

# BYLAWS OF THE COLUMBUS, GEORGIA YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

## ARTICLE Objectives

- A. The Youth Advisory Council (also referred to as “YAC”) shall be consistent with the City of Columbus and Muscogee County School District (MSCD) goal of broadening the scope of youth leadership, with emphasis on youth development, to enhance leadership skills and self esteem of middle and high school students.
- B. The purpose of creating a Youth Advisory Council is to:
- Actively involve youth on policy issues affecting them
  - Broaden the scope of youth leadership in City Government and Muscogee County School District Affairs
  - Promote experiential learning on the functions of City Government and the Muscogee County School District Affairs
  - Develop healthy citizen habits for the future of the community
  - Promote public awareness of the strengths and abilities of youth
  - Actively involve youth in planning, developing and implementing social, cultural and recreational activities that are drug and alcohol free

### **Responsibilities include:**

- Fostering increased involvement of youth in affairs of the City Government and Muscogee County School Board
- Studying problems, issues, activities, and concerns of youth, especially as they relate to City and Muscogee County School District programs and projects

## ARTICLE II Powers and Duties

- A. The Youth Council shall act in an advisory capacity to the City/MCSD.
- B. The YAC shall consider the various needs of youths and teens within, the City and MCSD when making decisions or advising on policies.
- C. The YAC shall recognize that its recommendations to governing bodies are advisory only.

## **ARTICLE II – continued**

- D. The services of the YAC, and all other persons volunteering services on Committees or subcommittees of the YAC, shall be strictly voluntary and without compensation.
- E. Whenever possible, the YAC shall provide voluntary services in order to carry out the recommendations of the YAC. Duties which include assisting in the planning and the implementation of the activities recommended by the YAC itself.

## **ARTICLE III** **YAC Member Eligibility**

- A. The Youth Advisory Council shall include a total of eighty-four (84) YAC Members.
- B. YAC members shall be middle and high school students.
- C. The youth may reside within the jurisdiction or attend any school within the City/Muscogee County. Young people attending private, and home school may qualify to serve on YAC.

## **ARTICLE IV** **Adult Advisors Eligibility**

- A. The Youth Advisory Council shall include adult advisors from the City Government and MCSD.
- B. The adult Advisors shall reside within the jurisdiction or teach at any school within the City/Muscogee County.

## **ARTICLE V** **Appointment to YAC**

- A. The appointed City Staff and MCSD Staff along with YAC Officers shall oversee the YAC recommendation selection process and shall request applications from potential YAC members beginning in April of each year. An interview process will be conducted May through July by the recommendation selection panel (hereinafter “Panel”), after which the Panel shall select YAC members for the upcoming school year.
- B. The City Council shall make the official appointment in October based on recommendations made by the panel.
- C. The duties of the panel include:
  - 1. To review the list of applicants for the YAC positions.

## **ARTICLE V - continued**

2. To conduct interviews using the guideline outlined in Bylaws.
  3. To provide a list of recommended YAC members (“nominees”) to City Council.
- D. The selection of nominees by the panel shall be governed by the following guidelines:
1. Selection of nominees shall be made in a fair and impartial manner.
  2. Each application will be reviewed without regard to gender, ethnicity, disability, or religious preferences.
  3. Recommendations shall be restricted to potential YAC members who express interest in representing youth as YAC members. Potential YAC members must be able and prepared to participate in the Youth Advisory activities and make the required commitment of time and energy.
  4. Reasonable effort shall be made to assure that nominees are representative of the youth population as a whole, and that each high school and middle school within the City is represented, under the limitations of Article III.

## **ARTICLE VI** **Term of Office**

Appointments to the Youth Advisory council shall be made by City Council in October of each year and shall be for a term of one year. Officers may serve two years on the YAC to ensure continuity in the Youth Advisory Council and projects.

