

YOUTH COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

AN ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE PUBLICATION





INTRODUCTION

A municipal youth council is an opportunity for cities and towns to increase youth engagement, educate students about the importance of local government and encourage the next generation of civic leaders. This youth council development guide includes practical information about starting a youth council, ideas to maximize interest and engagement, and sample documents. For additional resources, downloadable templates and more, please visit the Youth Council page on the League's website.

For more information on forming a youth council, contact Mark Stodola at 501-454-7070 or mstodola@barberlawfirm.com. The Arkansas Municipal League would like to thank the Florida League of Cities for sharing information about their youth councils.

Arkansas Municipal League
301 West 2nd Street | North Little Rock, AR 72114
501-374-3484 | www.arml.org



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS TO ANSWER	4
HOW TO GET STARTED	6
THE MONEY SIDE	8
MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA	9
RECRUITMENT	10
BEFORE YOUR FIRST MEETING	11
MEETING AGENDAS	12
PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES	14
APPENDICES	16



PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

Q:

WHAT IS A YOUTH COUNCIL?

A:

- A youth council is a municipal-created group of high school students engaged in their local government and representing youth voices within the municipality.
- Some youth councils are created to be advisory boards to advise the local governing body and its affiliated advisory and regulatory boards on youth issues.
- Youth councils can implement and participate in youth-identified community initiatives.

Q:

WHY CREATE A YOUTH COUNCIL?

A:

- There are 22 million young people between the ages of 15 to 19 years old in the United States.
- Youth councils promote regular and active civic engagement among young people in your municipality.
- Youth councils foster communication and collaboration between the municipal government and youth in a municipality.

Q:

HOW DO YOUTH COUNCILS PROMOTE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

A:

- Give youth a formal role in local government.
- Offer real-world experiences with elected and advisory bodies.
- Help develop leadership skills and learn how local government operates.
- Increase communication between youth and adults.
- Increase youth volunteerism.



Q: WHO BENEFITS FROM A YOUTH COUNCIL?

Youth:

A:

- Their voices are heard in local government.
- They will understand the value of public service.
- Their service is a bonus activity for college and scholarship applications.

Elected officials and city staff:

- They create relationships with youth across the municipality.
- They receive input about initiatives or programs related to youth.
- They build future leaders for their municipality.

Q: IS YOUR COMMUNITY READY?

The following are indicators:

A:

- Local leaders recognize the need for youth insight in public decision-making.
- Local leaders are willing to create programs or adopt ordinances to promote youth involvement in the local government.



TALK ABOUT THE WHY

- The first step is to discuss the purpose and role of the youth council.
- Youth councils may advise your city council on youth issues, implement youth outreach initiatives and events, participate in community service, and be a forum to grow future local government leaders.
- Youth will become valued participants in your municipality's work.

DETERMINE THE BEST ADVISOR

- Find leaders who are passionate about youth and willing to let them lead.
- Consider placing the youth council with a staff person who can provide long-term support. An elected official could serve as the advisor or liaison between the youth council and city council.

ALIGN THE COUNCIL WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY

- The youth council should be aligned with the elected body or a municipal department to house the youth council's meetings and funding initiatives.
- The youth council should be considered an essential part of the local government structure.
- A youth council can be designed as a municipal program or advisory board. An advisory board makes recommendations to the city council on matters that are pending official action.

ADVISORY BOARDS

- Youth councils are created as municipal advisory boards to advise the city council on matters of public concern in the community and to the youth in the community.
- Youth council members must be advised and trained on the rules regarding public meetings and public records laws.
- Work with your municipal attorney to determine if your youth council members serving as members of a municipal advisory board are required to file financial disclosures.

DETERMINE YOUTH NEEDS

- Ask youth to share their ideas about the needs of peers in their municipality and how a municipal youth council would benefit youth and the broader community.
- Talk with a local school guidance counselor, a volunteer at your recreation center and a youth pastor about the needs of youth in your community.
- Learn what issues youth face and ask about challenges your municipality might experience working with local youth.

