

SAMPLE SYC BYLAWS



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Article I. Preamble

Section 1: We, the youth of the _____, in conjunction with the _____, to construct a more formal venue to voice our concerns, create the _____. As a representative body of _____ youth, the Council aims to provide an opportunity for youth to have a formal role in local decision-making while assisting and advising the _____ in addressing youth issues.

Article II. Authorization

Section 1: This council of the _____ of _____ shall be under the jurisdiction of the _____.

Article III. Conduct of Business

Section 1: The council shall adopt bylaws for the orderly conduct of its business.

Article IV. Name

Section 1: The name of this council shall be the _____; hereinafter referred to as the _____ located at _____.

Article V. Commission Seal

Section 1: The seal and logo of the _____ shall be as shown above.

Article VI. Purpose

Section 1: The purpose of the council is to actively involve youth in policy issues affecting them, broaden the scope of youth leadership in city affairs, promote experiential learning of the functions of government, develop healthy citizenry habits for the future of the community, and promote public awareness of the strengths and abilities of youth. The council shall provide an opportunity for the youth of _____ to acquire a greater knowledge of and appreciation for our political system through active participation within it. The council shall collect all information relevant to advising and assisting the _____ on the effects of legislative and educational policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the children and youth of _____. The _____ shall refer any youth and children issues to _____ for comment and recommendation. The council shall have 12 days to respond. This referral requirement shall not apply to any matter where immediate action by the _____ is necessary to protect the public interest.¹⁴

Article VII. Goals

The goals of the _____ shall be to:

Section 1: Promote civic mindedness and participation in the city among youth as well as to give them an invested interest in city affairs;

Section 2: Help the city be more aware of youth issues;

Section 3: Give future leaders real world experience to help them in life;

Section 4: Help ensure that governmental policies meet the needs of young people;

Section 5: Provide leadership in research and analysis on youth issues;

Section 6: Provide a powerful youth voice in the _____;

Section 7: Facilitate communication between young people and the government;

Section 8: Design and manage services and programs to maximize young people's participation in the _____ community;

Section 9: Ensure and encourage the active participation of youth in all spheres of society and in decision-making processes at the local level;

Section 10: Promote education, training in democratic processes and the spirit of citizenship and civic responsibility of young men and women with an aim of strengthening and facilitating their commitment to, participation in and full integration into society.

Article VIII. Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the _____ shall be to:

Section 1: Act as an advisory board to the _____.

Section 2: Develop and make recommendations on programs which promote collaboration between public and private organizations in delivery of services that foster positive development of _____'s youth.

Section 3: Facilitate improved coordination and cooperation among youth-serving agencies and local government agencies.

Section 4: Identify and make recommendations on conditions which hinder or prevent _____'s youth from becoming healthy, productive members of the community.

Section 5: Communicate accurate and timely information concerning issues facing _____'s youth and coordinate community-wide responses to those issues.

Section 6: Address and take recommendations concerning the implementation of the Violence Prevention Plan.

Section 7: Identify the concerns and needs of the children and youth of _____. Examine existing social, economic, educational, and recreational programs for children and youth.

Section 8: Develop and propose plans that support or improve such programs, and make recommendations to the _____.

Section 9: Identify the unmet needs of _____'s children and youth through personal contact with these young people, school officials, church leaders, and others.

Section 10: Hold public forums in which both youth and adults are encouraged to participate.

Section 11: Elicit the interest, support, and mutual cooperation of private groups and citywide organizations that initiate and sponsor recommendations addressing the social, economic, educational, and recreational needs of children and youth in _____.

Section 12: Advise the _____ City Council about how such recommendations could be coordinated in the communities and/or schools to eliminate duplication in cost and effort.

Section 13: Advise about available sources of governmental and private funding for youth programs.

Section 14: Submit recommendations to the _____ City Council about juvenile crime prevention, job opportunities for youth, recreational activities for teenagers, opportunities for effective participation by youth in the governmental process, and changes in city regulations that are necessary to improve the social, economic, educational, and recreational advantages for children and youth.