## **ARTICLE VII** **Quorum**

- A. Only YAC members shall have the right to vote at YAC Caucus Sessions. Only Caucus representatives shall have the right to vote in open YAC session.
- B. A majority of all YAC shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all YAC business. A quorum is necessary for a Youth Advisory Council meeting to be held. Since there are eighty-four (84) YAC members, a quorum shall be forty-three (43) YAC members.
- C. In the event that there is no quorum, any decisions that are made by those assembled will be regarded as informal and non-binding.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Attendance**

- A. YAC members shall attend all regular business meetings of the Youth Advisory Council at the scheduled time and location. Special meetings shall count for only those YAC members who vote on the meeting. If a YAC member realizes that he/she will be unable to attend after the meeting is set, a 24-hour written notice will apply.
- B. Whenever a YAC member has missed three consecutive meetings, regular or special, or any unexcused meeting of the Youth Advisory Council, the question of that YAC member continuance as a YAC member must be placed on the agenda for the next regular business meeting of the Youth Advisory Council. Continuation of that YAC member on the YAC requires two-thirds vote of the quorum. A failure to receive the required two-thirds vote shall result in a vacancy of that YAC member's position on the YAC.
- C. To be excused from any YAC meeting, which also includes leaving early and being tardy, a YAC member shall make an application in writing or in person to the Secretary at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting. However, if a YAC member is unable to attend any regular meeting or adjourned regular meeting due to illness or injury, a statement of the same by the member at the next regular meeting of the YAC shall constitute an excused absence.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**YAC Vacancies**

- A. Vacancies on the Youth Advisory Council during a term shall be filled by appointment by the City Council, based upon a recommendation by the YAC. In addition to the guidelines set forth in Article V, above, the following criteria shall be considered by the YAC.
  - 1. Consider the alternate(s) as ranked during the previous interview process.
  - 2. Review past applications from under-represented schools, re-interview applicants, and make recommendation for City Council.
  - 3. Consider recommendation from the Panel.
  - 4. Consider appointing an active non-voting member, who has attended YAC meetings, or been actively involved in YAC committees.
  - 5. In the event additional applicants are needed:
    - a. Solicit new applications from the under-represented high school or middle school.

## **ARTICLE IX - continued**

- b. Interview new applicants, conducted by at least two of the original interview panel members.

## **ARTICLE X** **Election of YAC Officers**

- A. Youth Advisory Council shall elect from its YAC members the following officers:
  1. President
  2. President-elect
  3. Secretary/Treasurer
  4. Parliamentarian
  5. Historian
  6. Caucus Representative
  7. Assistant Caucus Representative
- B. The annual election of officers shall take place on or by the regular meeting in October of each year. The terms of officers shall commence retroactive September and shall continue through May of the following year.

## **ARTICLE XI** **Duties of YAC Officers**

- A. The President presides at all regular and special meetings of the Youth Advisory Council.
  1. The President shall establish all standing committees or special committees of the YAC, which may be deemed necessary for carrying out the functions and purposes of the YAC.
  2. The President shall establish all points of order and procedure during the YAC meetings. The President procedural decision shall be final unless overruled by a majority of voting YAC member present.
  3. The President shall sign all meeting minutes and resolutions upon approval by the YAC.
- B. The President-elect shall assume all duties of the President in the absence of the President. The President-elect shall assist the committees in fulfilling their responsibilities as needed.

**NOTE:** In case of the absence of both President and President-elect from any YAC meeting, the treasurer will preside. If all three are absent, an acting President shall be elected from among the YAC members present.

## **ARTICLE XI - continued**

- C. The Secretary/Treasurer shall receive and record all exhibits, petitions, documents or other material presented to the YAC in support of, or in opposition to, any questions before the YAC.
1. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for all communications related to the Youth Advisory Council on meetings, and solicit and keep records of the minutes of the YAC.
  2. The Secretary/Treasurer shall sign all notices prepared in connection with YAC business and attest to such record of actions, transmittals and referrals as may be necessary or required by law.
  3. The Secretary/Treasurer shall collect, receive, deposit and invest with the consent of the Executive Committee and disburse the funds of the organization with guidance from the City Manager's Office.
- D. The Parliamentarian shall maintain peace in the meeting and know Roberts Rules of Orders. The Parliamentarian must be available to caucus groups to rule and resolve issues relating to rules of order.
- E. The Historian shall record in photographic form all YAC activities.

