



**City of Niagara Falls
Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee**

Terms of Reference

HISTORY

In 1999, the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee (MYAC) was established through the Community Policing Committee's Safe City Campaign.

In March 2001, MYAC hosted a Youth Forum at The Optimist Club to determine the recreation and leisure needs of youth ages 14-20 years in Niagara Falls. One of the outcomes of the Youth Forum was a need for a Skate Park in the City. Subsequently, numerous public meetings were held and surveys were completed to further substantiate the need.

On November 26, 2001, the MYAC made a request to City Council requesting funds and a site for the Skate Park. City Council approved the request and allocated funds for the design and construction of the Skate Park and also allocated space on the site of the Community Centre.

On June 18, 2005, MYAC, together with the City of Niagara Falls, held the Grand Opening of the Skate Park. MYAC raised and contributed more than \$12,000 to assist the City with the Skate Park.

Since 1999, the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee has been a voice for the youth of Niagara Falls, advised council on important issues when required, acted as advocates regarding environmental issues and mental health, raised funds and supplies for local charities and causes, volunteered many hours, and hosted countless activities and events.

MANDATE

The City of Niagara Falls Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee will provide a voice for the youth of Niagara Falls, while advising Council of important recreational and social issues concerning the City's younger population.

PURPOSE

1. To keep Council informed of important matters affecting youth.
2. To occasionally host youth workshops/forums, conduct surveys to address concerns and needs that affect youth.
3. To act as a positive advocate for youth.
4. To actively seek input from youth on important matters.
5. To support events created by the Committee that relate to the mandate.
6. To provide leadership experience for youth.

VISION

It is the vision of the Committee to provide a communication link between the youth of Niagara Falls and City Council and to encourage facilities and programs that will enhance the quality of life, health and well-being of the youth in our community.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall be made up of a maximum of twenty-eight (28) people, comprised of five (5) youth from each of the five local high schools, two (2) additional youth from other schools (French language, private, etc.), and one (1) MYAC Alumni. All MYAC members must be residents of Niagara Falls.

Representatives from the Niagara Regional Police Services, Niagara Falls Public Library, and other complimentary organizations, along with a staff member of the Recreation & Culture office and the Mayor's Office will serve as facilitators and liaise with the Committee and be non-voting members.

The Mayor will be an ex-officio member of the Committee.

TERM

The minimum term of office is one (1) school year (September to June). Once appointed, Committee Members will be considered for reappointment each year for the duration of their high school enrollment. At the completion of each year the staff liaison will make a recommendation to Principals the reappointment of active and contributing Committee Members. The Committee's success hinges on the experience and guidance of returning members. Students may choose not to reapply due to competing priorities.

APPOINTMENT TO THE MAYOR'S YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In order to be considered for appointment to the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee all students, including returning students, must complete a Niagara Falls Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee application.

Applications for representatives from the five local high schools will be administered and reviewed at each of the high schools. The selection of student representatives will be carried out by the respective high school principal or an appropriate representative. **Selection Notes:** It is strongly recommended that the students selected, including those reappointed, represent each of the grades and that at least one of the members be a member of Student Council.

Interested Alumni must apply in writing to the staff liaison or the Mayor's office.

Applications for representatives from other schools (French Language, private, etc.) and for the Alumni representative will be administered, reviewed, and selected by the MYAC staff liaison(s). A maximum of two students will be selected each year.

In the event that Committee vacancies occur, the staff liaison will contact the appropriate high school principal and request the appointment of new members.

MYAC EXECUTIVE TEAM

The Executive Team will be comprised of an elected Chair/Co-Chairs, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Principal Liaisons. In addition, Chair/Co-Chairs, Photographer, and Marketing Representatives will be elected for each of the established Sub-Committees and/or on an event by event basis.

ELECTIONS

Elections will be held each year for the position of Chair/Co-Chairs, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Principal Liaisons. Committee Members running for Executive Positions will be allowed 1-2 minutes to speak. Vote will be made by ballot. In order to be considered as Co-Chairs, two individuals must run together as a team.

RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF CHAIR/CO-CHAIR

1. To chair all meetings of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee.
2. To prepare all agendas for the Committee meetings with the assistance of the staff liaison(s).
3. To motivate individual members and recognize each member's contribution to the Committee.
4. To delegate appropriate tasks or responsibilities to individual Committee members.
5. To network with student councils and other youth organizations.
6. To make presentations to City Council with the assistance of the staff liaison(s).
7. To attend Council meetings and participate in an advisory capacity when appropriate. A designate may be assigned as required.
8. To represent the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee at any social functions or other meetings where the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee's attendance is required.
9. To call additional meetings in consultation with the staff liaison(s) as necessary.
10. To lead workshops/public meetings, as required.