Section 15: Respond to requests for comment and recommendation on matters referred to the Commission by officers, departments, agencies, boards, commissions and advisory committees of the _____.

Section 16 : Perform other related functions assigned by the _____.

Article IX. Membership

Section 1: The council shall consist of thirty (30) voting members, each of whom shall be between the ages of 11 and 18 years old at the time of appointment.

Section 2: The _____ shall appoint the thirty (30) members to the council based on applications filed during a set filing period.¹⁶

Section 3: The _____ shall appoint thirty (30) youth applicants that reside within Durham and/or attend a school within _____ County. The _____ shall ensure racial, socioeconomic, cultural and educational diversity in their appointments.

Section 4: Resignation

Section 4.1: A member who wishes to resign from the council shall be required to submit a resignation to his/her appointing authority. The council requires that the resigning member then submit a copy of this letter to the Operations Officer.

Section 5: Vacancies

Section 5.1: In the event of a vacancy on the council, the Operations Officer shall inform the appointing authority that the council would like to review applications and make recommendations to the authority without opening another application filing period. Applications on current file will be the only applicants included in this process.

Article X. Offices

Section 1: The elected officers of the _____ shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Government Affairs Officer, Operations Officer, Community Affairs Officer, and Media and Public Relations Officer, etc.

Section 2: Terms and Vacancies

Section 2.1: Any council may hold the position of Chairperson, Secretary, Governmental Affairs Officer, Operations Officer, Community Affairs Officer, and Media and Public Relations Officer following elections. The Secretary shall not be elected but appointed by the Chairperson.

Section 2.2: The elected officers shall serve one (1) year terms, following the calendar terms of the full council.

Section 2.3: No Chairperson shall run for more than one officer position at the same time.

Section 2.4: No officer shall hold more than one officer's position at the same time.

Section 2.5: No officer shall hold the same position for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Section 2.6: Any officer can be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote by full council for any reasons deemed necessary by the council

Section 2.7: Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in a manner similar to that which the member was initially elected.¹⁷

Section 2.8: A member may nominate himself/herself for an office or have someone else nominate them, providing the person accepts the nomination. Elections will happen in writing and results will be announced to the public. If there are more than two (2) candidates, and neither receives more than fifty percent (50%) of the votes, a run-off will be held. The person with the majority vote in the run-off shall be elected to the offices.

Section 3: Duties of Officers

Section 3.1: The Chairperson

Section 3.1.1: Facilitate council and Executive Committee meetings;

Section 3.1.2: Motivate and encourage active participation by all members at meetings and in projects;

Section 3.1.3: Uphold and enforce the bylaws;

Section 3.1.4: Meet with the director weekly to check in and discuss council business;

Section 3.1.5: Be responsible in assigning tasks under the jurisdiction of other officers. (Recommended Skills: Public speaking skills, leadership skills, group facilitation skills that will ensure participation of members at meetings and in projects, motivational, inclusive, flexible schedule with free hours during the day.)

Section 3.2: The Government Affairs Officer:

Section 3.2.1: Serve as the point person on receiving, monitoring, and reporting pending legislation to the council

Section 3.2.1: Ensure that Commissioners build relationships with the _____ by meeting about upcoming legislation

Section 3.2.3: Check to make sure members are meeting with appointing authorities regarding pending legislations.

Section 3.2.4: Solicit interest and participation of members in writing and get support for legislation.

Section 3.2.5: Advise committees on drafting legislation before it goes before a governing body. (Recommended Skills: Interest in governance and policy, leadership skills, public speaking skills, organizational skills, facilitation skills, quick learner, able to teach and engage as many Youth members as possible.)¹⁸

Section 3.3 The Operations Officer:

Section 3.3.1: Facilitate council and Executive Committee meetings in the absence of the Chairperson

Section 3.3.2: Ensure committees and liaisons are fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

Section 3.3.3: Mediate all internal conflicts unless they involve the Operations Officer, in which case, the Chairperson will mediate any grievances.