MAKE IT OFFICIAL

A municipality may adopt a resolution or ordinance establishing a youth council. Seek the advice and counsel of your attorney.

Items in a resolution/ordinance establishing a youth council include:

- Mission
- Membership and qualifications
- Length of terms
- Application process
- Organizational and leadership structure
- Budget: How will it be funded, and will you allow sponsorships and fundraising?

See Appendix 1: Sample ordinance.

See Appendix 2: Sample resolution.



PLAN YOUR BUDGET

Many expenses can be in kind:

- Email accounts
- Meeting space
- Paper copies
- Placement of a youth council page on the municipality's website

Determine if the council will receive funds through any of these or a combination of these or other sources:

- The municipal budget
- A line-item allocation
- Donations and sponsorships
- Raised funds

EXPENSES TO CONSIDER

Staff Time: If this is a new venture, is there the capacity to take on the responsibility with existing staff, or will part-time staff or a stipend be required?

Travel Opportunities: Consider how to fund attendance at events hosted by the Arkansas Municipal League and/or National League of Cities.

Meetings and Special Events: Consider expenses such as meeting supplies, youth council T-shirts, name tags and items needed for special events.



MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

DETERMINE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

- Many councils are for high school students grades 9-12, however some may include grades 10-12.
- Consider that finding activities of interest to 15-year-olds *and* 18-year-olds may be a challenge.
- Consider including representatives from all local high schools, including private, charter and home schools.

Recruit from a variety of geographic areas.

- Determine whether the geographic area is limited to city limits.
- If you recruit through the schools, consider that not all youth live inside the city limits.

CONSIDER DIVERSITY

- Consider not only racial, gender and socio-economic balance but also the diversity of interests, activities and academic levels.
- Student government leaders in schools are great additions, but seek to balance your councils with youth from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, talents and interests.
- Consider requiring youth to have a minimum, good grade point average and/or a maximum number of unexcused school absences.
- If students do not meet these requirements, some youth councils require an essay about why they should be considered for the program regardless.

STATE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- Create information about the time and involvement youth are expected to give.
- Explain how often the group will meet.
- Explain how often members will participate in service and community projects.

SELECTION

- Determine who will serve on the selection committee. Consider including youth.
- Thoroughly evaluate applicants in a competitive process. You may wish to hold interviews, in person or over the phone, to narrow down prospective candidates.
- Determine the criteria you will use if more youth apply than can be included.

See Appendix 3: Sample application form.



MEMBER RECRUITMENT

ADVERTISING

Getting the word out is essential for recruiting youth council participants. In addition to making presentations and announcements at schools, be sure to advertise within your community.

- Advertise in local newspapers/publications.
- Ask radio stations, such as your local NPR affiliate, to make a short plug on air.
- Consider a flyer in your municipality's utility bills, newsletters and websites.
- Put flyers up in schools or popular youth spots.
- Contact supervisors of local youth programs and groups, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church youth groups, recreational sports teams, YMCA and 4-H.
- Make announcements at youth conferences or summits.
- Ask students to share information via social media to reach their peers.

RECRUITMENT PARTNERS

Forming a youth council requires a team effort. Be sure to tap into the resources of potential recruitment partners in your community.

Schools:

- Ask teachers to share information about the purpose of youth councils and how to apply.
- Ask school counselors to solicit applications.
- Request an assembly where the youth council supervisor can discuss specifics with potential candidates.
- Develop posters or flyers for classrooms and counselors' offices.
- Post information on websites visited frequently by youth (e.g., school websites, Facebook, etc.).

Parents:

- Send a letter to all parents/guardians describing the purpose and goals of the youth council, the application and selection process, and a contact person for further questions. **See *Appendix 4: Sample letter to parents.***
- Use municipal social media to reach parents whose children might want to apply.

