



City of Montrose Youth Council Manual

**City of Montrose
433 South First Street,
Montrose, CO 81401
Phone (970) 240-1415**

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City of Montrose Youth Council

The Voice of Youth to the Montrose City Council

The Montrose Youth Council was established by the Montrose City Council to encourage greater youth participation in the city's government, and is charged with actively advising City Council with thoughtful recommendations on issues concerning youth and assisting city staff in considering youth perspectives in its planning efforts.

The specific goals of the Youth Council program are:

- To provide an opportunity for the youth of this community to acquire a greater knowledge of and appreciation for the American political system through active participation in that system.
- To help the Montrose City Council to solve the problems and accomplish the goals of this community by working directly with the representatives of the youth.
- To serve the youth of this community by:
 - Informing the city government of the needs and wishes of the youth.
 - Planning and implementing social, educational, cultural, athletic and recreational activities for the youth.
 - Working with the Montrose City Council, Montrose County School District and other local organizations to provide new opportunities for Montrose youth.

Role of the Youth Council

The Montrose Youth Council provides a strong link to the community's youth and gives younger citizens a voice in policy and program decisions. It also provides youth with opportunities to give back to their community in the form of community service projects. Actions and statements by members assume special significance to the City Council.

In order to achieve the established goals of the program, the Youth Council:

- Reports directly to the Montrose City Council three times each year at a regular session, advising them on matters affecting youth, issues, and discussion
- Makes specific recommendations for youth programs and activities to city government,
- Serves as a forum for the expansion of ideas, needs, concerns, and goals relating to community issues, particularly as they may affect youth,
- Makes recommendations to enhance the range and quality of opportunities for young people,
- Enlists community-wide participation in assuming the responsibility for resolving youth concerns,
- Initiates and encourages youth-driven community service projects.

Membership and Recruiting

The following guidelines have been set forth by the City of Montrose regarding the structure and operation of the Montrose Youth Council:

The Youth Council is composed of 11 high school youth between the ages of 14-18 years who represent a cross-section of youth attending school and/or residing in the city's boundaries. Members must have and maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or greater. The Montrose City Council appoints members after the candidate completes an application and interviews with City Council members. Members serve one-year terms and may reapply until they graduate from high school. Current members and active alternates who meet expectations will be given preference for reappointment year to year.

Youth Council openings and requests for application are distributed at local schools and published in a variety of places, and advertised by word of mouth through Youth Council members, social media and city staff. Recruiting efforts will begin at the start of each school year. Applications are due by the last week in September with appointments occurring in October.

City Council members meet and interview all potential Youth Council members. The entire City Council, at a regular meeting of the Council, considers approval of members. City staff notifies all applicants of the City Council's decision.

Youth Council members have an important role in their community and therefore accept responsibility for the following expectations they are held to:

- Commitment to attend all scheduled meetings of the Youth Council; four meeting absences are permitted and members must advise the Youth Council Coordinator if they are not able to attend a scheduled meeting. Extended absences due to serious medical conditions will be evaluated separately and approved by the Youth Council Coordinator.
- Individual conduct that will positively reflect upon the Youth Council and the City of Montrose
- Willingness to represent the Youth Council at public meetings/events
- Be present, as requested, at Montrose City Council and/or other official city activities
- Display strong leadership skills and work ethic
- Be a positive role model for the youth of the community
- Serve as needed on Youth Council projects and actively contribute skills and time as required

A Youth Council member who is absent more than four times from regular meetings or who does not meet the above expectations may be removed and will forfeit scholarship monies for that term.

Youth Council Alternates – When there are more applicants than open positions on the Youth Council those not appointed may become alternates. Based upon their application and interview a ranking will be determined. In the event a Youth Council member is removed or voluntarily leaves an alternate shall be appointed by the Youth Council Coordinator and City Council Liaison at a regular Youth Council meeting or City Council meeting.. Alternates may be given voting rights during meetings when appointed Youth Council members are absent.

Montrose City Council and City Department Liaison Members – City Council and department liaison members provide active communication with the Youth Council on matters that may affect the community's youth. They also provide community contacts and resources. Department contacts are called in as needed but the following positions attend every meeting: the Youth Council Coordinator and one City Council liaison. City Council and department liaisons are non-voting members

Youth Council Coordinator – A city staff member will be assigned as an advisor to the Youth Council. The coordinator will attend Youth Council meetings and generally become involved, in the advisory role only, in all council projects. In addition, the coordinator will provide leadership in the area of activities as well as politics and government. The Youth Council Coordinator selects the Mayor for each term.

Ex-Officio Members – Ex-Officio, non-voting members provide adult leadership. They are part of the larger community and volunteer a particular skill as it relates to a Youth Council work plan item. Ex-Officio members are selected to participate on a particular project by Youth Council members. They listen and encourage youth participation and independence. Ex-Officio members contribute community contacts, resources, and participate on projects as needed. They support the Youth Council and serve as youth advocates.

Ad Hoc Members – Ad-Hoc members can be Montrose residents 14 years of age or older. These members provide an important communication link to area schools and provide a mechanism for including additional youth resources on Youth Council projects. Ad-Hoc members are non-voting members and may serve as long as requested. Ad-Hoc members must be approved by the Youth Council prior to participation.

Official Roles and Responsibilities

Each of the 11 members of the Youth Council will be appointed a role by the Youth Council Coordinator, either as an official of the board or a project leader or assistant, as described in this section. Members may serve as an official of the board as well as a project leader. They are expected to direct their efforts toward fulfilling their designated role for the

proper functioning of the Council. Each member is a voting member of council. A Mayor Pro-Tem may also be selected from the existing members of the Youth Council by vote of the Youth Council. Officers will be appointed the first meeting in July of each year.

