



# *CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT*

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MEETING DATE: January 16, 2007

ITEM NUMBER:

**SUBJECT:** YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

**DATE:** JANUARY 4, 2007

**FROM:** CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

**PRESENTATION BY:** THOMAS R. HATCH, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** THOMAS R. HATCH AT 714-754-5288

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council provide any additional direction or clarification to staff on the implementation of the Youth in Government Program.

## **BACKGROUND:**

In November 2005, the City's Child Care and Youth Services Committee received a proposal on establishing a Youth in Government Program in Costa Mesa. This proposal was submitted by Committee Council Liaison Katrina Foley through her intern, Lindsay Hopkins. The Child Care and Youth Services Committee approved the idea and forwarded its recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission in April 2006. At their April meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission voted 5-0 to support the City funding and the implementation of a Youth in Government Program for the next fiscal year. The Commission also asked staff to work with the School District to ensure that students who participate in this program are credited hours towards community service requirements for graduation. A copy of the Parks and Recreation Commission Agenda Report from April 26, 2006 is included as Attachment 1 of this report. Attachment 1 also includes the original memo from Lindsay Hopkins to the Child Care and Youth Services Committee dated November 9, 2005 as well as the memo from the Costa Mesa Child Care and Youth Services Committee to the Costa Mesa City Council dated February 1, 2006. The Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes from April 26, 2006 are included as Attachment 2.

Funding for the Youth in Government Program in the amount of \$3,800 was included as part of Recreation's programming in the Proposed FY 2006-07 Budget which was adopted by City Council in June, 2006.

The implementation of the Youth in Government Program was redirected from the Recreation Division to the City Manager's Office in September 2006. As staff began to implement this new Program, it was viewed as an educational/civics program. Given that the Program was new with a short time period for implementation and based on input from other cities with similar programs as well as input from representatives of the high schools, staff made changes to the original proposal. The changes from the original structure of the Program as provided to the Parks and Recreation Commission included:

- From allowing ages 14 to 18 to participate to focusing the Program to high school sophomores and juniors only. It was felt that the age/maturity difference was too broad as originally proposed;
- From including a "Challenge Day" component to eliminating this activity because some of the schools were already doing something similar and because of the shorten Program period;
- From conducting 10 monthly meetings to only 6 meetings;
- From a requirement of a two-page application to a one-page application and a recommendation from a teacher;
- From allowing only 10 to 12 participants to participate with competitive selection through a formal interview process conducted by the City Council Liaison and School Board Liaison to allowing all those that apply to participate;
- From having the City Council and School Board ratify the 10 to 12 recommended students to allowing all those that applied to participate as long as they were Costa Mesa residents (attending any school public, private or home schooled) with a 2.5 grade point average; and
- From having only City staff provide administrative support to the Youth Council to having both City staff and a school teacher from both Costa Mesa High School and Estancia High School provide support to the Program.

Other Program elements such as the City Government Day (students shadowing City staff for a day) and the Final Report to the City Council are planned to continue as originally designed. The educational nature of the monthly meetings is also planned to continue as originally designed. The monthly meetings will consist of a new topic each month selected by the Youth Council for review and discussion. Finally, a concept of having the Youth Council plan a Youth Summit this year (a one-day event coordinated by Youth Council to listen to ideas from other youth) for possible implementation in the following year is also scheduled for discussion in the next few months. The above represents the scope of activities for this year.

During November of 2006, the Program was advertised in the newspaper, in the Community News and Recreation Review, on the web site and through flyers around the community seeking students that wanted to participate in the Youth Council. Eighteen students requested to be on the Youth Council; all were accepted with the exception of one student who was not a Costa Mesa resident. The first meeting of the Youth Council was held on December 18, 2006. The second meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2006.

**ANALYSIS:**

Mayor Allan Mansoor has requested that this item be placed on the agenda. He has expressed that he would like more details on the Youth in Government Program and how it was created.

**ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

As an alternative, the City Council could take one of the following actions:

1. Alter the structure, participants or make other changes to the Program (for example, the Youth Council advisory to another formal body);
2. Direct staff to initiate the committee formation process and make the Youth Council a formal committee;
3. Discontinue the Program; and/or
4. Request the Newport-Mesa Unified School District assume responsibility for supporting the Program.

**FISCAL REVIEW:**

No further fiscal review is required for this item. The budgeted funding of \$3,800 has been transferred to the City Council budget program for anticipated Youth Council expenditures.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

The City Attorney has reviewed the current structure of the Youth Council and does not see the need for the group to be an official Brown Act committee. If either the City Council or the Newport Mesa Unified School District Board is required to ratify the membership on the Youth Council, then the Youth Council would be deemed a Brown Act body and subject to the necessary legal requirements.

**CONCLUSION:**

The Youth in Government Program for FY 2006-2007 is anticipated to conclude in June of 2007 with a final report to the Costa Mesa City Council. This final report is to include any recommendations from their monthly meeting topics, an evaluation on their experiences with the Program and any recommendations to improve the Program for future years.

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DISTRIBUTION: Allan L. Roeder, City Manager  
Carol Proctor, Management Analyst/Liaison to Youth Council  
Steve Mandoki, Administrative Services Director  
Jana Ransom, Recreation Manager

ATTACHMENTS: 1 [Parks & Rec. Commission Agenda Report - April 26, 2006](#)  
2 [Parks & Rec. Commission Minutes from April 26, 2006](#)