Elected officials:

- Council members can attend civics and government classes to discuss the youth council.
- They can make morning school announcements, including information on the council formation.



BEFORE YOUR FIRST MEETING

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Return to schools to acknowledge the selected members.
- Send acceptance letters and/or make congratulatory phone calls.
- The decision could be honored through a formal vote by the council members.
- A polite letter should be sent to all applicants who were not selected, and it should encourage them to apply again.

ORIENTATION

- Plan activities to allow members to learn about each other and the youth council liaison.
- Find out what issues are important to teens.
- Invite the mayor or a council member to speak and let members know their input is valued.
- If your youth council is an advisory board, have your attorney share information on public meetings and public records law. Consider providing youth with municipal email accounts so all electronic communication is retained in accordance with Arkansas' public record requirements.

TRANSPORTATION

Youth in more rural and/or low-income neighborhoods might not have reliable transportation. Consider transportation options such as:

- Free bus passes
- A van to pick up those needing rides
- Coordination of transportation among parents



FIRST MEETING: ORIENTATION

- Establish the council as a safe, fun forum.
- Youth can participate in an icebreaker activity and team-building exercises.
- Members should learn more about the purpose and mission of the youth council.
- If desired: Determine the process for electing officers and review officer responsibilities.

SWEARING IN YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

- If required by your city charter, local officials should swear in youth council members.
- Youth council facilitators will need to place this item on the agenda in advance.
- At the meeting, the youth council should be welcomed as an official advisory board.

See Appendix 5: Sample oath of office.

DISCUSS GUIDELINES

Solicit input to create council guidelines. Members should be able to contribute their ideas.

Topics to consider include:

- Purpose/mission/goals
- Membership and membership requirements
- Meetings: Structure, length and frequency. Invite a member of your city's governing body to present a workshop on parliamentary procedure for meetings. Youth can also establish procedures by applying what they learn based on the city's council procedures.
- Adopt bylaws
- Attendance requirements
- Appropriate dress code for meetings and events
- Expectations on technology use during meetings
- Subcommittees
- Programs and activities
- For advisory board officers/roles: Members may need to be placed as representatives, such as voting seats on advisory boards.

See Appendix 6: Sample mission statement.

See Appendix 7: Sample bylaws.

NEXT MEETING(S)

- Discuss issues members want to address and goals they want the council to accomplish throughout the year.
- Use the information to create an action plan to help plan topics for future meetings.
- Coordinate activities and guest speakers accordingly. *For example, if youth are interested in discussing teen drug and alcohol use or gang violence, schedule a law enforcement officer as a speaker. Or, if youth express interest in the city funding a new park, schedule a parks and recreation employee or a local developer to discuss implications and costs.*

HELPFUL TIPS FOR MEETINGS

- Consider how to address youth council members who might speak too little or too much. *For example, one council adopted an approach called "to step up and step back." If one person speaks too much, another can politely suggest a step back to allow others to step up.*
- Ask youth to bring a proposed solution to any problem they share. *For example, one youth council member lamented that they needed a stronger social media outreach, and the advisor agreed. The member presented a social media plan and committed to writing a weekly blog.*
- Keep random ideas from surfacing. *For example, one youth council requires a member to vet any new project idea with at least three other members. At least three members must agree to support it before it can be shared.*



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

EFFECTIVE ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR COUNCIL

Ask youth to determine topics of interest and host quarterly forums for local youth.

- Consider having a panel.
- Be prepared for topics ranging from discrimination and bullying to youth/law enforcement interaction and drug use.

Identify community service projects that youth think would be meaningful. Examples include:

- Cleaning up streams and/or highways
- Senior center volunteering
- Tutoring or mentoring youths, such as Big Brother/Big Sister programs
- Organizing drives such as ones for food, clothes, school supplies or holiday gifts
- Volunteering at a food bank or shelter

Weigh in on municipal issues

This step is more significant when elected leaders ask the youth council to research and recommend actions that help the community.

