



## Takoma Park City Council Meeting – November 7, 2018 Agenda Item 4

### **Voting Item**

Resolution Revising the Composition and Terms of the Takoma Park Youth Council and Providing for Appointments to the 2018-2019 Youth Council

### **Recommended Council Action**

Approve the resolution.

### **Context with Key Issues**

The City Council established the Takoma Park Youth Council:

- To provide an opportunity for the youth of Takoma Park to acquire a greater knowledge of and appreciation for local government through active participation in the system.
- To help the City Council to address problems and accomplish the goals of this community by working directly with the representatives of youth.
- To serve the youth of Takoma Park by:
  - informing the Takoma Park municipal government of the needs and wishes of youth;
  - planning and implementing social, educational, cultural and recreational activities for the youth;
  - working with the Mayor, City Council, City department heads, schools, civic clubs and service organizations to provide service and leadership opportunities for the youth of the City; and,
  - helping to instill a feeling of positive self-worth and esteem, teaching respect for the rights of others, and promoting community pride.

As originally designed, the Youth Council is to be comprised of nine members from grades 7 through 12, representing a cross-section of the City's youth. At least one member is to be appointed from each ward, but no more than two are to be appointed from any one ward. Three members are to be appointed at large.

The City Council discussed the composition at its work session on October 24. The Council wants to increase diversity on all committees, has committed to applying a racial equity lens in a systematic way, and notes the historically lower representation on committees from Wards 4, 5, and 6. Selecting candidates from each ward, but limiting candidates to no more than two from any one ward, can conflict with efforts to have members represent a cross-section of the City's youth.

The draft resolution addresses the composition, terms, and appointments to the Youth Council:

1. The draft resolution amends Section 3 of Resolution 2017-50 to change the composition of the Youth Council to be comprised of 11 members from grades 7 through 12, representing a cross-section of the City's youth, but it does not put a cap on the number that can be appointed from any one ward. This amendment will allow for more Council discretion to select applicants that advance its goal of continuing to build an inclusive, equitable community.

2. The Youth Council has recommended that the terms be changed to begin in September and end in August to more closely line up with school schedules. Although this change will require a change to the Youth Council Charter, the draft resolution endorses this change.

3. The resolution provides for appointment of 10 members to the Youth Council for the 2018-2019 term. The 11<sup>th</sup> position is reserved for a Ward 4 resident.

### **Council Priority**

A Livable Community for All – Expand Youth Programming and Engage Youth in Civic Activities

### **Environmental Considerations**

N/A

### **Fiscal Considerations**

We anticipate that Youth Council activities may incur some costs but expect that it would be under \$1,000.

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

The change in the composition of the Youth Council will emphasize recruitment from traditionally under-represented Wards 4, 5, and 6 and allow the Council more flexibility to appoint a cross-section of young people. Additionally, it is hoped that the Youth Council will provide an opportunity for young people of color to become actively involved with City government.

### **Attachments and Links**

- Draft Resolution
- [Resolution 2017-50](#) establishing the Youth Council
- [Youth Council Information Page](#)

Introduced by:

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION 2018-  
APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE 2018-2019 YOUTH COUNCIL  
AND REVISING THE COMPOSITION OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL  
BY AMENDING RESOLUTION 2017-50**

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution 2017-50 to establish the Takoma Park Youth Council; and

WHEREAS, the nine-member Youth Council serves the youth of Takoma Park by: 1) informing the City government of the needs and wishes of youth, 2) planning and implementing social, educational, cultural and recreational activities for the youth; 3) working with the Mayor, City Council, City department heads, schools, civic clubs and service organizations to provide service and leadership opportunities for the youth of the City; and, 4) helping to instill a feeling of positive self-worth and esteem, teaching respect for the rights of others, and promoting community pride; and

WHEREAS, application for membership in the Youth Council is open to Takoma Park residents in grades seven to 12; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 2017-50, Youth Council members are to represent a cross-section of the City's youth. At least one member, but not more than two, shall be appointed from each ward and three members shall be appointed at large; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that selection of members for appointment by ward, and limiting membership to no more than two from any one ward, can conflict with efforts to have the members represent a cross-section of the City's youth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council in its 2018 Priorities committed to improving systems for Council-appointed committees, including working to ensure diversity among committee members; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has committed to applying a racial equity lens in a systematic way in its decision-making processes with the goal of continuing to build an inclusive, equitable community and ensure a vibrant and healthy community for all Takoma Park residents pursuant to Resolution 2017-28; and

WHEREAS, historically, representation on Council appointed committees has been low for Wards 4, 5, and 6; and

WHEREAS, Wards 4, 5, and 6 have a greater percentage of residents of color than other wards; and

WHEREAS, an amendment to Resolution 2017-50 is necessitated to allow the City Council to use its discretion in determining how many applicants may be appointed from a ward; and

WHEREAS, Youth Council terms begin on November 1 and end on October 31 of the next year; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Council has recommended that member terms be changed to begin in September and end in August of the next year to better accommodate school schedules; and

WHEREAS, the schedule for appointments and term expirations is set in the Youth Council Charter and can be formally addressed by the City Council and Youth Council by amending the Youth Council Charter during the 2018-2019 term; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the applications submitted for the 2018-2019 Youth Council and has selected 10 applicants to serve on the Youth Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Section 3 of Resolution 2017-50 is amended as follows:

SECTION 3. As established in the Youth Council Charter, the Youth Council shall be comprised of ~~nine~~11 members from grades 7 through 12, representing a cross-section of the City's youth. ~~At least one member, but not more than two, shall be appointed from each ward and three members shall be appointed at large.~~ The City Council will actively recruit and appoint members from traditionally under-represented Wards 4, 5, and 6. One of the appointed Youth Council members in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade shall be designated by the City Council as the Leader of the Youth Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council endorses the change in terms for the Youth Council and shall undertake a review of the Youth Council Charter in coordination with the Youth Council to determine if other amendments are needed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the following individuals are appointed, effective immediately, to the Takoma Park Youth Council for a term that will expire on August 31, 2019:

1. George Ashford                      Ward 2
2. Elliot Davey                         Ward 1
3. Mintesinot Getachew              Ward 6
4. Adelaide Harris                     Ward 2
5. Asha Henry                            Ward 6

6. Jason Kaplan Ward 1
7. Kiran Kochar McCabe Ward 6
8. Eliza Van Camp Ward 5
9. Kamilla Sorenson Ward 3
10. Rafayel Charkoudian Rogers Ward 2
11. Vacant (reserved for Ward 4 resident)

Adopted by the Takoma Park City Council on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.

Attest:

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Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk