

Waterville Youth Council (WYC)

NAME & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The official name of the City of Waterville youth council shall be the “Waterville Youth Council” (WYC). The WYC, established by the Waterville City Council on March 19, 2024, shall serve as an advisory council to the Waterville City Council and shall serve as a liaison between the youth of the community and the City. The WYC shall enable youth to work toward goals that empower all of the community’s youth and to undertake service projects that enhance the community.

COMPOSITION

The WYC shall annually have a composition of up to 15 high school aged members chosen through an application/selection process. To be considered for membership on the WYC, an individual must be a Waterville resident at the time of application. Should a member no longer meet membership criteria in the midst of their tenure, the youth may complete their term but not re-apply.

The Advisor shall be appointed by the mayor and City Manager. The advisor shall be a resident of Waterville.

The WYC shall also have one (1) ex-officio city councilor annually appointed by the Waterville City Council. This individual will serve as a liaison between the City Council and the Waterville Youth Council.

MEETING SCHEDULE

During the K-12 academic school year, a regular meeting of the WYC shall take place a minimum of twice a month on a weekday and at a time agreed upon by WYC members and the Advisor. Special meetings shall be called if business at hand requires additional meetings.

WYC PROCEDURES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All information pertaining to the procedures and responsibilities of the Waterville Youth Council are found in the by-laws that are incorporated herewith.

PARTICIPATION AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

PURPOSE

Youth council participation at a City Council meeting refers to a revolving seat on the Waterville City Council to provide WYC members with an opportunity for further civic engagement in local municipal government. Their participation will also provide elected officials and members of the public with youth perspectives on topics being discussed.

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REPRESENTATION

The youth joining the City Council for a particular meeting will have the opportunity to do so due to membership on the youth council; however, the views and opinions youth share will be regarded as their own and are not to be interpreted as the position of the Waterville Youth Council. The Presiding Officer will make that clarification at the beginning of each City Council meeting in which an WYC member participates per this policy.

The idea of a youth revolving seat shall be reviewed every two years by incoming City Council members. It will be their total discretion as to whether the revolving seat continues or is reinstated if previously stopped.

ROTATION PROCESS

Participation by WYC member is voluntary—not mandatory, as only those WYC members who wish to participate shall do so.

A list of members who wish to participate will be maintained by the WYC Advisor, and the order of the list will first consist of high school seniors (listed alphabetically), and then the remaining names will also be listed in alphabetical order. The reason for first utilizing the seniors is due to them being in their last year with the youth council through which this opportunity is being provided.

It is understood that youth might not be available for some meetings due to the unexpected scheduling of a City Council meeting or conflicts with school, family, and/or extracurricular activities.

As one person serves, the next person on the list will be invited to participate at the next City Council meeting. If that person is unable to serve at the current time, the next person on the list will be approached. Should a person be unable to serve their assigned rotation, the Advisor will only move down one person on the list to seek a replacement for that respective meeting.

The originally scheduled person for that meeting who was unable to serve will have their name placed at the end of the current rotation before the next full rotation of participants begins.

If the Chair is giving their monthly update to the City Council, he or she will serve as the rotation representative if it's already their assigned rotation OR if no one else is available for that meeting's rotation. If it is someone else's turn to be in the rotated seat, the Chair will leave the City Council seating area for use by the respective WYC rotating representative.

The City Clerk will be informed as to which youth will be serving at a particular City Council meeting. Prior to an upcoming meeting, the young person who will be engaged in a particular City Council meeting will be instructed to review the respective City Council agenda, which is accessible online.

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PARTICIPATION

Youth will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and participate in City Council discussions in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*. Youth will not be voting members of the City Council, and youth will not participate in executive sessions due to the nature of confidentiality associated with such sessions. Those WYC members who participate with the City Council shall be youth who are actively participating in WYC and in good standing with the group.

