

Youth Council Handbook

(2021/2022)



Introduction

Our Mission

The purpose of the Youth Council of the City of Happy Valley is to serve the youth of the city of Happy Valley in such a manner that their lives might be joyous, fulfilling, respectful and just. Councilors are to behave in such a way as to provide a role model of good citizenship and conduct.

In 2010, the City embarked on a mission to involve local high school students in a forum where they could exchange diverse opinions on matters of importance to their peer group in a safe and non-judgmental atmosphere. Professionally moderated, this first Youth Town Hall captured big ideas and enthusiasm, and a follow-up work session led to the groundwork of the City's first Youth Council. Student leaders from local high schools were selected to work under the guidance of city government representatives, to give teens a voice and a stake in their Happy Valley community.

This advisory board of teen advocates consists of members who must be of high school age and reside in the City of Happy Valley. Vacancies on the panel are filled by the election of new members as voted on by the sitting Youth Council. Youth Councilors collaborate on ideas and goals to enhance their community and look to the city's elected leaders - Mayor and City Council - for mentorship and assistance. Monthly council meetings are held to attend to the business of organizing Youth Council events and planning their service and participation in other community events sponsored by the City.

Ongoing community goals include drug and alcohol abuse awareness through annual *Rx Drug Turn-in Days* and an Anti-Bullying campaign with its cornerstone *Bully Block Day* event. To identify other current teen issues, they continue with the founding activity of a yearly *Youth Town Hall* where they work with other local teens to develop new ideas for projects to enhance their community. *Teen Driver Safety Event* is one more annual event that has come from the workings of the Youth Council. Here teens can experience first-hand how quickly distracted driving could have devastating consequences. Using driving simulators and impairment goggles, and hard-hitting testimonials from nurses and others affected by distracted driving, students who attend the event have their eyes opened to the realities of distracted driving.

Their motto is **PEER²** which stands for “**p**ositively influence, **p**rotect, **e**mpower, **e**nrich, **e**ncourage, **e**ngage, **r**epresent and **r**espect” the teens in their community.



(PEER)²
: positively influence, protect,
empower, enrich, encourage, engage,
represent, respect



The Program

The Happy Valley Youth Council is an advisory board serving as teen advocates in their community. Youth Councilors collaborate on ideas and information and look to the City Council for mentorship and assistance. The Youth Council encourages community members to join their events and attend their monthly council meetings.

Meetings

The Youth Council's calendar runs in concurrence with the school year, from September to June. During these months, meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. There is a work session from 6pm-7pm, followed by regular session at 7:00pm in Happy Valley City Hall Council Chamber. Frequently, additional meetings are necessary to plan events.

City Awareness

Youth Councilors commit to attending one of the following meetings in a calendar year when absent from a regular scheduled Youth Council meeting. Attendance at council and committee meetings provide our Youth Councilors a learning experience by an active mentorship with officials at various levels of government, and to jointly participate in the delivery of their services.

Happy Valley Traffic and Public Safety Meeting

Contact: Steve Campbell - Director of Community Services & Public Safety
503-783-3818

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at City Hall beginning at 7:00pm.

Happy Valley City Council Meeting

Contact: Kara Kerpan – City Recorder
503-783-3826

Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at City Hall beginning at 7:00pm.

Happy Valley Planning Commission Meeting

Contact: Cheryl Whitehead – Planning Assistant
503-783-3812

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at City Hall beginning at 7:00pm.



The Program *continued*

Happy Valley Youth Council Events

Each year the Youth Council sets off on an end-of-summer annual retreat trip where they will become acquainted with their new councilors and set the Council's yearly goals and agendas. As youth representatives of their community, they will strive to tackle issues of importance affecting their peer group and take strides to improve the status quo through important community events.

Events may change from year to year, but past events have included:

RX Drug Turn-In Day: held annually supported by Sunrise Water and Providence.

Bully Block Day: to prevent and block inappropriate posts on social media sites.

Youth Town Hall: youth forum for local teens to share ideas & discuss peer topics

Teen Driver Safety Event: teens experience consequences of bad driving decisions through the use of driving simulators, 'impairment' goggles and hear guest speakers and demonstrations on the perils of distracted driving.

Happy Valley Community Events

During their tenure, Youth Councilors attend as many community events as they can. The following annual community events are some in which they participate.

Happy Valley Dumpster Day

2nd Saturday in June from 8:00am to 12:00pm

4th of July Family Festival

July 4th from 11:00am to 2:00pm

National Night Out

1st Tuesday in August from 5:00pm to 9:00pm

Harvest Fest

2nd Saturday in October 12 from 11am to 3pm

Tree Lighting

1st Sunday in December from 4pm to 6pm

Requirements

The Happy Valley Youth Council elects its members and councilors. Each member of the Youth Council is expected to prioritize his/her Council activities and responsibilities at the same level as their other commitments. The importance of regular meeting attendance must be stressed. Event planning requires participation from a unified Council whose members share equally in the effort and commitment level to reach established goals.



Council Expectations, Bylaws and Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct

A member of the Happy Valley Youth Council is to conduct oneself in such a manner that is both respectful to and conscientious of the office that one holds, knowing the potential effects of one's behavior in light of that office. Each Councilor must maintain good citizenship in their school and community and a minimum of a 3.5 GPA. This includes but is not limited to anti-bullying, no drugs and no alcohol. All Councilors must embody professionalism and respect the time and efforts of their co-councilors. Actions that are disruptive and that cause inefficiencies during meetings and events will not be tolerated. If a member fails to sufficiently fulfill this code, he/she is subject to censure and possible removal from their seat on the council, after a majority vote from the other members of the council.

A member of the Happy Valley Youth Council is to attend as many meetings as possible, including but not limited to formal meetings, informal work sessions, council events and meetings pertaining thereto. A Councilor will be subject to review by their peer Councilors if they have one (1) unexcused or three (3) excused absences. The review can lead to probation or eventual termination from the group.

Bylaws

In order to serve on the Happy Valley Youth Council, one must reside within the City of Happy Valley.

Members of the Happy Valley Youth Council may fill any of 6 roles: Member, Media Representative, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Chair, and Chair. The latter four may only be filled by members who are juniors or seniors in high school during their term of service.

On the Happy Valley Youth Council, a term of service in any particular role, is one session of council. A session of council is defined as the span of time between August and June. An individual is not barred from serving for more than one term of service, however he/she must be elected again the following term.

Once a Councilor has been on the Youth Council for two years, said Councilor must schedule a recommitment interview with an Advisor. Recommitment interview is a time for the council member to make a recommitment to the Council. If they choose not to be on Youth Council anymore, this is the time they can step down.

Additions to the Happy Valley Youth Council may only be made to fill an empty seat. The applicants for the open seats are interviewed by the council toward the end of the session preceding the session in which they wish to participate. Should a Councilor choose to leave the Youth Council mid-term, the remaining Councilors will use their discretion in filling the vacant seat.

