



Youth Council Meeting Minutes - September 21, 2022

Item 1 | Call to Order

- Catherine Dhingra called the meeting into order at 1:05 PM.

Item 2 | Attendance

- Ahmed Othman, Ali Atoui, Alla Othman, Elizabeth Menjivar, Juliana Spaulding, Madeline Naper, Matthew O'Brien, Paige Arkinstall, Sadie Lominac, Thomas Berinato, Vanessa Westlake

Item 3 | Public Comment

Item 4 | Welcome- Catherine Dhingra, Wakefield Youth Council Adult Advisor

- Catherine Dhingra introduced herself and explained her role as the adult advisor to the Youth Council, and that in the future, the chair of the Youth Council facilitates the meetings.

Item 5 | Youth Council Members Introductions

- Each member of the Youth Council introduced themselves with their name, grade, and an extracurricular activity.

Item 6 | Reorganization

A. Overview of Wakefield Youth Council Roles

- Catherine Dhingra gave an overview of each Youth Council role: the chair, vice-chair, and clerk.

B. Nominations & Elections for Chair

- Madeline Naper nominated Ali Atoui, and he declined the nomination.
- Ahmed Othman nominated himself, and he accepted the nomination.
- Vanessa Westlake nominated herself, and she accepted the nomination.
- Vanessa Westlake motioned a proposal for co-chairs, and the proposal was discussed by the council with several members expressing their thoughts on the proposal. The general consensus amongst those who spoke was that having co-chairs was unnecessary since the vice-chair position already existed, and having co-chairs might make running meetings more difficult. The motion was defeated with two votes Yea and nine votes Nay.
 - Ahmed Othman's nomination for chair was defeated with three votes Yea and eight votes Nay.



- Vanessa Westlake's nomination for chair succeeded with eight votes Yea and three votes Nay. Vanessa Westlake now became chair of the Youth Council.

C. Nominations & Election for Vice-Chair

- Madeline Naper nominated herself, and she accepted the nomination.
- Ali Atoui nominated himself, and he accepted the nomination.
- Madeline Naper's nomination for vice-chair succeeded with six votes Yea and five votes nay.
- Ali Atoui's nomination for vice-chair was defeated with five votes Yea and six votes Nay.
- Madeline Naper now became vice-chair of the Youth Council.

D. Nominations & Election for Clerk

- Alla Othman nominated herself, and Ahmed Othman seconded the nomination, and she accepted the nomination.
- Juliana Spaulding nominated Ali Atoui, and he accepted the nomination.
- Alla Othman's nomination for clerk was defeated with five votes Yea and six votes Nay.
- Ali Atoui's nomination for clerk succeeded with six votes Yea and five votes Nay. Ali Atoui now became clerk of the Youth Council.

Item 7 | Liaison Positions

- Catherine Dhingra explained that at the next meeting, the final liaison positions for each member will be released. She also stated that for those who have not yet filled out the liaison interest form from the orientation, she will hand them out again.

Item 8 | Initiative Ideas

- Catherine Dhingra explained some past initiatives the Youth Council has had and opened up discussion to continue past initiatives and establish new ones.
- Juliana Spaulding said that the Youth Council should continue the Snow Angels initiative, and that she'd lead it again even if she's not the liaison to the Council on Aging. Madeline Naper, Ali Atoui, and Vanessa Westlake all agreed. Vanessa Westlake also suggested expanding the program to leaf-cleanups, and Madeline Naper agreed. Catherine Dhingra also liked the idea, but suggested avoiding outright advertisement of it to avoid getting an influx of requests causing the Youth Council to become overwhelmed. Juliana Spaulding and Ali Atoui concurred. The motion to officially continue the Snow Angels program passed unanimously.
- Juliana Spaulding suggested continuing the Veterans Day Cleanup initiative, and Madeline Naper agreed, but also mentioned that the Youth Council should improve upon its organization and follow-through with the initiative. Catherine Dhingra noted that the Youth Council has a smaller budget, and that a greater number of people than expected showed up, leading to organizational difficulties. The motion to continue the Veterans Day Cleanup initiative passed unanimously.
- Paige Arkinstall suggested having a drive or fundraiser to raise awareness for women's feminine products due to the lack of access some women and girls have at school and home. Madeline Naper noted that she mentioned this last year, but did not pursue it. She also explained that the high school has started to put them into women's bathrooms, but she does not know about the situation in the middle school. Catherine Dhingra suggested to Paige Arkinstall to do more research about the situations in the town and explore the idea of doing a drive.

Item 9 | Wakefield Town Day

- Catherine Dhingra explained that Wakefield will be having its first town day on October 8 from 1-4 PM. She said that different organizations will be having informational tables, and asked what the Youth Council thinks it should do. Vanessa Westlake liked the idea of having a Youth Council table to increase youth interest in the council and also spread awareness of our initiatives. Ali Atoui agreed, noting that the Youth Council has struggled with its recognition amongst the youth community and could also take this as an opportunity to get more input on future initiatives and promote our social media pages. Ahmed Othman suggested having small activities for younger children, as well as advertise our projects. Madeline Naper concurred additionally.
- The proposal for the Wakefield Youth Council to have a table at Wakefield Town Day passed unanimously.
- Catherine Dhingra stated that a brief subcommittee would be beneficial to organize this, and Alla Othman, Juliana Spaulding, Ali Atoui, Ahmed Othman, and Madeline Naper would be interested in this.

Item 10 | Communications

- Ali Atoui stated what the Communications/Outreach subcommittee does for the Youth Council, explaining its outreach methods to the youth of Wakefield. He also noted that Madeline Naper runs the Instagram page.
- Catherine Dhingra suggested that the Communications/Outreach subcommittee handle the Town Day organization. Ali Atoui agreed with this.
- Madeline Naper gave an explanation of what the Youth Council's Instagram does, such as promoting our initiatives, meeting the members, and promoting initiatives of other boards. Catherine Dhingra mentioned that the Youth Council needs someone to run the Facebook page, and Madeline Naper said that she would handle this if no one else is interested.

Item 11 | Determine Next Meeting Date

- Catherine Dhingra explained that we do not have generally set meeting arrangements due to the differentiating and often-changing schedules of the members. Catherine Dhingra suggested meeting on early-release days, and Ahmed Othman agreed but stated that we should have a meeting every two weeks. Madeline Naper stated that the two week model worked better as it increased productivity and reduced meeting times as opposed to having a meeting a month. Paige Arkinstall stated that Doodle Polls helped and should be continued.
- Catherine Dhingra stated that going forward, the Youth Council will have meetings twice a month, one on a half-day and the other scheduled with a Doodle Poll.
- Catherine Dhingra questioned members on their thoughts on an attendance policy for members. Ahmed Othman said that a reasonable attendance policy could be useful. Ali Atoui said that an attendance policy would be positive on the Youth Council, especially because last term, some members stopped attending meetings with no notice and did not resign their seats, despite the fact that there were people who applied and did not get on due to membership constraints.

- Madeline Naper asked if every meeting would be hybrid, and Catherine Dhingra said that potentially the daytime meeting could be in-studio (with a Zoom option) and the evening meeting could be on Zoom.
- The motion to make meetings on half-days hybrid, and the other meetings on weeknights to be full-remote passed unanimously.

Item 12 | Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated

Item 13 | Adjournment

- Ali Atoui motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Thomas Berinato seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned unanimously.