Section 3.3.4: Monitors attendance and report delinquent members to the Executive Committee

Section 3.3.5: Coordinate recommendations of a Youth council candidate to appointing authority in the event of a vacancy.

Section 3.3.6: Oversee all administrative functions on behalf of the council.

Section 3.3.7: Coordinate social training events with the assistance of staff. (Recommended Skills: Organizational skills, ability to work well with people and encourage/urge them, facilitation/conflict mediation skills, ability to relate well to different kinds of people.)

Section 3.4: The Community Affairs Officer:

Section 3.4.1: Co-coordinate (with the Media and Public Relations Officer) media, public relations, outreach and educational material on behalf of the council.

Section 3.4.2: Work with staff to develop an annual outreach plan for the council.

Section 3.4.3: Coordinate community meetings and council presentations at schools, agencies, and events.

Section 3.4.5: Work with the Government Affairs Officer to coordinate members testimony at legislative hearings.(Recommended Skills: Organizational skills, strong people and communications skills, outgoing, dependable, public speaking skills, ability to relate to different groups of people, strong familiarity with _____)

Section 3.5: The Media and Public Relations Officer:

Section 3.5.1: Co-coordinate (with community Affairs Officer) media, public relations, outreach and educational material on behalf of the council.

Section 3.5.2: Coordinate the Council's newsletter.

Section 3.5.3: Work with staff, develop media strategy for the council, which may include press releases, press kits for the media and public and maintain a web page.¹⁹

Section 3.5.4: Coordinate the production of the Annual Report.(Recommended Skills: Organizational skills, writing skills, public speaking skills, experience with media or willingness to learn, dependable)

Section 4: Terms and Vacancies

Section 4.1: The elected officials shall serve one-year terms, following the calendar terms of the full council.

Section 4.2: No member shall run for more than one officer position at the same time.

Section 4.3: No officer shall hold more than one officer's position at the same time.

Section 4.4: No officer shall hold the same position for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Section 4.5: Any officer can be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the full council for any reason deemed necessary by the council that is not discriminatory or biased.

Section 4.6: Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in a manner similar to that which the member was initially elected.

Article XI. Meetings and Procedures

Section 1: All meetings of the council shall be open to the public and shall conform to the North Carolina Open Meetings Law, B.S. Chapter 143, Article 33C.

Section 2: Special Meetings

Section 2.1: The Chairperson or a majority of the council has the power to call a special meeting of the council. In addition, the Executive Committee shall also have the power to call a special meeting of the council, if a minimum of three Executive committee members vote to do so. For a special meeting, an agenda and 72 hours notice to the public must be provided. Sixteen (16) members of the council must be present in order to conduct business.

Section 3: Quorum and Voting Procedure

Section 3.1: The Presence of a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum (half plus one) for all purposes.

Section 3.2: The affirmative vote of a simple-majority of the members shall be required for the approval of any matter.

Section 4: Setting the Agenda²⁰

Section 4.1: The Chairperson and members of the Executive Committee can place new items on the agenda for the next council meeting in between council meetings. Any council member is free to propose agenda items.

Section 5: Public Comments

Section 5.1: The council and all committees and boards of the council shall hold meetings open to the public in full compliance with these bylaws. The council encourages the participation of interested persons. The Chairperson may limit time permitted for public comment consistent with these bylaws. Each person wishing to speak on an item before the council at a regular or special meeting shall be permitted to be heard once for up to three (3) minutes.

Article XII. Attendance

Section 1: Automatic Resignation of Members

Section 1.2: members shall not abuse the attendance policy. Absences or tardiness may result in automatic resignation from the council as described in this attendance policy.

Article XIII. Committees and Boards

Section 1: Executive Committee

Section 1.1: The Executive committee shall be composed of the council officers, meet twice a month and provide the internal oversight of the full council. All meetings are open to any member and to the public.

Section 1.2: The Executive Committee responsibilities are to:

Section 1.2.1: Create, determine size, and select members of committees as required, and remove members if necessary. Each committee must meet the same public notice requirements.

Section 1.2.2: Call special meetings on behalf of the council. The Executive Committee must have a minimum of three votes in order to do so.

