



Youth Council Meeting Minutes - April 27, 2023

Item 1 | Call to Order

- Chair Vanessa Westlake called the meeting into order at 8:03 p.m.

Item 2 | Attendance

- Ahmed Othman, Ali Atoui, Alla Othman, Juliana Spaulding, Madeline Naper, Maya Palic, Matt O'Brien, Sadie Lominac, Thomas Berinato

Item 3 | Public Comment

- A Melrose City Council intern introduced himself and explained that he will be listening in on the meeting to see how the Youth Council operates.

Item 4 | Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 11, 2022 and April 5, 2023

- Catherine Dhingra stated that the November 11, 2022 meeting minutes would be ready for approval at the next meeting.
- Clerk Ali Atoui gave a summary of the meeting minutes from the prior, April 5, meeting. It was motioned to accept the minutes and subsequently seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

Item 5 | Vocational School Building Project Presentation

- Catherine Dhingra shared a presentation about information from the ensuing NEMT school building project and the concerns alongside it. These generally stem from environmental impacts and public transparency qualms. Discussions with the Town Engineer have ensued and the project must still be approved by the Conservation Commission. New additions would include great ADA compliance (i.e. ramps) and appropriate rainwater runoff due to its location on a hill.
- Town Councilor Jonathan Chines concurred with Catherine and further outlined the process that the NEMT school has gone through and will continue going through, alongside the process that the current WMHS has been going through.

Item 6 | Recycling & Sustainability Day Recap



- Vanessa Westlake gave a recap of the Youth Council's involvement in Rep. Kate Lipper-Garabedian's Recycling & Sustainability Day event, which took place on April 8, 2023. It was an opportunity to gain greater exposure for the Youth Council.
- Vanessa Westlake noted that some people asked if the Youth Council could accept donations, to which Catherine Dhingra responded yes, as it is included in the budget line, but the gifts must be presented to and approved by the Town Council. One who wishes to donate can reach out to Catherine Dhingra to subsequently present.
- Vanessa Westlake asked if the Youth Council is included in the budgeting process for the Town Council, to which Catherine Dhingra responded with no. Councilor Chines added how different committees apply for different budgets. FY24's budgeting process is just about over, but FY25 budget requests can be made before the end of the calendar year.

Item 7 | Warrior Clean Up

- This event will be taking place from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. on May 20 (rain date May 21). Flyers have gone up on Facebook, and Vanessa Westlake brought up posting it on Patch.
- Ali Atoui updated that Maggie Shaffer, Ahmed Othman, and himself will be meeting to create a video with WCAT for the event. Ali Atoui also stated that he reached out to the Recreation Department to email blast the event to its subscribers.

Item 8 | Youth Council Applications (2023-2024)

- Catherine Dhingra went over the application process for being on the Youth Council; they are due on May 10. Promotion is important for this so far. Jonathan Chines commented on the timeline as the Youth Council has traditionally interviewed and vetted applicants, before presenting them to the Town Council in June. The application period can be reopened if not enough apply.
- Ali Atoui will work with the subcommittee to promote this, through emailing Jason Pavey, the 5-12 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator to have teachers speak about it, reaching out to Jenn McDonald to work together to make a flyer for the event, school announcements, table at lunch in the cafeteria, reaching out to alumni, a series of posts, etc.

Item 9 | Liaison Updates

Item 10 | Communications Sub Committee Update

- The Youth Interest Survey is in its final stages, and will be further discussed at the Communications/Outreach Subcommittee.

Item 11 | Announcements

- Councilor Jonathan Chines gave updates from the Town Council. Town election just occurred and Councilors Mehreen Butt and Ed Dombroski were reelected to the Town Council, Kevin Piskadlo and Pete Davis were reelected and elected respectively, and many other board members were reelected or elected.

- He also updated on the Town Meeting, which will be happening on May 15. The warrant is full with legislative priorities for the town, including reviewing the town's bylaws. All registered voters can participate.
- Vanessa Westlake announced that a Youth Climate Council has been created, and any interested applicants can apply through the email Catherine Dhingra sent.
- She also updated on Sherri Oken from the WHRC and stated that the group will be having several events related to Juneteenth, Pride Month, and AAPI Heritage Month.

Item 11 | Determine Next Meeting Date

- May 10 is the next half day, and will be the next in-person meeting.

Item 12 | Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated

Item 13 | Adjournment

- Ali Atoui motioned to adjourn, then Madeline Naper subsequently seconded; the meeting was unanimously adjourned.