To be prepared for City Council discussions, the youth scheduled for each meeting shall thoroughly review agenda materials prior to arrival. In addition, each youth is expected to arrive on time and to be respectful to elected officials, members of the public, and staff. WYC youth who participate at City Council meetings have the option of leaving the meeting before it concludes due to family, school-related, or extracurricular commitments.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The official name of the City of Waterville youth council shall be the **“Waterville Youth Council”** (WYC).

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The WYC shall serve as an advisory council to the Waterville City Council in regards to community issues affecting youth and shall serve as a liaison between the youth of the community and the City. The WYC shall enable youth to work toward goals that empower all of the community's youth and to undertake service projects that enhance the community.

ARTICLE III - ADVISORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Section 1. Advisor

The WYC shall be facilitated by a Waterville resident serving as an “Advisor,” and the Advisor shall be appointed by the City Manager.

Section 2. Administrative Support

Administrative support shall be provided to the youth council by the Advisor for purposes of guidance relating to WYC administrative issues.

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Section 3. Vacancy of Advisor

The City Manager and mayor shall be responsible for filling a vacancy of the Advisor whenever such a vacancy occurs.

ARTICLE IV - APPLICATION AND SELECTION

Section 1. Qualification

To be considered for membership on the WYC, an individual must be a Waterville resident at the time of application. Should a member no longer meet membership criteria in the midst of their tenure, the youth may complete their term but not re-apply.

Section 2. Selection Criteria

Selection criteria shall not be based on popularity, grades, student activities, or such. Students shall be chosen to serve by the Selection Committee (Article IV, Section 6) based on their willingness to serve, ability to interact with others, and ability to be a youth leader.

Section 3. Application Process

Each April, the application process for membership on the WYC shall be made public. Promotional efforts may include, but are not limited to, an assembly at Waterville Junior High School, Waterville Senior High School, and/or other educational institutions located in Waterville; posted flyers; media notification; social media outreach; and emails to the above-noted schools. Application forms shall be released, completed by applicants, and returned to specified locations no later than the second Friday in May.

Section 4. Application Content

The application shall include:

- a. Information regarding due date and return location
- b. Section requesting name, grade, school or home school affiliation, home address, phone number, e-mail address, and parental contact information
- c. Section requesting signatures of two (2) adult community members
- d. Section requesting signatures of ten (10) peers that may include friends, neighbors, and classmates
- e. Open response question **“Why do you want to serve on the Waterville Youth Council?”** In addition to answering the question, a student may also include other information that may be helpful to the Selection Committee when making a decision about a youth’s ability to serve.
- f. A *“Commitment to Serve”* statement for signature by the applicant which shall read, *“If selected to serve on the Waterville Youth Council, I agree to work in a spirit of teamwork with my fellow peers, the WYC Advisor, Council Liaison,*

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other members of the WYC, municipal officials, municipal staff, and community members with the understanding that I have been provided with a unique opportunity to represent my peers in a positive light and effectively contribute on behalf of all youth within our community.”

Section 5. Interviews

Each applicant shall be contacted within two weeks of submission of an application for the purpose of scheduling an interview.

Section 6. Composition & Duties of Selection Committee

A Selection Committee shall be assembled once a year to choose the new WYC. This committee shall consist of the Advisor; Council Liaison, possible representation from the Mayor/Council; and any member of the municipal staff, member of the community, or member of the local school system that the Advisor and Council Liaison may deem appropriate. The interview panel may also include one or more former WYC members, such as one or more high school senior whose service with WYC has just ended.

This committee shall be responsible for reviewing all applications, conducting interviews, and appointing up to fifteen (15) capable youth who best stand out among applicants, thereby best fitting the selection criteria as noted in Article IV, Section 2.

The WYC Selection Committee shall be responsible for submitting a finalized list of WYC members to the City Manager by no later than the last Friday in June. Follow-up contact will thereafter occur informing applicants of the group selected.

