

MINUTES
The City of Crystal Lake
PROCEEDINGS OF THE YOUTH COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL
October 10, 2024 Special Meeting
Aaron T. Shepley City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL

1. Call to Order

Mayor Haig Haleblian called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. Thursday, October 10, 2024.

2. Roll Call/Attendance

Commissioners Charlie Benton, Leo Camasta, Andrew Cioper, Jackson Lisle, Sunny Tomberlin, and Lauren Wolfe were present. Commissioner Alyssa Theo Johnston was absent.

Mayor Haleblian and Councilmembers Denise Smith and Ian Philpot were present.

City Manager Eric Helm and Deputy City Manager Nick Hammonds were also present.

3. Commissioner Introductions

Nick Hammonds led the Commissioners and Councilmembers through an introduction exercise.

4. Public Presentation

Mayor Haleblian asked if there was anyone in the public who wished to speak on an item not found on the agenda. No one wished to speak. Mayor Haleblian closed public presentation.

5. Commission Purpose and Objectives

Councilmember Smith provided an overview of the objectives of the Youth Commission. She stated that the Commission members are encouraged to engage with other youths in the community to bring items to the Commission meetings. Members of the public can speak at public comment during the Commission meetings to bring new items to the City's attention.

Councilmember Smith provided an overview of how the Youth Commission came to fruition. She stated that she and Councilmember Philpot attended a roundtable discussion at a recent Illinois Municipal League conference regarding youth commissions in other communities. Councilmember Smith stated that Mayor Haleblian was supportive of the City Council thinking outside of the box. Mayor Haleblian confirmed that he has been eager to start the Youth Commission, and Councilmember Smith's efforts have brought us to the first Youth Commission meeting today.

Mayor Haleblian discussed how impressed he was with the Youth Commission member's resumes, but more importantly, he has been impressed with the character of each Commission member. Mayor Haleblian stated that he enjoyed meeting with each Commission member individually, and the intellect and maturity level of each applicant was astounding. Councilmember Smith stated that her goal for the Youth Commission is for each member to understand that they can make a difference. She discussed the importance of new leaders coming into the world, and that you do not have to be the loudest person in the room to be a leader.

6. Mayor and City Council Objectives for the Commission

Councilmember Smith discussed the role of the Youth Commission. The Commission will serve as an advisory body providing guidance to the City Council on youth matters in Crystal Lake. Mayor

Haleblian stated that the Youth Commission provides a perspective that the City Council may not see or hear. He further stated that he and the City Council are excited to see the youths' perspective.

Councilmember Philpot provided background regarding his experience growing up in Crystal Lake. He stated that he would have appreciated having someone his age represented to provide a voice for teens and young adults in the community. In addition, he stated that he hopes the Youth Commission works on creating more opportunities that are engaging for high schoolers and young adults.

City Manager Helm provided his background and the role of the City Manager. He stated that the City Council sets the vision for the City, and the City Manager's job is to implement that vision. City Manager Helm further stated that the City Manager and City staff will work with the Youth Commission to implement objectives and provide recommendations to the City Council when appropriate.

Mayor Haleblian inquired for the Youth Commission members to provide their insights on goals and objectives for the Youth Commission. Commissioner Cioper recapped a recent discussion he had with his sister where she recommended that Crystal Lake should have a public pool. Commissioner Benton discussed hangout spaces, such as The Break, are needed in town. The Commission agreed and discussed the need for 'third spaces,' which are the places where youth can gather outside of school without having to spend money.

The Commission discussed the Crystal Lake Public Library and the services provided at libraries in neighboring towns. Mayor Haleblian inquired if the Youth Commission would use resources at the library if they were available. The Commission agreed that expanded use of the Crystal Lake Library would be ideal as a gathering space to hang out or study. Commissioner Tomberlin stated that she has worked at the library. She stated that there are meeting rooms available that could be utilized more. Commissioner Lisle asked Commissioner Tomberlin about the Crystal Lake Library compared to the Algonquin Library. Commissioner Camasta stated that he has visited the Algonquin Library more often than the Crystal Lake Library.

Commissioner Wolfe discussed parking lot safety at the local high schools. She stated that there are numerous accidents in the lots, however, there are not enough cameras to provide clear evidence when an accident occurs. Commissioners Camasta and Cioper confirmed they have experienced issues where their parent's car was damaged and the culprit could not be properly identified. Mayor Haleblian asked if the Commissioners could estimate how frequently the accidents have occurred. Commissioner Wolfe stated that there have been between five and ten incidents at her school this year. Commissioner Camasta confirmed the amount of incidents at his school as well, and he further stated that the issue may be drivers distracted by their cell phones.

City Manager Helm cited an idea by Councilmember Philpot that another objective for the Youth Commission is to learn how the City and other governmental entities interact. In addition to the library, the Park District and the City often times work together to solve problems. Councilmember Smith stated that she will contact Jason Herbster at the Park District to attend a Youth Commission meeting in the future.

The Youth Commission, Mayor and Councilmembers discussed additional objectives for the Commission. Mayor Haleblian suggested the Youth Commission work on public education regarding electric scooters and bike safety. Commissioner Camasta discussed police in the community and having more positive interactions between police and community members, like at the recent Fire Rescue Department open house.

7. Commission Code of Conduct and Policies

Deputy City Manager Hammonds provided a brief overview of the Commission Code of Conduct and Policies. The Commission will follow Robert's Rules of Order for the conduct of running an official meeting. The Youth Commission meetings will occur at least six times per year, and the regular meeting date is the second Thursday of the month. The Commission agreed that 4:00 p.m. meetings will be held going forward.

Deputy City Manager Hammonds provided an overview of the harassment training requirement for elected and appointed officials. In addition, the Commission members will be receiving the link to complete Open Meetings Act training.

8. Open Discussion

Commissioner Cioper inquired if the Commission members could present in pairs when the Commission presents progress updates to the City Council. The Commission agreed that presenting in pairs is preferred. The Commission agreed that there will be a rolling schedule where each Commission member serves as Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk at each Commission meeting. Then, the Chair and Vice Chair will work together to present at the following City Council meeting.

The Commissioners agreed on the Chairperson schedule for the November Youth Commission meeting. Commissioner Tomberlin will serve as Clerk, Commissioner Camasta will serve as Chair, and Commissioner Cioper will serve as Vice Chair.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, Commissioner Cioper moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m. Commissioner Camasta seconded the motion. On voice vote, all present voted yes. Motion passed.