

AGENDA

Youth Services Committee
Thursday, December 8, 2016
10:30 a.m.

Room 100

Members and Alternates: Council Members Amy Foster, Charlie Gerdes, Karl Nurse, Lisa Wheeler-Bowman; Alternate—Darden Rice

Support Staff: Mike Jefferis, Parks and Recreation Director

- A. Call to Order and Roll Call
- B. Approval of Minutes from Youth Services Committee—November 10, 2016
- C. Agenda Items
 - 1. Pinellas County Schools' status report on public schools in St. Petersburg—Lori Matway, Associate Superintendent, Student & Community Services and Bob Poth, Area 3 Superintendent
- D. New Business
 - 1. Next Meeting Date—Thursday, January 12, 2017
- E. Adjournment

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG
YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE
November 10, 2016 @ 10:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Committee Chair Amy Foster, Vice-Chair Lisa Wheeler-Brown, Karl Nurse, Charlie Gerdes, Darden Rice

ALSO PRESENT: Education and Community Engagement Director Leah McRae, Parks and Recreation Director Mike Jefferis, Urban Affairs Director Nikki Capehart, SPPD Community Intervention Director Rev. Ken Irby, My Brother and Sister's Keeper Committee Chair Erik Smith, Assistant City Attorney Sharon Michnowicz, Assistant to the City Clerk Cortney Phillips.

ABSENT: None

Chair Foster opened the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and began with a roll call. Councilmember Gerdes moved for approval of the August 11, 2016 minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

In connection with the new business, Chair Foster introduced Reverend Kenny Irby, Community Intervention Director for the St. Petersburg Police Department. Rev. Irby noted that Gypsy Gallardo was scheduled to attend this meeting, but was unable to attend. A video was presented that outlined the Cohort of Champions initiative. The program was based on President Barack Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative. The aim is to direct opportunities to young minority boys and girls in St. Petersburg by connecting the community at large. This program works in tandem with "Not my Son" and "My Brother's and Sister's Keeper", which each provide other youth services. Cohort of Champions focuses on after-school employment training, post-secondary opportunities, career readiness, entrepreneurship training, sports and team-building outings, mentoring, and more.

Rev. Irby introduced My Brother's and Sister's Keeper Subcommittee Chair Erik Smith, who discussed the communication with JWB and other programs to ensure that wrap-around services will be offered. Currently, there is great interest for the part-time job offerings at Cohort of Champions. The program will accept 100 boys and young men.

Councilmember Nurse questioned the nature of the college-level career training. Rev. Irby answered that they are in talks with St. Petersburg College to offer career readiness. Councilmember Nurse would like to see realistic education as part of the program, so that participants can understand that progressing in a career takes time.

Vice-Chair Wheeler-Bowman expressed surprise that there are only currently 25 applications submitted for these 100 open slots. She inquired what further steps will be taken in outreach to push for more interest. Rev. Irby responded that they are still very much in the preliminary stages, however, they are establishing a presence at local football games, weekend activities, etc. He stated that his biggest goal at the moment was to reach young people that are not currently being served by any other programs, and thus, are high risk.

Chair Foster inquired as to the vetting process applicants will have to go through, and how they will be ranked. Rev. Irby responded that the primary applicant that they are looking for first-time offenders, truants, drop-outs, and those in single parent homes. They will also be evaluating what programs the applicants are already a part of, and those already being served are unlikely to be in the first tier. He went on to say that they are partnered with SPPD in searching for young men that fit these criteria.

Chair Foster expressed concern that some of the services that Cohort of Champions aims to provide are already offered in other programs across the City. Nikki Capehart responded that this program will differ in that it is specifically tailored to the group of 100 young men they will service. Rather than funneling them into different programs around St. Petersburg, these services will be provided in-house to participants.

Councilmember Nurse stated that many of the youths committing crimes have gone straight for felonies, such as grand theft auto, with many of them not even legally old enough to drive the cars they're stealing. Rev. Irby considers this a values issue that they have no moral sense of not taking things that do not belong to you. He stated that this is the type of guidance and philosophy that will be taught.

Councilmember Gerdes reflected that this is the kind of program that makes the future of the City bright. He would like to find the resources to expand this idea so that no one is excluded from these resources. Rev. Irby stated that uniqueness of the approach to Cohort of Champions is that the community can get engaged at every level. If someone has something to offer, they can be a part of the program after a vetting process.

Chair Foster would like to see that the program leaders within the area get together to identify missing pieces within their framework.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2016.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.