**NOTE:** Any officer elected by the YAC shall be subject to removal by the YAC at any time, if in the sole judgment of the YAC, such action is in the best interest of the organization.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Duties of Committee Chairs**

- A. The President of the Youth Advisory Council shall make all committee assignments and appoint the Chair of each committee.
- B. Committee meetings shall be held upon call of the chair of the Committee.
- C. A verbal and written report may be made at any meeting of the YAC or by the Chair of the committee on any subject under consideration by such committee; or such report may be requested by the President of the YAC.
- D. YAC members who are not elected as one of the officers are eligible to chair and/or co-chair one of the standing committees. They are:
1. Newsletter (teen News)
  2. Programs I (September-December)
  3. Programs II (January-May)
  4. Ways and Means (Fund/Donations)
  5. Bylaws (Review and Update)

## **ARTICLE XII - continued**

- E. Each Committee Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that the duties of the committee are successfully completed. The duties of each standing committee are as follows:
1. The duties of the Newsletter Committee shall be as follows:
    - a. Report news and information to be announced at schools, in school newspapers, school bulletins, cable access, and local newspaper(s) as directed by YAC.
    - b. Assist in the gathering news or items of interest for publications.
    - c. Develop a YAC newsletter.
  2. The duties of the Programs I Committee (September-December) shall be as follows:
    - a. Assist officers and staff with planning and implementation of programs scheduled for the months of September through December.
    - b. Assist staff with creation of any flyers, posters, and publications.
    - c. Plan and conduct at least two programs during the program period.
  3. The duties of the Programs II Committee (January-May) shall be as follows:
    - a. Assist officers and staff with the planning and implementation of programs scheduled for the months of January through May.
    - b. Assist officers and staff with the creation of any flyers, posters, and publications.
    - c. Plan and conduct at least two programs during the program period.
  4. The duties of the Ways and Means Committee shall be as follows:
    - a. Assist officers in adhering to the Bylaws as written.
    - b. Review and recommend changes in the Bylaws as written.
- F. Sub-committees will be formed, as the Youth Advisory Council deems needed.

## **ARTICLE XII - continued**

1. A Sub-committee Chair will be expected to chair, or co-chair at least one subcommittee at any given time.
2. A Sub-committee Chair will be expected to participate in all, but not less than half, of the YAC programs implemented during a given year.
3. Young people outside the YAC within the community may serve on the sub-committees.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Duties of Adult Advisors**

- A. Adult Advisors shall act in an advisory capacity to the YAC. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:
  1. To act in an advisory capacity to YAC at the monthly meetings.
  2. To volunteer services at events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Youth Advisory Council during their term. Adult Advisors shall be present during the entire duration of an organized event.
- B. Adult Advisors shall be non-voting members.
  1. Adult Advisors will meet on a monthly basis to help plan YAC upcoming meetings.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **Meetings**

- A. Regular meetings of the Youth Advisor Council shall be held once a month with a goal of limiting the time of each meeting to two-hours or less.
- B. The Youth Advisory Council shall publish an annual calendar indicating the regularly scheduled meetings for the entire year. This meeting schedule will be made public no later than the third meeting of the newly appointed Youth Advisory Council.
- C. The first meeting of each newly appointed Youth Advisory Council shall be an orientation meeting that may include outgoing members of the immediately preceding Youth Advisory Council. The process for election of officers will be explained.

## **ARTICLE XIV - continued**

- D. The second meeting of YAC shall be an extended meeting, which officers will be elected, issues and concerns are identified, and planning is started for the year.
- E. Special meetings may be called by the officers of the Youth Advisory Council, or upon a majority vote providing notice 24 hours in advance of the meeting to YAC members and to all media outlets. Notice of such special meeting shall be given as required by law. Any such notice shall state the date, place, and time of special meeting.
- F. In the event that the scheduled date of a regular meeting falls on a holiday, such meeting shall be held on the next business day.
- G. Any regular meeting may be adjourned, or any item on the agenda continued to the next or any subsequent regular meeting of the YAC by a majority of the voting YAC members. If a meeting is adjourned or an item is continued to a special meeting to be held on a date other than a regular meeting date, the time, place, and date of such special meeting shall be specified in the motion for adjournment or continuance.
- H. All meetings of the YAC are subject to the open meetings law of the State of Georgia. The following policy shall govern the preparation and posting of agendas for all meetings.
  - 1. Regular meeting agendas shall be posted 72 hours prior to the meeting at the Government Center Council Chambers.
  - 2. Notice of each special meeting must be posted at least 24 hours prior to the special meeting.
  - 3. Each meeting agenda shall include the YAC Secretary's report on the posting of the agenda, which shall be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.
  - 4. The agenda shall contain a brief general description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting.
  - 5. The YAC is prohibited from taking action on any item not appearing on the posted agenda unless the YAC determines that:
    - a. An emergency situation has arisen that must be addressed.
    - b. The YAC has determined, by a two-thirds vote, or by a unanimous vote if less than two-thirds of the YAC members are present, that they need to take action on items arising subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

## **ARTICLE XIV - continued**

- c. The public shall be given the opportunity to speak under “Items of the Public agenda”.