RESPONSIBILITY OF VICE-CHAIR

1. Assume all responsibilities for the Committee Chair or Co-Chairs in their absence.
2. Oversee all work of the Committee and foster a positive line of communication with Committee members.
3. Supervise attendance of Committee members at their respective meetings in consultation with the Committee Chair or Co-Chairs and staff liaison.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SECRETARY

1. Take minutes for all committee meetings and email to the staff liaison.
2. To ensure Committee meeting summaries are clear and concise. **Motions must be recorded.**
3. To record names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of Committee members.
4. Responsible for the official correspondence of the Committee.
5. To mark the attendance of Committee members at all meetings.
6. To mark the attendance of Committee members at all events.
7. To advise the Chair and the Staff liaison of any committee members that have missed three (3) meetings.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PRINCIPAL LIAISONS (5)

1. To advise their High School Principals of upcoming committee meetings and events.
2. To advise their High School Principals of any important issues relating to the Committee and the students of the High School.
3. To connect with student councils/governments to inform them of upcoming events or initiatives.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. To attend all meetings.
2. To participate on a minimum of one (1) Sub Committee.
3. To play an integral role to the Committee by actively participating and contributing to projects/special events coordinated by the Committee.
4. Must be an official member appointed by their respective high school principal to vote on issues.
5. Members must notify the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Committee and the staff liaison to inform of their absence from a meeting if they are unable to attend.
6. To propose to the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee projects and plans designed to assist in the fulfillment of the purposes of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee.
7. To contribute to MYAC in a positive way throughout their term.

ATTENDANCE AND REGRETS

When a Committee member misses three (3) regular committee meetings, without explanation or valid regrets, they may be asked to step down from the Committee. The same rule shall apply for each of the Sub Committees. Attendance discrepancies and decisions will be up to the discretion of the staff liaison.

Regrets should be sent as early as possible to the Chair or Co-Chairs, Sub Committee Chair, and/or the staff liaison.

In the case of a vacancy, the Committee may then contact the corresponding High School Principal and ask that another representative be sent as a replacement.

PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL

A. Decision Making

The Committee will approve by motion those matters it wishes to advise City Council.

A resolution of the Committee will be adopted on a motion, carried by simple majority vote. A quorum will be required. A quorum consists of a minimum 50% + 1 of the voting members of the Committee.

B. Meetings

Meetings of the Committee will normally be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. or at the call of the Chair. Meetings will generally be held at the MacBain Community Centre. Meetings will generally be open to the public.

C. Council Communication

A Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee will attend Council Meetings and participate in an advisory capacity when appropriate.

The Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee will provide a minimum of two (2) updates to City Council each year regarding their activities. The update may be in the form of a Council Deputation or a memorandum.

COMMITTEE PROJECTS/SPECIAL EVENTS

Based on the mandate and purpose, the Committee will establish its priorities at the beginning of each school year and develop an annual plan with which to focus its attention. Additionally, the Committee may address items referred to it by others.

The Committee may consider matters that members deem to be of importance and within the Committee's responsibilities. The Committee will also consider matters referred to it by Council or other Committees of Council. Additionally, the Committee may also consider matters identified by youth in the community. Such matters should be identified and explained in writing, addressed to the Chair. The Committee will consult with the staff liaison(s) regarding all matters and the corresponding work plan.

SUB-COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Sub-Committees may be formed at the discretion of the Committee for events, projects or initiatives. The following applies to all subcommittees:

1. Initial Sub-Committee budgets must be submitted in a timely fashion after resolution and must be approved by the Committee.
2. Any major variations to the initial subcommittee budgets must be brought to the Committee for approval.
3. It is recommended that each Sub-Committee elect a chair or co-chairs and a secretary.
4. A photographer and media representative may be elected for each sub-committee or on an event by event basis to ensure all events are promoted and covered properly.
5. The chair or co-chairs of each Sub-Committee will be responsible for setting meeting dates, ensuring a room is booked, and reminding Sub-Committee Members of meeting dates and responsibilities.
6. Sub Committees will consist of at least one representative from each of the five local high schools.

AMENDMENT OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee should be reviewed on an annual basis at the end of each year. The Committee may recommend revisions to the Terms of Reference which will require approval by City Council.