



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

Council of Youth

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

I. Call to order

Edward White (Acting Chair) called to order the regular meeting of the Allentown Council of Youth at Council Chambers, Allentown City Hall at 6:00 pm on November 23, 2021.

II. Roll call

The following persons were present: Edward White, Officer Jamil Newsome, Oscar Ortiz, Tino Babayan, Knoxley Samms and City Council member Daryl Hendricks

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Minutes of September 29, 2021 were amended to correct voting/non-voting adult members. Minutes as amended were approved unanimously.

IV. Old Business

- It was decided that meetings would be held at 6:00 pm the fourth Tuesday of each month. Dates: 12/28/21, 1/25/22, 2/22/22, 3/22/22, 4/26/22, 5/25/22, 6/28/22, 7/26/22, 8/23/22, 9/27/22, 10/25/22, 11/22/22, 12/27/22

- Communications office should widely circulate meeting notices
- There is need to clarify procedures and streamline paperwork.

Action: Acting Chair White to handle.

- Members were reminded that Council of Youth ("COY") members, volunteers and others in contact with youth must have the appropriate clearances.
- Discussion ensued regarding establishment of COY bylaws. Acting Chair White suggested that the COY consider utilizing his Allentown Citywide Initiative for Youth bylaws as a basis and amend as appropriate.
- The COY is to provide recommendations to Allentown City Council.

Recommendation is that bylaws be completed in January 2022 and an Annual Report be submitted to City Council's Parks and Recreation Committee.

V. New business

- Joe Hoffmann was unavailable this evening, however, he has analyzed the Allentown City Budget for funds allocated to youth activities. When received, Acting Chair White will circulate Mr. Hoffman's report

Action: COY to provide recommendations on budget prior to Allentown City Council finalizing the budget.

- America Rescue Plan Act funding ("ARPA").

There will be a separate Allentown City Council meeting to discuss ARPA funding.

Action: Daryl Hendricks or Michael Hanlon to provide prior notice prior to Allentown City Council vote for COY recommendations.

- City Councilman Julio Guridy recommended a \$100,000 budget for the COY to spend on youth programs

- On 22 November a meeting was held by an ad hoc group including A-YOUTH members. Mark Smith conducted the meeting. Acting Chair White will share his Allentown Citywide Initiative for Youth articles of incorporation and suggest COY as a forum for the ad hoc group.

- Acting Chair White announced a new basketball team "Lehigh Valley Legends" with whom he is the Director of Business Relations. The organization is focused on community engagement.

VI. Comments from Council Members

- COY member Babayan inquired:
 - o What is the COY mission?

Response: The purpose of the organization is in the ordinance which established the COY.

- o Reaching out to youth organizations to advise of COY meetings.

Response: Acting Chair White has a list of community/neighborhood organizations and will provide to COY members. He also advised that he recommended to the incoming administration that a Department of Youth and Community Engagement (with a Director) be established.

- o Does the City of Allentown actually have youth programs besides basketball? Allentown Recreation Specialist Ryan Griffiths referenced a 2021 Recreational Response: Programs hand-out with commensurate explanation of all the sports offerings currently provided to Allentown youth.

- o Does the city pay for kids who can't afford fees to participate in sports, eg. East Side Youth Center?

Response: no, although some organizations do work with the families to reduce costs. Acting Chair White recommended that from the \$100,000 budget there may be consideration to provide micro-grants to families.

- Officer Newsome requested the actual age for "youth" member

Response: Acting Chair White advised there are five available COY spots for youth under age 21 who serve for one year. There is no requirement that they must attend any specific schools.

VII. Comments from the Public

- Jessica Ortiz (The Ortiz Ark Foundation)
 - o Concern: there is only one adult woman on the COY

Response: It is beyond the COY's control since members are appointed by the Mayor. The COY can, however, influence membership.

- o COY is not on the City of Allentown website

Action: Mike Hanlon to ensure that COA is on the website, including telephone number and email address

- o There is only one Allentown School District ("ASD") member on the COY.

ASD guidance counselors are not aware of the COY.

Action: The Administration needs to communicate meetings, etc. to the schools

- o How do small grass roots sports teams become included in City of Allentown recreation activities?

Action: Ms. Ortiz to send grass roots team information to Allentown Recreation Specialist Ryan Griffiths.

VIII. Closing Remarks

Acting Chair White advised that Vision 2030 reports are available. The next meeting of the COY is scheduled for 12/28/21 from 6:00-7:30 pm

IX. Adjournment

Edward White (Acting Chair) adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Karen M. El-Chaar - Director, Allentown Department of Parks and Recreation

Minutes approved with amendment: 12/27/21

Motion by Knoxley Samms, 2nd by Tino Babayan; unanimous approval.

[15-4406](#) COY Info

Attachments: [COY Legislation](#)
[Council of Youth Members](#)
[Park and Rec Program Flyers](#)
[Recreational Offerings 4.30.21](#)
[MeetingAgenda18-Nov-2021-12-21-38](#)
[SCLK-E0154021112209310](#)
[Youth Organization List](#)
[Council of Youth Agenda and Legislation](#)

Adjourned