Work with local schools

- Create a youth council publication to be distributed at local schools or as a leaflet in the local newspaper.
- Organize a “Careers in Local Government” day.
- Promote civic involvement of local youth by spearheading civic-minded clubs/organizations.

Interact with city officials

- Encourage youth council members to attend city council meetings. One member can be present at each meeting and report to the youth council on topics covered. This is a great opportunity to update the city council on youth council activities. *For example: Consider the youth council piloting a youth-centered survey project to a citywide survey project to support the city council.*
- Youth can act as liaisons between the city and local youth through school announcements.
- Youth can shadow elected officials or department heads.
- Youth can attend or host city/county forums, conferences or events to represent the youth perspective.

Other activity ideas

- Lead a citywide educational or advocacy campaign addressing a youth-identified issue of concern.
- Advocate for particular development projects on behalf of local youth. Examples might include building a skate park or athletic field.
- Plan and organize fundraising events for youth-related development projects and/or charitable causes.
- Maintain a local youth council website that provides relevant information to local youth.
- Sponsor or attend professional development workshops on leadership, goal setting and public speaking.
- Tour municipal facilities so youth become familiar with the work of government. Ensure these tours provide hands-on activities to engage youth.
- Offer opportunities for youth to socialize outside of council meetings and consider providing meals at meetings.
- Plan scavenger hunts, team challenges and other opportunities to work together.

Helpful overall tips

- Determine the best communication tools based on your youth's preferences. Texting is a common way for young people to communicate, even if a text directs them to read an email.
- Share photos, videos, stats and outcomes of projects and activities with municipal leaders and the community.
- Existing council advisors are outstanding resources. Visit the Youth Council page on the League's website for information on youth councils around the state.
- The first year, generating interest in the new program is easiest. Plan vital programs and engagement to retain youth who recommend the council to classmates. Use current or past members as ambassadors to recruit new members.
- Show youth how to learn from mistakes, become resilient and become future community leaders.

APPENDICES

1: SAMPLE ORDINANCE

2: SAMPLE RESOLUTION

3: SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM

4: SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

5: SAMPLE OATH OF OFFICE

6: SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT

7: SAMPLE BYLAWS

An ordinance of the City of _____ creating the city's Youth Council.

**ARTICLE ____ BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
CITY YOUTH COUNCIL**

Sec. _____. Creation.

There is created a board to be known as the City Youth Council which shall consist of _____ members from each high school in the City. The members will be City residents who are actively enrolled in a public or private high school in grades 9 through 12. The members shall be appointed by the City Council and each member appointed shall serve a term of two years, unless grade 12 is completed during the term, at which time the position shall be declared vacant. Of the initial members appointed to the first board, _____ shall serve for a term of two years and _____ shall serve for a term of one year. Unlike other boards, the term of the members of the City Youth Council will expire and be appointed in the month of _____ each year. The commissioners will attend board meetings and, along with City staff, coordinate activities.

Sec. _____. Elections of officers.

The City Youth Council shall elect a chairperson to conduct meetings and a vice-chairperson to conduct meetings in the absence of the chairman. The City Youth Council will also elect a secretary to take minutes and a treasurer to report on finances. Elections shall be held at the first regular meeting after annual appointments are made by the City Commission.

Sec. _____. Vacancies.

Irregular vacancies on the City Youth Council shall be filled as they occur and regular vacancies shall be filled by appointment in the month of _____ each year.

Sec. _____. Meetings; records.

The City Youth Council shall hold at least one regular meeting per month during the school year, with the option to meet more often as needed or desired. Public records of such meetings shall be kept by the office of the City Clerk. All meetings shall be public under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

Sec. _____. Absences from meetings.

Absences from three consecutive regular meetings of the City Youth Council shall cause a member to be automatically removed from their seat, unless such absence is excused by a majority vote of the Council, with such excuse duly entered upon its minutes.