Section 7. Appointment of WYC Members

Selected youth will be appointed at the first City Council meeting in August.

Orientation/training shall occur during the month of August. The first meeting of the new WYC year shall be held in September.

ARTICLE V - ORGANIZATION OF WYC

Section 1. Composition of WYC

Composition of the Waterville Youth Advisory Council shall be as follows:

- a. Up to fifteen (15) high school aged voting members appointed by the WYC Selection Committee
- b. One (1) ex-officio city councilor annually appointed by the Waterville City

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Council. This individual will serve as a liaison between the City Council and the Waterville Youth Advisory Council.

Section 2. WYC Membership

To be considered for membership on the WYC, an individual must be a Waterville resident at the time of application. Should a member no longer meet membership criteria in the midst of their tenure, the youth may complete their term but not re-apply.

Section 3. Subcommittees

- a. At any time, the WYC reserves the right to create an WYC subcommittee in order to address a particular issue or issues pertaining to a project the group is focused on.
- b. The officers (Article VI, Section 2) of the WYC, in consultation with the Advisor, shall appoint members to subcommittees. Subcommittee membership may not exceed seven (7) members and shall hold public meetings. The WYC Chair shall appoint a subcommittee chair from among the voting membership of the WYC, with acceptance by a simple majority vote of the WYC.
- c. Membership of subcommittees shall not be limited to voting WYC members and may consist of any individual who has an interest in a particular youth advisory council issue. All subcommittee members may vote on issues at subcommittee meetings, regardless of WYC membership. These votes, however, shall not be binding upon the WYC. The WYC membership shall have the final word on recommendations from subcommittees.
- d. Subcommittee chairs are solely responsible to report findings to the WYC or any other group that may request information of a subcommittee. Subcommittee chairs shall also be responsible for ensuring that subcommittees address forwarded issues in a timely manner.
- e. Subcommittee chairs shall set meeting times based upon a consensus of subcommittee member preferences.

Section 4. Standing Subcommittees

Any permanent or semi-permanent subcommittee created by act of any WYC must be observed by succeeding WYC groups. As subcommittee chair vacancies occur, the elected Chair of the WYC is responsible for filling those vacancies. These Chair nominations must be accepted by a simple majority vote of the WYC.

Section 5. Discontinuation of Subcommittees

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A subcommittee created by act of the WYC may be discontinued at any time by a simple majority vote of WYC membership.

Section 6. WYC Term of Service

- a. WYC members shall be appointed for service in July of each year with a one-year appointment expiring the day the succeeding youth advisory council is installed.
- b. WYC members may apply for an unlimited number of terms as long as they submit an application for a new term and are meeting membership criteria (Article V, Section 2). Should a member no longer meet membership criteria in the midst of their tenure, the youth may complete their term but not re-apply.

Section 7. WYC Attendance

- a. Members of the WYC shall adhere to a strict attendance policy.
- b. Three (3) unexcused absences from Waterville Youth Advisory Council meetings shall be considered as a resignation. An unexcused absence is one in which the member does not inform an officer or the Advisor of his or her need to be absent from a meeting. In addition, five (5) excused absences—unless one of those excused absences was due to a family or medical emergency—shall be considered as a resignation. Once a resignation occurs, the seat is automatically vacated, and proper steps (Article V, Section 8) shall be taken to fill a vacancy.
- c. The WYC Secretary shall maintain an attendance roster to keep track of members' attendance, in particular when unexcused and excused absences are occurring.

Section 8. WYC Non-Officer Vacancy

Non-officer vacancies that occur within a WYC term shall be filled by consideration of a recommendation presented by the sitting WYC and confirmation vote of the sitting WYC.

Confirmation shall be a simple majority vote of the WYC as the first order of business at the next regularly scheduled WYC meeting, with the new member's(s') tenure taking effect immediately.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS & DUTIES

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Section 1. Officers of the Youth Council

The officers of the Youth Council shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. These positions shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the WYC.