## **ARTICLE XV** **Conduct of Meetings**

- A. At the time and place established for meeting, and with a quorum present, the President shall call the meeting to order.
- B. The YAC may, from time to time, limit the number of individuals who may speak on an item, limit the time each individual may speak on a particular item, and place limits on the subject matter of discussion.
- C. Citizens wishing to voice their opinions at regular Youth Advisory Council meetings may do so during “Items for the Public”.
  1. To provide the audience an equal opportunity to address the YAC, the President will call for comments from the Public at the beginning of the meeting from any person who wishes to speak on matters not listed on the Agenda. The audience will be asked to identify themselves by a show of hands or by any other means that encourages.
  2. The Youth Advisory Council will provide one opportunity for “Items from the Public”. This item will be listed as a regular part of the Agenda at the beginning of the agenda. This item will be listed as a regular part of the Agenda at the beginning of the agenda. The call for the “Items from the Public” will be limited to a five-minute period per speaker. If there are more individuals wishing to address the YAC than can be accommodated within thirty (30) minutes, the President will ask the speakers if anyone wishes to relinquish their request time, or if they would prefer to wait to address the body during “Items from the Public” that occurs at the end of the agenda.
- D. The Order of business shall be as follow:
  1. Pledge of allegiance
  2. Moment of Silence
  3. Call to Order
  4. Roll call
  5. Minutes Approval
  6. Items from the Audience
  7. President’s Report and Direction for Caucus Breakouts
  8. Caucus Breakout Sessions
  9. Reconvene from Caucus Sessions
  10. Old Business
  11. New Business

## **ARTICLE XV - continued**

12. Staff Report
13. Adjourn

## **ARTICLE XVI** **Motions**

- A. Upon conclusion of discussion on a matter or at such time as any YAC member may feel all points have been sufficiently reviewed, the President may call for a motion or one may be offered after a request by the President, the President may offer a motion.
- B. The President shall receive all motions and shall call for a second to the motion if none has been made. In the event no second is offered after a request by the President, the President may offer a second on any motion which has not been made.
- C. If, after a reasonable time, no second has been made, a motion shall be declared dead for a lack of a second and so stated by the President.
- D. After a motion has been made and seconded, further discussions shall be limited to that of the motion only.
- E. Persons having made a motion shall accept amendments to it only after the approval of the second. Should the second not approve a proposed amendment to the motion, a YAC member may withdraw their second and the motion, as amended, shall be restated as a new motion. Should the second refuse to withdraw, the president shall call for a vote on the original motion.
- F. At such time as any YAC member shall call for the question, the President shall close discussion. Any YAC member shall have the opportunity to make a statement, then the President shall have the opportunity to make a statement, then the President shall immediately put the matter to a vote.
- G. Should a motion fail to pass, the President shall so state, and must call for a new motion in this matter.

## **ARTICLE XVII** **Voting**

- A. Upon acceptance of a motion and completion of discussion on the same, the President shall instruct the Secretary to read the motion and to poll the YAC members for a vote.

## **ARTICLE XVII - continued**

- B. All votes shall be verbally stated as “Aye”, “No” or “Abstain”. If desired, each opposing YAC member shall be given an opportunity to state the reason for his or her vote for inclusion in the meeting minutes.
- C. Unless otherwise specified by State Law, adoption of a motion shall be by simple majority of the YAC members present.
- D. The President shall vote on matters only in the event of a tie vote.
- E. The YAC members shall be polled in the order of a person making a motion, then the second, and then the YAC members.

**NOTE:** Caucus Breakout Sessions will operate as stated above.

## **ARTICLE XVIII** **Other Rules of Order**

All questions of order and procedure, which are not provided for in these Bylaws shall be resolved according to the provisions of the Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, which are for this reason and as limited and modified, herein adopted and made a part of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XIX** **Amendments**

- A. Amendments to the Youth Advisory Council Bylaws may be initiated at any Youth Advisory Council meeting with prior notification to YAC members.
- B. Recommendation of any Amendment will require a two-thirds vote of the quorum of the Youth Advisory Council voting members.

## **ARTICLE XXI** **Adoptions**

This document, when adopted by resolution of the YAC membership shall serve as the Bylaws for the Youth Advisory Commission