Sec. _____. Duties and responsibilities.

The City Youth Council shall have the duty and responsibilities to:

1. Evaluate and review problems facing youth in the City.
2. Facilitate neighborhood meetings with youth to discuss problems, needs, and suggested improvements for our community.
3. Meet regularly with the Mayor and City Council to share ideas and discuss issues, concerns and needed improvements.
4. Attend City Council meetings and participate in vision and goal sessions.
5. Present recommended improvements to the City Council and Mayor of public projects and programs.
6. Assist in planning youth/recreation activities.
7. Evaluate and advise the City Council and Mayor on issues forwarded to the City Youth Council for advice.

RESOLUTION_____.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF _____, ARKANSAS,
CREATING THE YOUTH COUNCIL COMMITTEE;
AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

WHEREAS, many municipalities use Youth Councils to inject fresh ideas and youth perspectives into local decision-making; and

WHEREAS, Youth Councils can promote community service and foster a better understanding among young people of how municipal government works; and

WHEREAS, Youth Councils are an excellent means of promoting regular and active civic engagement among young people, which is vitally important to provide the knowledge, skills and abilities to the next generation of local leaders; and

WHEREAS, as such, the City of _____ desires to create a Youth Council; and

WHEREAS, the City of _____ finds that this Resolution is in the best interest and welfare of the residents of _____.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF _____, ARKANSAS, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals. The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. Creation of the Youth Council Committee. The City Council hereby creates a citizens committee, to be known as the _____ Youth Council to advise and make appropriate recommendations to the City Council regarding issues of special interest to youths within the City. City Council Member _____ is hereby appointed liaison to the Youth Council and shall report to the City Council as to the Youth Council's activities on a regular basis.

Section 3. Composition of the Council. The Youth Council shall consist of ____ students and shall be appointed as follows: _____ student(s) to be appointed by the City Council (two per council member) and _____ students to be selected from high schools in the City.

Section 4. Effective Date. The Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED and ADOPTED the _____ day of _____, 202__.

Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to Form:

City Clerk

City Attorney

City of _____

Youth Council Application

The vision for the Youth Council is to empower youth dedicated to personal development and servant leadership. If you are interested in participating, please complete the following application. Applicants **MUST** be a city resident and be in grades 9 through 12. Please type or print clearly in blue or black ink. You may attach additional sheets if necessary. ALL information must be completed in order to be considered for the Youth Council. Please return completed application to _____ by _____.

Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Home Address: _____

Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Cell: _____

Email: _____

Parent/Legal guardian: _____

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Please check all that apply:

- ☐ I have transportation to get to Youth Council meetings/events.
- ☐ I initiated my interest in this program.
- ☐ I was asked to apply for this program.

By whom? _____ Position: _____

Organization: _____

Why do you want to serve as a member of the Youth Council? (feel free to add a sheet of paper)

What are the three most important issues to you, your friends and your family concerning your neighborhood?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Please list any other activities you will be involved in during the school year. (employment, sports or other school or community activities)

What personal skills and characteristics do you possess that would make you a good representative?

If you could bring one thing to this city or change one thing, what would it be?

Are you willing to attend the meetings, events and activities of the Youth Council for one year and commit to making a difference in our city?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you interested in community service points for this project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

REFERENCES

Please list two adult references (non-relatives) with phone numbers. You must also attach letters of recommendation from these individuals. Please include one letter from your school principal or other school-based personnel or one letter from a community member who is familiar with you.

- 1.
- 2.

I have read and understand the commitment required for the Youth Council. I also realize the importance of teamwork and cooperation and I am willing to make this commitment.

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Permission

I give my permission for _____ to seek the position of representative on the Youth Council.

Parent/guardian signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/guardian phone number: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Please include at least one emergency contact in addition to the parent or guardian.

