



Village Trustee Memo

MEMO Date: December 3, 2021
TO: Village Board, December 6, 2021
FROM: Village Trustee Melissa Ratcliff
RE: Youth Representatives

OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND :

Youth representatives on the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee and Parks and Recreation committees was discussed at each committee meeting and was met with very positive responses of including youth on these committees.

We are defining “youth” as ages 14 to 17.

The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Committee, Ordinance 12-2, attached, [Village of Cottage Grove, WI Boards, Committees and Commissions: § 12-2 Parks, Recreation and Forestry Committee. \(ecode360.com\)](#) indicates that “The Committee shall be comprised of one Village Board member and four citizen members.” All positions on the Committee are currently full. However, in order to have a pilot type of project to see how youth members work on the committee, we could hopefully amend the ordinance to allow up to two youth representatives as voting members and if the spots weren’t filled, they wouldn’t count toward quorum. If one or both spots were filled, they would count toward quorum. Additionally, the youth representatives should have equal voting power as other committee members.

The Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee does not have an ordinance. On August 3, 2020, the Village Board approved the formation of the Committee with the representatives as noted in the attached memo. The Memo allows for the Committee Composition to include “Community members with diverse representation of Village population” which could include youth representatives. We should make it known that we are looking for up to two youth representatives for the DEI Committee.

Lastly, the committee application should be updated to include boxes for youth representatives for the Ad Hoc DEI and Parks and Recreation Committees. See attached application.



RECOMMENDATION:

Based on the discussion at Parks, Recreation and Forestry and Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committees, I would recommend the following:

1. We have staff draft an updated Parks, Recreation and Forestry Ordinance 12-2 to allow for up to two youth representatives as voting members and if the spots weren't filled, they wouldn't count toward quorum. If one or both spots were filled, they would count toward quorum. Additionally, the youth representatives should have equal voting power as other committee members;
2. We reach out to the Monona Grove High School and other community organizations that have teenagers and make them aware of this new initiative to include youth members on the Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Committee; and
3. Direct staff to update the Application for Appointment to Village Committees on our website to include boxes for youth representatives for the Ad Hoc DEI and Parks and Recreation Committees.