

MAYOR’S YOUTH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Mayor’s Youth Council was held on November 04, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall.

Mayor Melonie Barh Monson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.. Roll call was taken. Present were members Hailey Dester, Na-kowa Ryals, Janelle Lewis, Catherine Shell, Lakshmi Nooka, Matthew Goldfarb and Lydia Ragsdale.

Council President Kenneth M. Burgess Jr. and Councilman Steven Spina was also present but left prior to formally starting. Brody Bishop was absent.

Staff present: Principal Planner Rodney Corriveau and Acting City Clerk Ricardo Quiñones.

Council Mentors Sam Abrahani and Dr. Randy Stoval were also present.

Student Ivani Sharrock – ASD was also present.

Youth Council Mentor Sam Abrahani delivered the invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Introduction of Council Members: update contact sheet

Introduction of Community Mentors: update contact sheet

Mayor Monson and present mentors introduced themselves to the youth council members followed by the youth council members introducing themselves to each other. Mayor Monson passed around the contact sheet advising all members to ensure the information is accurate.

Reading of Ordinance 1218-13: Guidelines

Dr. Randy Stoval read the Mayor’s Youth Council Ordinances for the Youth Council. Mayor Monson explained the need for staggered terms and how she would assign seat numbers based on their grade.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Election of Chair

Mathew Goldfarb and Lakshmi Nooka self-nominated for the position of Council Chair. Each said a few words to Council as to why they want this opportunity. Council then voted - Matthew received 3 votes and Lakshmi received 2 votes. Matthew was elected as Council Char.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Na-kowa Ryals and Lakshmi Nooka self-nominated for the position of Council Vice Chair. Council then voted - Lakshmi received 4 votes and Na-kowa received 1 vote. Lakshmi was elected as Council Vice Char.

3. Youth Council Shirts

Mayor Monson presented the shirt options to the Youth Council for their consideration. Council was asked to select one formal dress shirt and one non-formal shirt. After discussion Council selected the Navy Blue Port Authority Easy Care Shirt winning by a vote of 4-3. Council discussed and decided that black pants should be worn with the Navy Blue dress shirt.

Discussion followed regarding if the non-dress shirt would be a polo or t-shirt. The Youth Council unanimously decided on Polo.

Discussion followed regarding which color the polo shirts would be with Columbia Blue being decided as the polo color on a vote of 5 – 2.

4. Discussion of Projects

a. Elementary Drawing/Essay Contest – Mayor for the day

b. JR High -

Youth Council Presented opened the next business item. Mayor Monson explained that the Youth Council should select a signature project to work on this season. She presented two ideas and encouraged Council to focus on the younger generation when considering their project. Discussion followed with contest ideas such as a Digital Talent Show, Public Speaking & Theatre Program. Reward ideas were discussed such as Mayor for a Day, Micro Scholarship & Week at Summer Camp.

Youth Council President Goldfarb encouraged all members to give their ideas no matter how small. Dr. Stoval said a program that he is involved in dealing with transportation and safety. Dr. Stoval said research shows older folks and younger folks are more prone to accidents, he would like to promote online driving safety courses for

the older folks. Existing Programs out there are Driver Fit and Car Fit, sponsored by AARP. Mayor Monson said that at the Chamber of Commerce there is a youth and education program called Skills that Pay, designed to build soft skills needed in the workplace. This could be a larger project for later.

Discussion followed regarding how to provide food to our community such as serving hot meals and providing care packages.

5. Discussion of Volunteer Opportunities

Mayor Monson opened the next item. She said that there are more community partners that could not be here tonight that the Youth Council will get to know better.

Discussion followed on how the Youth Council could serve in local parades and events. For volunteer events, Council is encouraged to invite their friends and groups they are a part of.

6. Next Meeting Date & Agenda Items:

Mayor Monson asked how frequently Council would like to meet. Discussion followed to determine with Council deciding to meet on the first Monday of every month. Mr. Abrahani asked the Chair and Vice Chair to be present 15 – 30 minutes before each meeting.

Discussion followed regarding topics for upcoming meetings, a brief description of Sunshine Law was given with Mayor Monson saying that City Attorney Matthew Maggard would give them a better understanding in a future meeting. Mayor Monson said they would not be held to as high a standard as elected officials would be but wants them to understand the intention and purpose of the Law.

Council Chair Goldfarb said that they should focus on one project and one volunteer opportunity. Mayor Monson said how impressed she was by this Youth Council. Mr. Abrahani said that tomorrow is election day and as an immigrant he was impressed by what this youth did today.

ADJOURN – 7:22 PM