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City Council

Approval of Recommendations for an Olympia Youth Council

Agenda Date: 10/30/2023
Agenda Item Number: 6.A
File Number: 23-0953

Type: decision **Version:** 1 **Status:** Passed

Title

Approval of Recommendations for an Olympia Youth Council

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Community Livability and Public Safety Committee received a briefing on the recommendations for an Olympia Youth Council at their September 27 meeting and approved the recommendations to be forwarded to the full City Council for consideration.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve the recommendations related to standing up an Olympia Youth Council.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve the recommendations related to standing up an Olympia Youth Council.

Staff Contact:

Susan Grisham, Assistant to the City Manager, 360.753.8244

Presenter(s):

Susan Grisham, Assistant to the City Manager

Dane Wolfram, Senior Manager Truclusion

Ashley Gardner PhD, Qualitative & Quantitative Researcher, Truclusion

Yien Folino, Principal, Truclusion

Tre Simons, Olympia Youth Representative

Christine Zhang, Olympia Youth Representative

Gavin Cruz, Olympia Youth Advisor

Background and Analysis:

In June 2022, Councilmember Huỳnh, with the support of Councilmembers Parshley and Madrone put forward a referral requesting the hiring of a consultant tasked with researching successful youth council models and best practices; engaging and consulting with Olympia area youth and providing a recommendation to the Olympia City Council on how best to stand up an Olympia Youth Council.

In the summer of 2022, the City launched a Request for Proposal to select a firm to develop a recommendation. Interviews with respondents were held in October 2022. The contract was awarded to Truclusion, a firm out of Dupont that has experience developing similar programs in other Cities in Washington, including Tacoma.

Truclusion used a Human-Centered inclusive approach which helped guide the development of recommendations that would create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Youth Council. An Olympia Youth Council will increase the sense of belonging and value of the youth in our community as they contribute to City government and decision making in a meaningful manner.

Throughout 2023, Truclusion engaged with Olympia Youth reaching across cultural, social and economic group identities. The focus on these areas increased diverse participation and captured stakeholders' unique perspectives in the formulation of recommendations for the Youth Council.

The breadth of this work includes research, community engagement and recommendations which are being presented to the Community Livability and Public Safety Committee for review and vetting before being forwarded to the full Council for consideration.

The recommendations include youth council structures and roles; age range for youth participants; youth representation from different schools in the area; number of members; length of term; member recruitment; how to meet youth where they are at; creative meeting formats; scope and work plan; long term youth council sustainability; coordinating with partners; and compensation (stipend and/or school credit).

Climate Analysis:

This project is not expected to have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

Equity Analysis:

Based on data from the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's "Report Card", minority enrollment in Olympia's schools is at 40% and approximately 20% of students are economically disadvantaged. (This data does not include students who are not in traditional schools, like home school or G.E.D programs.) One of the main goals of a Youth Council is to engage and lift up voices and perspectives of people who are often excluded from decision making and lack access to power.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Youth in our community have expressed an interest in participating in decision making that effects their future.

Financial Impact:

The City has allotted \$30,000 for the contracted work using Council goal funds. Currently there is a \$40,000 request going through the 2024 budgeting process to begin work of standing up the Youth Council.

Options:

1. Move to approve the recommendations related to standing up an Olympia Youth Council.

2. Amend and move to approve the recommendations related to standing up an Olympia Youth Council.
3. Take other action.

Attachments:

Youth Council Recommendations and Research