Name: _____ **Relationship to youth:** _____

Phone number: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The City of _____ is proud to announce a new and exciting opportunity for rising 9th-12th grade students. The City's new Youth Council will provide our youth with an opportunity to increase their knowledge of civic education through practical hands-on experience. The Youth Council will be composed of twenty 9th-12th grade students who will be charged with representing youth in the City of _____.

The Youth Council will:

- Involve youth in local government through participation on local boards and commissions.
- Increase youth voice and communication in the city's future direction.
- Increase volunteerism among youth and adults in civic affairs.
- Enhance civic education through education and training.

Youth Council members will be selected through an application process. An ideal Youth Council will be composed of a diverse group of young people that represent ALL youth in _____. Our primary criterion for selection will be a demonstration that the young person wants to make a difference in _____ and we will give them an opportunity to do just that.

Youth Council members will be voting members from the 9th-12th grades. Members will take part in all Council activities and learn the role of a City Council member. All members will be required to attend monthly meetings.

Youth Council applications will be distributed when the students return to school. Applications will be due _____ and our first meeting will be in _____. Please discuss this exciting opportunity with your high school students and encourage them to apply for service on the Youth Council.

If you have additional questions about the Youth Council process, please contact _____ at _____.

Sincerely,

City of _____
Youth Council Oath of Office

I, _____ do solemnly swear or affirm that I will support, uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America, and the laws thereof; that I will support, uphold and defend the Constitution and laws of the State of Arkansas, not inconsistent therewith, that I will observe and obey the laws and ordinances of the City of _____; that I will faithfully perform and discharge the duties incumbent upon me as a member of the _____ Youth Council fairly and honestly and to the best of my skills and abilities.

Council Member

Executed the _____ day of _____, 202__.

City of _____
Youth Council Mission Statement

To provide _____ youth with the opportunity to participate in the City's decision-making process, through recommendations to the City Council that address youth issues, promote existing positive programs, and develop programs, projects and activities for the young people of the City of _____ thereby promoting and encouraging the youth to become effective leaders in the community by helping shape the future of _____.

City of _____

Youth Council Bylaws

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Representation

The Youth Council shall seek in its membership a diverse representation reflecting the community of _____.

Section 2: Membership Qualification

All members must live within city limits and be between the grades of 9-12.

Section 3: Term Limits

Terms shall be for two years, or until the student transfers or graduates from high school. Members may re-apply provided they remain within the grade limits of the membership qualifications.

Section 4: Application Process

Members of the Youth Council shall be chosen through an application process. Interested parties shall complete a simple application form. The City Council shall review the application and appoint members of the Youth Council.

Section 5: Appointment of Members

Each member of the City Council shall appoint two members to the _____ Youth Council.

Section 6: Conduct

Each member of the Youth Council must conduct themselves in a positive, friendly and law-abiding manner at all times. Unruly and abusive behavior will not be tolerated and is grounds for dismissal from the Youth Council.

ARTICLE II: OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers

The City Clerk shall serve as temporary Chair for purposes of presiding over the election of the Youth Council Chairperson. The Youth Council shall elect from its members a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The candidate receiving a majority vote of the Youth Council members shall be elected.

Section 2: Officer Duties

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- **Chairperson:** The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Youth Council and shall be charged with the administration of the affairs of the Youth Council with assistance from the Office of the City Clerk. The Chairperson shall perform such other duties as provided by these bylaws or by rule of the Youth Council.
- **Vice-Chairperson:** The duties of the Vice-Chairperson shall be to perform the duties and exercise the power of the Chair during the absence of the Chair.
- **Secretary:** The Secretary shall determine a quorum for the meeting and report back to the City Clerk. The Secretary shall conduct the roll call at the start of the meeting. The Secretary shall preside at the meetings of the Youth Council and perform the duties and exercise the power of the Chair during the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair.
- **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall report on the finances of the Youth Council and on fundraising activities.