Officers

Mayor:

- ✓ Presides at all meetings of the Youth Council
- ✓ Calls any special meetings in accordance with the Manual
- ✓ Facilitates the development of the meeting agenda
- ✓ Represents the Youth Council at all ceremonies
- ✓ Signs all documents of the Council
- ✓ Ensures that all Council actions are taken properly
- ✓ Delivers an oral or written summary on the activities of the Youth Council to City Council three times a year
- ✓ Mentors new board members
- ✓ Provides notification of meeting times and dates to members.

Secretary:

- ✓ Gives or serves all notices required by law or these bylaws
- ✓ Informs the council of correspondences in relation to the business of the council and attends to such correspondences
- ✓ Records and transcribes meeting minutes, including all motions and votes taken
- ✓ Keeps the minutes of all meeting of the Council in an appropriate minutes book
- ✓ Sends minutes to the City Clerk
- ✓ Tracks attendance
- ✓ Creates and maintains a portfolio containing Council events in the form of picture, newspaper articles, or any other medium they deem fit

Projects and Project Leaders

After Youth Council appointments in October of each year, a meeting will be scheduled with the City Council and Youth Council to discuss projects for the upcoming year. This meeting should occur in November.

After a list of projects is determined, project leaders and assistants will be assigned.

Project Leader Expectations

- ✓ Meet all deadlines and commitments to see the project through successfully
- ✓ Assemble the project team and designate an assistant if necessary
- ✓ Obtain assistance from community members, City Council, Youth Council Coordinator and City staff as needed
- ✓ Report on project progress at Youth Council meetings or as requested by the Youth Council Coordinator
- ✓ Schedule meetings as necessary to plan and complete work needed on the project with team members outside of Youth Council regular meeting times
- ✓ Report any issues or support needs to the Youth Council Coordinator

Projects may be added throughout the year as opportunities arise by either the Youth Council Coordinator or a majority vote of the Youth Council.

Public statements should indicate that Youth Council member's actions are only recommendations to City Council. Statements to the public should contain no promises of action by the Youth Council, staff, or the City Council.

Meetings

Youth Council meetings are open to the public, where both youth and adults are welcome. Any change in meeting time or date must be voted on by the Youth Council and properly posted in an area outside of its meeting space. Attendance is taken at each meeting and the attendance policy is enforced.

Upon application for an acceptance of appointment, Youth Council members demonstrate their intention and ability to attend meetings of the Youth Council. If an absence from a meeting is necessary, members must contact the Youth Council Coordinator prior to a regular meeting.

Youth Council members are voting members and may reach decisions by consensus or a majority vote. Council members communicate the group's purpose and goals to other organizations and recruit ad-hoc members to assist in the Youth Council's charge. The meeting agenda is developed by the Youth Council Mayor and Youth Council Coordinator to focus on the projects adopted for the year.

Regular Meetings - Youth Council members are required to attend regular meetings held twice a month on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Meetings are held in the Annex Conference Room at City Hall. Youth Council members should conduct themselves in a professional manner at meetings and treat each other with respect. Rules of order shall be observed and the Mayor will preside over meetings.

Project Meetings – Project team members are required to participate in project meetings as called by project leaders. The frequency and duration of these meetings is determined by the timeline and complexity of the issue being addressed. The location for these meetings is determined based on what is convenient to those participating.

Annual Retreat - Members are required to participate in a yearly retreat with the City Council for setting projects and team building. This retreat will take place in November.

City Council Meetings - Members are required to attend all presentations by the Youth Council to City Council. Attendance at other City Council meetings and work sessions is encouraged so that Youth Council members can become more informed about community issues.

Other Meetings – Youth Council members may be required to attend other meetings during their terms. Examples of such meetings may including attendance at a conference, presentations to local groups or organizations, or conducting a survey at local schools.

Procedure

Youth Council Manual – The Youth Council may develop and adopt a Youth Council Manual by a four-fifths (80%) vote. The Manual can be modified as needed by a four-fifths vote and must be presented to the Montrose City Council for final approval.

Motions and Resolutions – Motions and resolutions are approved by a majority vote of the Youth Council. A majority is defined as one vote more than one half of the voting members who are present.

Financing

The Youth Council is assigned an annual budget as approved by the City Council. Funds are to be used for the routine Youth Council activities as well as special projects. Expenditures are to be approved by the Youth Council Coordinator and the City Council liaison.

Youth Council Scholarship Program

In 2013 City Manager, William Bell, created a scholarship program for Youth Council members, in good standing, through a City Manager initiative. The program allows members of the Youth Council to receive \$250 for each year

served, up to \$1000, for use at an institution of higher education. Scholarship monies will be disbursed directly to the accredited institution of higher education, upon proof of enrollment, that the student chooses to attend. In the event the institution of higher education cannot be contacted or will not accept the scholarship directly, the Youth Council Coordinator may obtain approval for disbursement directly to a parent or guardian from the City Manager. The Youth Council Coordinator will facilitate disbursements with the City of Montrose Finance Department.

To be considered for a scholarship, a Youth Council member must be in good standing with the following criteria and expectations met:

- Incur no more than four regular meeting absences within a one-year term as defined by the Youth Council Manual. For graduating seniors the term will end July 1st of the graduating year.
- Individual conduct must reflect positively upon the Youth Council and the City of Montrose.
- Must be always willing to represent the Youth Council at public meetings and events.
- Attend, as requested, City of Montrose City Council meetings and other official city activities.
- Display strong leadership skills and work ethic.
- Serve as a positive role model for the youth of the community.
- If a Youth Council member is removed for absences, scholarship monies will be forfeited for that term only. Prior terms will be considered separately using current scholarship criteria.
- If a Youth Council member is removed for misconduct, such as unlawful or inappropriate behavior, scholarship monies for all terms served may be forfeited.