

MINUTES OF THE YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD  
CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA  
DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES BUILDING  
JUNE 9, 2020

A **Regular Meeting** of the Youth Advisory Board of the City of Peoria, Arizona was convened at 9875 N. 85<sup>TH</sup> Avenue in closed and virtual session at 4:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Leah Gilbertson, Madelyn Stuckey, Elena Andreyeva, Larisa Andreyeva Peter Bartos, Nikhila Basana, Ravi Bhakta, Cassidy Gatrost, Shaan Patel, Caillet Popelier, Madison Presmyk, Ritika Ravindran, Savana Rodriguez, Saanvi Tiwary, Dom Van Winkle

**Members Absent:** Natalie Awdisho-unexcused, Marin Clark-unexcused, Tyrin Clay-unexcused, Brighton Greathouse-unexcused, Addison Vinck-unexcused

**Municipal Officials Present:** Brian Carrico-Recreation Superintendent, Stephanie Mellring-Recreation Coordinator and Selena Ferreira-Administrative Assistant

**Audience:** 2 (virtually)

**Presentation:** None

**Note:** The order in which the items appear in the minutes is not necessarily the order in which they were discussed at the meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** All items listed with a “C” are considered to be routine by the Youth Advisory Board and were enacted by one motion.

**MINUTES:**

**1C Discussion and possible action to approve/excuse members absent from the May 19, 2020 regular meeting.**

**2C Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of May 19, 2020.**

A motion was made by Madelyn Stuckey to approve the consent agenda; the motion was seconded by Ritika Ravindran and the motion carried unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Community Based Presentation**

Five organizations attended the meeting to present their company ideas, function, mission and how the Youth Advisory Board could possibly help in their cause.

Caitlin Moore with Bloom 365 explained what her organization was and that their mission was to prevent teen dating abuse before it starts and how to have healthy and safe relationships. Bloom focused on youth lead peer advocate groups which centers around teen relationships and support. On the first Friday of each month this group wears different colors to support their cause and hopefully open discussion (ie: October is Domestic Violence month and purple is worn). They also offer virtual training. Madelyn Stuckey mentioned she and Leah both attended the Bloom training last year. She then asked how the YAB could support the cause. Caitlin asked for support on the “first Friday” campaigns and to wear the designated color. Savana asked about ways to help through social media. Caitlin asked to share Bloom Instagram feed.

Ruth Langford with HART Pantry introduced herself as the founder and explained how HART is helping at risk teens by providing them with food, sometimes clothes, Christmas gifts and more. Her non-for-profit group helps upwards of 300 teens per week during the school year. Kids come by way of school counselors, teachers, etc. Ruth is seeking to help more kids and would like the YAB to offer their support to find more teens in need. Savana attends Peoria High School and has seen HART Pantry at work in her area.

Brent Whiting and Andrea Diaz both represented Tomorrow We Vote. They showed a 2-minute video to explain what they are about. TWV's main goal is to help young people register to vote. Last year they helped almost 900 students to register. They demonstrated how YouTube and other media outlets discuss the latest bands and celebrities but nothing about politics, how many counties are in Arizona or vital knowledge about how things are done. They hope the YAB can spread the word about the importance of voting. Larisa and Elena work with TWV and have helped register 90 students at Peoria High School, where they attend too. Leah asked how she could have a voice. Andrea responded by saying, “voting IS being heard”.

Karasi Colter represented Dsquared-Homes for the Homeless. As a young teen herself, she's looking to recruit more teens to help mental ill homeless people and break the stigmas around this culture. Her group makes bed pads using plastic grocery bags, donates hygiene bags, and cultivates food and water drives and more. Currently their only organization operates in Phoenix and she would like to see the YAB possibly help create one in Peoria. Madelyn S. asked where some could donate grocery bags and what ages are Karasi looking for. Karasi said bags can be dropped off in south Phoenix and ages to help could be 13-17.

Robin Oden, Studio Manager from Ben's Bells showed us a product of her organization. It was a bell that was hand-made by 10 different people and promotes kindness. Seventeen years ago a mom lost her son and began to receive so much kindness from strangers. This moved her to the point she wanted to spread kindness too by leaving bells around the city with tags that read, “Be kind”. Today, Robin and her crew place about 100-150 bells throughout Phoenix each month. They have also expanded into Tucson. Ben's Bells have “to go” box in which you can make the crafts at home and drop them off when

done. Volunteers can be as young as 7 years old. Madison P. mentioned her school did a collaboration with Ben's Bells to complete a mural in her area. Robin hopes the YAB could participate in make bells and share this story on social media.

No action taken.

2. **Update on Youth Mental Health Awareness**

Savana reported to the board that the Social Media Committee is trying to reach out by way of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. They have laid the groundwork to expand using hashtags. Leah informed the board that our Mayor, Cathy Carlat declared May Youth Mental Health Awareness month with an official proclamation. Madelyn S. encouraged the board to "like", re-post posts and share content. No action taken.

3. **Youth Advisory Board Retreat**

Brian mentioned this was a good opportunity to welcome new members and become stronger as a board. Madelyn S. suggested doing something similar to last year's event and having an activity, eating, then planning the year. She then proceeded to ask if the board favored Tuesday (our regular meeting day) or a weekend? Board favored Tuesday. Then she presented two dates, either August 11<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>. Most everyone chose August 11<sup>th</sup>. No action taken.

4. **Engagement Opportunities for Ages 13-17**

Stephanie Mellring, Recreation Coordinator for the City of Peoria's Community Center elicited the board's help to come up with ideas that would engage teens in summer activities such as online gaming (E-games). Savana suggested organizing a dance. Stephanie also wanted to let everyone know that teens can earn volunteer hours for helping at the Community Center. Sixty hours equals a half credit for school. Please email Stephanie or Brian with any ideas you may have. No action taken

**Reports from Staff:**

5. Brain reached out to previous members and asked for input, how it was after YAB, after graduation, etc.
6. There will be seven seniors leaving the board this year. Brian thanked them for their service, especially Leah for serving as Chair.

**Reports from Youth Council Liaisons:** Ritika had nothing to report.

**Reports from Board:** Leah-graduation ceremony on 07/03/20, met her new roommate, dorm has no air conditioning. Madelyn S-dad's been sick, but better now and Hamilton musical on 07/03/20. Larisa-working with Tomorrow We Vote. Elena-Working with Tomorrow We Vote and volunteered at the Community Center and Library. Peter-he and Dom organized a peaceful protest. Nikhila-this is her last meeting, thanked everyone, learned a lot, sad to leave. Ravi-studying for ACT's and seeking colleges. Cassidy-serving on YAB since 7<sup>th</sup> grd, now a senior, very sad to leave. Shaan-sending college submissions. Caillet-on YAB all throughout high school, all the people and organizations was a huge experience. Madison P.-in cross country. Ritika-graduation ceremony on 07/02/20, this is her last meeting, thanked all for the opportunities, liaison position and

trip to DC. Savana-doing essay for GCC and thanked all the seniors. Dom-audition got postponed.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was duly adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

---

Leah Gilbertson, Chair

---

Selena Ferreira, Administrative Assistant