

ORDINANCE NO.

FILE OF CITY COUNCIL

BILL NO. 3 - 2025

JANUARY 15, 2025

AN ORDINANCE

Establishing an African-American Advisory Council to advise the Mayor and Council on African-American issues.

WHEREAS, the City strives to promote a culture of inclusion which values diversity, promotes equity and the involvement of all individuals regardless of their backgrounds, identities, perspectives and sexual orientation in the political process; and

WHEREAS, City Council understands community engagement is more than and visit to the polls come every November; and

WHEREAS, Allentown City Council desires to maximize community engagement in local government, and community and economic life.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT ALLENTOWN CITY COUNCIL HEREBY establishes the African American Advisory Council with powers and duties set out in the legislation.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN:

SECTION ONE: That the following be added to the city code as the African American Advisory Council.

ARTICLE
African American Affairs Council

Purpose
Establishment and Composition of the Board
Powers and Duties
Annual Report

PURPOSE

The purpose of the African-American Affairs Council is to advise the Mayor and Council on any relating to African-American issues.

ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION

The African-American Affairs Council of the City of Allentown shall consist of seven volunteer members (9), appointed by the Mayor and approved by Council.

The list of potential appointees will be provided to the Mayor by African-American run or African-American affiliated organizations within the city to select qualified applicants from.

The list of African-American Organizations that may nominate or select applicants for the African-American Affairs Advisory Council for nomination by the Mayor will include the following:

Duly appointed members shall serve a term of four (4) years, except that initial appointments shall be so staggered that the terms of the membership shall expire each year. On the initial appointments two members shall serve for four years, two for three years, two for two years and one member for one year.

Council and the Mayor must make every effort to ensure the board reflects the community it has been created to serve. Appointments to the board should prioritize African-American community leaders and city residents.

Whenever possible, the board should contain members from the East Side, South Side, Center City, and West End of the city. Council may take this under consideration in the approval process.

The board shall meet bi-monthly or on an as needed basis – having at least four meetings a year - with additional meetings as determined by the board. All meetings shall be advertised and open to the public.

The Board shall develop and approve their by-laws which shall be approved by Council by resolution.

POWERS AND DUTIES

The Council shall serve as an advisory body. It shall be tasked with offering suggestions on the following:

Identifying issues of concern of African-American Community. It shall, research, discuss and propose solutions to the concerns it identifies. The Council shall provide these recommendations to Allentown City Council and the Administration on a regular basis, at least annually as part of the annual report and presentation pursuant to the requirement below;

Facilitate communications, networking and referrals within the community advocating intercultural interests, events and activities.

Provide a representation or a “voice” for African-Americans in the community.

ANNUAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION

The Board shall prepare a written report of the year’s activities, a (1) one-year plan and long-term goals and scenarios. The report shall be given to the Mayor and shall be presented to Allentown City Council at an appropriate committee meeting no later than the second meeting in March.

SECTION TWO: That this Ordinance will take effect ten (10) days after final passage.

SECTION THREE: That all Ordinances inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.