Section 2. Descriptions of Offices

a. Chair:

The WYC Chair shall set agendas and preside over all meetings of the WYC. The Chair shall delegate responsibilities to WYC membership. The Chair shall report to the City Council at least once per month in regards to WYC activities. The Chair may also convene special meetings of the WYC to address immediate concerns. The Chair is also responsible for signing any official correspondence of the WYC.

b. Vice-Chair:

The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in his or her duties and advise the Chair of any agenda and subcommittee concerns. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume his or her responsibilities **OR** when called upon by the Chair, Advisor, or City Council, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair. Upon the resignation or dismissal of a Chair, the Vice-Chair immediately assumes the office of Chair.

c. Secretary:

The Secretary of the WYC shall be responsible for processing minutes and electronically distributing them to the membership. The WYC Secretary shall maintain an attendance roster to keep track of members' attendance, in particular when unexcused and excused absences are occurring.

The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining any needed WYC communication links, including phone information and e-mail information. The Secretary may utilize the guidance of the Advisor for administrative support but shall be responsible for fulfilling their own requirements. Minutes from the last WYC meeting shall be reviewed at the start of the next WYC meeting.

When the Secretary is aware that they will be absent at a meeting, it is their responsibility beforehand to ask another member to take the minutes and electronically distribute them in their stead, as well as ask that person to keep track of excused absences and unexcused absences. Should the Secretary's non-attendance be a very unexpected, last-minute incident, the

Vice-Chair will cover their duties for that meeting. Such coverage is anticipated to not be a regular occurrence.

d. Treasurer:

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The Treasurer of the WYC, in consultation with the Advisor, shall maintain proper budgetary processes, and facilitate any needed fundraising activities.

Section 3. Vacancy of Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer

Upon the resignation or vacancy of the Vice-Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer, the sitting Chair shall immediately declare a seven (7) day nomination period. Nominations for officer replacement shall be forwarded to the Chair during this time. A list of confirmed nominees shall be forwarded to the WYC membership. Election of a replacement shall be the first order of business at the next regularly scheduled WYC meeting thereafter, with the nominee receiving the most votes, by secret ballot, being the newly elected officer. In the case of a tie in votes, a re-vote will be taken. Following the voting process, the newly elected officer's tenure shall take effect immediately. Should there be a second tie vote for one of those positions, each of the tie individuals will assume the respective role for one (1) WYC meeting. After WYC members have seen each candidate for that position "in action," a re-vote will be taken.

Section 4. New Session Procedure

The Advisor shall conduct the first meeting of every new WYC year with the nomination process for officers (Article VI, Section 5) as the first order of business. The next scheduled meeting shall focus on officer elections as the first order of business, with new officers taking their seats immediately.

Section 5. New Officer Nomination Procedures

At the first official WYC meeting of the year, the Advisor shall be responsible for explaining the descriptions of offices as outlined in Article VI, Section 4, as well as facilitating the nomination process. The Advisor shall ask for nominations at the first meeting. The voting shall take place as the first order of business at the second WYC meeting, with secret balloting administered by the Advisor and/or the Council Liaison.

For officer voting only, email votes will be accepted if a member is unable to attend the voting meeting—as long as the email vote is received prior to the actual meeting vote AND the member was present when the person running for office gave their "why you should vote for me" address to the group. In the event of a tie for a newly elected annual officer(s), a re-vote shall be taken and facilitated by the Advisor and/or the Council Liaison. Elected officers shall be seated immediately.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Meeting Schedule

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During the K-12 academic school year, a regular meeting of the WYC shall take place a minimum of twice per month on a weekday and at a time agreed upon by WYC members and the Advisor. Special meetings shall be called if business at hand requires additional meetings. The Advisor and/or the Council Liaison shall be present at each WYC meeting.

