to grants, either from the government or the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation.

Last month, we reported that Pottstown has received \$22 million grants from the county, state and federal governments in the last two decades. A chart of those grants can be found at www.pottstowncitizens.org.

Since its inception 15 years ago, the Health and Wellness Foundation, with an endowment of about \$80 million, has distributed more than \$37 million in grants in Pottstown and an area within a 10-mile radius of the borough.

The Foundation was created with the sale of the non-profit Pottstown Memorial Medical Center in 2003 to Community Health Systems, a for-profit corporation. Most of the proceeds went to create the Foundation, which is supervised by a rotating, self-perpetuating board of 15 to 22 community volunteers serving three-year terms.

As its name implies, the Foundation's main focus is encouraging healthy lifestyles, under these general categories:

1. Funding programs and solutions for long-term improvement in healthy behaviors.
2. Funding programs for physical health and emotional well-being.
3. Funding learning opportunities and strategic planning to strengthen non-profits.

The foundation has two grant cycles each year, spring and fall. Detailed information on applying for grants, which must be done

on-line, can be found on the Foundation's website.

The Foundation receives about 50 applications each cycle, which are reviewed by the foundation's program officers, which then recommend grants to a committee of the board. The board committee recommendations go to the full board for final approval.



Commentary by
Tom Hylton

More on Thursday.



Year	No. grants	Total
2017-2018	68	\$3,132,339
2016-2017	77	\$2,917,007
2015-2016	79	\$3,293,554
2014-2015	72	\$2,856,652
2013-2014	74	\$2,594,473
2012-2013	62	\$2,583,859
2011-2012	56	\$2,819,174
2010-2011	56	\$2,935,041
2009-2010	52	\$2,953,457
2008-2009	47	\$3,112,881
2007-2008	52	\$3,103,185
2006-2007	59	\$3,083,499
2005-2006	56	\$2,031,038
2004-2005	33	\$1,227,324
TOTAL	843	\$37,500,000

A COMPLETE LIST with each grant recipient, and the amount received, as reported on the Foundation's annual filings with the IRS, can be found on our website, www.pottstowncitizens.org.

**Go to: Pottstown Borough
Overview
Health and Wellness Fdn.**