

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
January 14, 2019
Auditorium

Present: Councilmembers Anderson, Bullock, Litten, O’Leary, Rader

Also Present: Mayor Summers, Community Relations Specialist Melissa Garrett, Ron Lewis, LHS teacher; LHS students Jack Hueter, McKenzie Lane and Grace Gill; LCRAC members Gary Rick, Tariq Ata & Chitra Walker

Call to Order: 6:40 p.m.

ORDINANCE 45-18 - AN ORDINANCE enacting Chapter 161, Youth Advisory Council, of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances to establish a council for purposeful planning; advising Council and the Administration on matters including but not limited to addressing youth concerns and perspectives; assisting in securing and developing programs and activities for the young people in the City; and providing programming in the community for youth to obtain leadership skills and to participate in civic affairs.

Council President O’Leary introduced the ordinance and expressed his vision for how a youth council can be relevant and important. He described three major ways:

1. Get youth involved and a place at the table on City affairs.
2. Get youth input on issues facing the City.
3. Get youth to bring their own priorities to the attention of City leaders.

Mayor Summers explained that he became inspired to create a youth commission after attending the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He shared and referred to resources on youth councils in other states and cities. He announced that the Community Relations Advisory Committee will support and guide the youth council. He noted that by-laws, a guiding structure, as well as community input will be needed to get started. His goal is to establish the council by the end of the school year.

LHS students Jack Hueter, McKenzie Lane and Grace Gill addressed Council regarding the creation of a youth council. All were very supportive of the concept of establishing a council and explained why. They all characterized the LHS student body as politically active and aware. They explained that a youth council would be a natural fit at LHS.

President O’Leary agreed with the students’ assessment of an engaged student body at LHS. He proposed that Council discuss the appropriate number of members on the youth council. He also noted that he wants the City to guide the council and set it up for success but not to be overly prescriptive.

Councilmember Bullock expressed support for the establishment of a youth council. He suggested that 20 members be the maximum size, pointing out that most city boards and commissions do not exceed this. He asked for more information about the intended vision, goals, and priorities of the council.

President O’Leary responded that he wants to make sure that the council has enough flexibility to raise its own issues. He does not favor creating an exclusionary list. He suggested that youth may be interested in addressing use of public spaces in the City and how to make them more welcoming to teens.

Mr. Rick suggested establishing a smaller group to help establish the structure of the council and organize it.

Mr. Ata recommended that the first year of the council be a pilot year where members survey the needs and desires of their peers in order to best understand the priorities to establish.

Councilmember Litten remarked on his experience serving on the County’s Next Generation Council. He suggested building in access to the Mayor and Council so that the group automatically meets with City leaders a few times per year. He suggested adding a Council liaison and also emphasized that it should not replace student council.

Councilmembers expressed agreement with the suggestions made thus far in the discussion.

President O’Leary suggested that the founders of the group address term lengths, whether or not terms should be staggered, appointment during senior year, and possible school credit for participation.

Mayor Summers suggested referring to the materials and templates created in other jurisdictions. He suggested tabling the ordinance and creating a new resolution to establish a task force to set up the youth council, similar to the Foundation Planning Task Force.

President O’Leary proposed a timeline that includes an application period in the spring and a fall start date. He noted that the timeline will likely coincide with the school year and not the calendar year.

Councilmember Anderson engaged the LHS students in some questions and answers regarding their thoughts on the appropriate age of participants. The student agreed that the group should be made primarily of high schoolers and that a few 7-8th graders should also be included as non-voting participants.

Councilmember Rader noted that other high schools in the City should be included as well as high school students who attend high school outside of Lakewood.

Committee of the Whole decided that it will defer Ordinance 45-18 and wait for a new Resolution on the Jan. 22nd docket that will establish a task force to create the youth council.

RESOLUTION NO. 9033-18 - A RESOLUTION to take effect immediately provided it receives the affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the members of Council, or otherwise to take effect and be in force after the earliest period allowed by law, appointing _____ (2nd appointee) _____ to the Lakewood Heritage Advisory Board for the four year term beginning January 1, 2019 and ending December 31, 2022.

After brief discussion of the Heritage Advisory Board candidates, a motion was made and seconded to substitute the name Maggie Wojton into the blank in the Resolution.

All members voted in favor. Committee of the Whole adjourned at 7:44 p.m.