Section 3: Election of Officers

The officers of the Youth Council shall be elected annually. The officers of the Youth Council shall be elected by a majority vote of the voting members present.

Section 4: Term of Officers

The term of all officers provided for in Article II hereof shall be for one year; however all officers shall continue to hold office until their successors are elected. Officers of the Youth Council shall be elected at the first Youth Council meeting held in _____ of each calendar year.

Section 5: Vacancies of Officers

Should a vacancy occur in an office of the Youth Council by resignation, removal or by some other reason, the office shall be filled by an election for the vacant office at the next regular meeting of the Youth Council.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Youth Council shall be held once a month. The principal meeting place of the Youth Council shall be at City Hall. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Youth Council in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws. Matters for consideration by the Youth Council shall be presented only at Youth Council meetings. Before convening a meeting of the Youth Council, the Chairperson of the Youth Council shall inform the Office of the City Clerk of the subject matter of the meeting.

The Office of the City Clerk shall give public notice of the meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act. This notice shall include posting on the City's official website.

Section 2: Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called upon the request of the Chairperson. Request for special meetings shall be sent via electronic mail, or by telephone, to the office of the City Clerk at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting. This request shall include the reason or reasons for requesting the special meeting. The Office of the City Clerk shall notify every member of the Youth Council via electronic mail or by telephone. No subjects other than those stated in the notice shall be considered at the special meeting.

Section 3: Open Meetings

All meetings of the Youth Council shall be open to the public and be subject to all requirements of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

Section 4: Quorum

The presence of a majority of the entire membership of the Youth Council shall constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Youth Council. A quorum is necessary to transact official business at any meeting.

Section 5: Voting

The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present shall be necessary to adopt a recommendation to be forwarded to the Youth Council for review and/or possible action.

Section 6: Order of Business

The Chairperson of the Youth Council shall, when present, call the members of the Youth Council to order. Before proceeding to business, the roll of the members shall be called, and the names of those present (and absent) entered in the minutes. If a quorum is present, the order of the business shall be:

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
- c. Unfinished business
- d. Matters for consideration
- e. Announcements
- f. Adjournment

Section 7: Recordings of Meetings

The proceedings of the Youth Council shall be recorded by the Secretary. Records shall be preserved in accordance with the record retention schedule established by the Office of the City Clerk.

Section 8: Conduct of Members

No member of the Youth Council shall interfere with the orderly progress of the meeting by leaving his or her seat or engaging in unnecessary conversation. Any member exercising any unprofessional conduct shall be reported to the City Council.

Section 9: Attendance

Attendance at regular Youth Council meetings is expected from all members. If a member cannot attend due to sickness or for a duly authorized reason, the member shall notify the Office of the City Clerk who shall notify the Chair of the Youth Council. Any member who fails to appear and answer to their name when the roll is called at any regular meeting or special meeting shall be recorded as absent (excused or unexcused). Any member of the Youth Council who misses three consecutive meetings (excused or unexcused) shall be reported to the City Council.

ARTICLE IV: REPORTS

Section 1: Annual Report to the City Council

The Chairperson or his or her designee shall make a report to the City Council of the activities and business of the Youth Council at least once each calendar year.

ARTICLE V: ROLE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Section 1: Role of the City Council

The City Council shall receive recommendations for the Youth Council. The City Council shall provide support staff to the Youth Council to assist them in carrying out their duties. The City Council shall communicate upcoming issues to the Youth Council so they may respond and participate accordingly.

ARTICLE VI: BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Bylaws and Amendments

The bylaws of the Youth Council shall be reviewed once each year. The bylaws may be amended at a regular stated meeting provided two-thirds of the members of the Youth Council approve the amendment in a roll call vote; providing further that the amendment is part of the agenda for the meeting and the membership has been notified in writing. Bylaws and amendments must be approved by the City Council in order to take effect.

Adopted on this _____ day of _____, 202__.

Chairperson

Secretary