Section 1.2.3: Advise the council during emergency or extenuating circumstances on actions to take. In the event that the council does not have a regularly scheduled meeting in time to advise the _____ on legislation, the Executive Committee may state the position it will recommend to the full council. The legislation shall then be placed on the next council meeting's agenda to permit the Commission to determine its position.²¹

Section 1.2.4: Investigate all improper behavior or bylaw infractions by members and make recommendations for action to the full council.

Section 1.2.5: Monitor council attendance, make recommendations regarding authorizing absences, and review and make recommendations to the full council regarding any member's request for leave of absence.

Section 1.2.6: Review the council budget.

Section 1.2.7: Discuss and finalize council agendas.

Section 1.2.8: Individual members of the Executive committee are required to submit a detailed written annual report to the new officers of the new term.

Section 1.2.9: Make recommendations on applicants to the council in occurrence of a vacancy and in absence of the Operations Officer. The council will then present such recommendations to the full council for approval.

Section 2: Jurisdiction of the Executive Committee

Section 2.1: Only the Executive Committee members are allowed to vote on Executive Committee business. Decisions of the Executive Committee require a minimum of three (3) votes.

Section 2.2: Any unsolvable concerns of the Executive Committee shall be cast to the full council for resolution.

Section 2.3: The full council has the power to override or vet any decision made by the Executive board with a majority vote.

Section 3: Youth Advisory Board

Section 3.1: The Youth Advisory Board shall be comprised of 15 youth that sought appointments to the council but did not get appointed. Those youth would be chosen by the full council.

Section 3.2: The Youth Advisory Board responsibilities are:

Section 3.2.1: To attend monthly council meetings

Section 3.2.2: To participate with council members in the planning, organizing, coordinating and carrying out of various activities.

Section 3.2.3: To research information needed by the full council on various topics, matters, and issues.

Section 3.2.4: To provide information about different activities within their respective schools and communities.

Section 3.2.5: To assist the council with community projects.

Article XIV. Annual Report

Section 1: The _____ shall prepare and submit to the _____ a work plan by the beginning of July of each fiscal year with the assistance of the Youth council coordinator. The work plan shall provide a comprehensive listing of all work objectives for the upcoming fiscal year and all anticipated youth development activities, initiatives and projects to be carried out during the upcoming fiscal year.

Article XV: Transfer from Current to New Term

Section 1: At the first meeting of the new term, if the Chairperson has been appointed to the council, he/she shall preside of the council and explain that new officers will be elected at the second meeting.

Section 2: If the current Chairperson has been replaced, the Operations Officers shall calendar for consideration at the next meeting a vote on an interim Chair. The interim Chair shall preside until a Chair and other officers are elected at the second meeting of the new term.

Section 3: All members who are not replaced by their appointing authorities may continue to serve until they are replaced.

Section 4: The council shall provide a full report to the new appointed members of the council.

Article XVI. Youth Council Coordinator Role

Section 1: The Youth Council Coordinator responsibilities are to facilitate the day-to-day operations of the Council and the management, development, and representation of the Youth council's mission goals and actions.

Section 2: The Youth Commission Coordinator shall work:

Section 3.1: To ensure active youth participation in _____ city government as well as educational policies and programs;

Section 3.2: To develop the leadership skills of young people;

Section 3.3: To build a stronger young movement through collaborating with community members and organizations;

Section 3.4: To create a safe space in which supportive, honest, and respectful relationships amongst members and Staff thrive;23

Section 3.5: To share insight, history, and vision in order to provide the best possible members experience in the present and in the future.

Article XVII. Amendments:

Section 1: The bylaws of this council may be created, repealed, amended or reworded with a majority vote of the full council. Changes made to the bylaws must be placed on the agenda before the next full Commission meeting for approval.

Section 2: A record of all changes of any kind of the bylaws must be documented. The exact change must be recorded and have the Chairperson's, Vice Chairperson's and Operations Officer's signatures, the date, and must be properly filed. In addition, a current copy of the bylaws, with the most recent amendments reflected, must be maintained by council staff.