Section 2. Orientation

The WYC shall hold a day-long orientation in August. The purpose of the orientation shall be procedural education and team building. Returning WYC members do not need to attend the morning procedural education sessions; however, they are expected to join the new members for lunch and the afternoon interactive team building session.

Section 3. Special Meetings

A special WYC meeting may be called at the request of the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, the Advisor, or WYC Chair. A quorum must be met to proceed with the meeting.

Section 4. Governing Procedure

All meetings of the WYC shall be open to the public at all times. *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all meetings, with the Advisor serving as parliamentarian reference.

Section 5. WYC Quorum

To hold a meeting, a quorum, one more than one half of the active membership, shall be present. If a quorum is not achieved, no formal business may take place.

Section 6. Voting

Members of the WYC shall vote on all motions or actions before the WYC. Members shall abstain from a vote when a conflict of interest arises. Conflict of interest shall be defined as referred to in the newest available *Robert's Rules of Order*, and any subsequent editions, and Maine State Statutes.

Section 7. Information Process

- a. The Secretary shall keep a public record, minutes, of each meeting and distribute them electronically to members in a timely manner.
- b. When the Secretary is aware that they will be absent at a meeting, it is

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their responsibility beforehand to ask another member to take the minutes and electronically distribute them in their stead, as well as ask that person to keep track of excused absences and unexcused absences. Should the Secretary's non-attendance be a very unexpected, last-minute incident, the Vice-Chair will cover their duties for that meeting. Such coverage is anticipated to not be a regular occurrence.

Section 8. Commitment to Serve

Members of the WYC shall remain committed to the WYC "*Commitment to Serve*" statement that he/she signed at the time of application, which states, "*If selected to serve on the Waterville Youth Council, I agree to work in a spirit of teamwork with my fellow peers, the WYC Advisor, Council Liaison, other members of the WYC, municipal officials, municipal staff, and community members with the understanding that I have been provided with a unique opportunity to represent my peers in a positive light and effectively contribute on behalf of all youth within our community.*"

Section 9. Behavior

- a. As representatives of Waterville youth, members of the WYC shall strive to follow the "*Commitment to Serve*" (Article VII, Section 9) agreed to on the WYC application. Thus, their behavior should reflect the integrity and accountability that the position merits. Acting in an inappropriate manner, whether it be at an WYC meeting or during non-meeting time, may be just cause for dismissal.
- b. Upon the occurrence of an WYC member acting in an inappropriate manner, the Advisor and Council Liaison shall jointly submit to the City Manager a recommendation to address the behavior. The City Manager shall reserve the final authority as to discipline of an WYC member ranging from verbal warning to dismissal. Following the dismissal of a member, the WYC Chair may choose to leave the seat open or to present a new nominee to the membership in a timely manner.

ARTICLE VIII - ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

Section 1. Adoption

Upon a simple majority vote of the Waterville City Council, these by-laws shall be the by-laws by which the WYC abides. Any revisions to the by-laws by a two-thirds passage of the sitting WYC, or by a subsequent WYC, shall become effective only after a simple majority vote of the Waterville City Council. Dates of all amendments shall be so noted at the end of these by-laws.

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Section 2. Amendment

These by-laws may be amended with a two-thirds vote of the WYC and a simple majority confirmation vote of the Waterville City Council. A proposed change to the by-laws must be introduced in writing at an WYC meeting or via email prior to the vote being taken on such an amendment(s).

Section 3. Informal Acts

The WYC may create subcommittees; pass “*advisory opinion*” resolutions; make recommendations to the Waterville City Council; or undertake appropriate expenditures of WYC funds, the latter in consultation with the Advisor. The youth council shall, however, not proceed in any way that undermines or serves to inappropriately alter these by-laws or the laws and policies of the City of Waterville or the State of Maine.

Section 4. Adopt-A-Spot Beautification

Should a sitting WYC vote to undertake a beautification Adopt-A-Spot or some kind of greenery nursery towards City beautification, each WYC membership thereafter will continue maintenance of such an area.