

BILL NO. : 2 OF 2021  
INTRODUCED: MARCH 9, 2021  
BY: PRESIDENT MATTHEW T SHORRAW  
ENACTED: APRIL 13, 2021  
ORDINANCE NO: 1232

CITY OF MONESSEN

MONESSEN YOUTH AND YOUNG CITIZENS BOARD

ORDINANCE 1232

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MONESSEN, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ESTABLISHING A YOUTH AND YOUNG CITIZENS BOARD BY AND FOR THE CITY OF MONESSEN; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; ESTABLISHING A BOARD PURPOSE, DUTIES, QUALIFICATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND PROCEDURES; ESTABLISHING LONG TERM GOALS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the City of Monessen finds that it is in the best interest of the City's general welfare and wellbeing to find ways to support our City's youth, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the City of Monessen are interested in, and find that the youth are the future of our city, and we should all do our part to mentor, educate and support them, in order to create successful outcomes, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the City of Monessen find it appropriate to establish Youth and Young Citizens Board by and for the City, in order to promote student leadership, mentorship, advocacy, and means for success.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED** by the Council of the City of Monessen and it is hereby ordained and enacted as follows:

### **Section 1. Short Title.**

This Ordinance shall be known as and may be cited as the "Monessen Youth and Young Citizens Board Ordinance."

### **Section 2. Definitions.**

**YOUTH:** Any citizen of Monessen, who is aged 18 or under, and/or is enrolled in a K-12 program.

**YOUNG ADULT:** Any citizen of Monessen, who is aged 18 to 40 years.

### **Section 3. Creation, Members, Terms, Qualifications, and Expenditures.**

The Monessen Youth and young Citizens Board is hereby created, by and for the City of Monessen.

- A. **Membership.** The Board shall be composed of seven (7) members, who shall serve without compensation. Appointments shall be made by following the procedures as stated in the City of Monessen's Resolution 11 of 2020, regarding appointment procedures of Boards, Authorities, and Commissions.
- B. In order to keep terms staggered, the Board members shall be appointed in the manner as follows: Year 1: 4 positions appointed; Year 2: 3 positions appointed; with the exception of the initial appointments, which shall be made by council at the same time, and the initial duration of terms shall be selected by the appointee drawing a number at random.
- C. The Board shall include:
  - i. Two (2) youth members.
    - 1. Shall be a resident of Monessen, and junior or senior at Monessen High School or a K-12 program. Their names are to be referred to Monessen City Council by a faculty and/or member of the administrative staff at Monessen High School, and/or by submitting an application and letter of interest to Monessen Mayor and City Council.
    - 2. Each youth member must accept the nomination, and write a formal letter of commitment, before being considered for appointment.
    - 3. Each youth member shall serve a two (2) year term.
  - ii. Two (2) educators, either active or retired.
    - 1. A retired educator, in any subject, who is either;
      - a. A resident of Monessen, or;

- b. Is familiar with and has devoted their time in Monessen with their career, or through volunteer work.
- c. To be considered for appointment, they shall:
  - i. Submit a letter of intent to Mayor and Council, and;
  - ii. Complete a Board, Authority, and Commission Application form, and meet the requirements for appointment, as laid out in Resolution 11 of 2020.
  - iii. They must have the necessary Child Clearances, as laid out by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
  - iv. This term shall be a two (2) year term.
- iii. Two (2) young adult members.
  - 1. Shall be a Monessen resident;
  - 2. To be consider for appointment, they shall:
    - a. Submit a letter of intent to Mayor and Council, and;
    - b. Complete a Board, Authority, and Commission Application form, and meet the requirements for appointment, as laid out in Resolution 11 of 2020.
    - c. They must have the necessary Child Clearances, as laid out by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
    - d. This term shall be a two (2) year term.
- iv. One (1) at-large resident of Monessen.
  - 1. Preferably, a resident who does or has recently worked with youth, and has been a resident for at least one year.
  - 2. To be consider for appointment, they shall:
    - a. Submit a letter of intent to Mayor and Council, and;
    - b. Complete a Board, Authority, and Commission Application form, and meet the requirements for appointment, as laid out in Resolution 11 of 2020.
    - c. They must have the necessary Child Clearances, as laid out by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
    - d. This term shall be a two (2) year term.

- D. Qualifications.** Qualifications for eligibility are as follows:
- a. Must be a resident of the City of Monessen, with the exception of Section 3(A)(ii) of this Ordinance.
  - b. All adult members (age of 18 and over) must have all child clearances, as required and recommended by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
  - c. All youth members must be enrolled as a student within the Monessen School District, or a resident of Monessen, who is either:

- i. Attending a K-12 program, or;
  - ii. Homeschooled.
- E. **Vacancies.** An appointment shall be made by a majority vote of Monessen City Council, in order to fill any vacancies, for the remaining term of the open seat.
- F. **Graduating Youth Member Positions.** If a youth member graduates before their term has expired, they may remain on the board, so long as the remainder of their term does not exceed one (1) year.
- G. **Bylaws.** The board shall enact bylaws, by a majority vote of its members, in order to dictate how the board will fulfill its mission. Approved bylaws shall not contradict anything laid out in this ordinance. The board shall submit a copy of the current bylaws, as approved by its members, to the City Clerk, for reference.
- H. **City Council Liaison.** The Monessen City Council may appoint a liaison from its membership, to serve as a non-voting member of the board.

**Section 4. Purpose and Duties, Long Term Goals.**

1. The purpose of these provisions is to establish a Youth and Young Citizens Board of the City of Monessen.
2. The City of Monessen Youth and Young Citizens Board will seek to ensure that all Monessen City Youth are aware of and have access to positive opportunities to meet their basic needs to:
  - a. Be safe, feel cared for, be valued, and be independent, and;
  - b. Build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute to society in a productive manner.
3. More specifically, the board will advocate for supportive policies, facilitate enriching experience, work with established groups and organizations in Monessen and the region, who cater towards supporting youth; and will regularly assess how well the City and other local youth-serving organizations are doing in achieving the following intended outcomes for youth:
  - a. Academic Success: Academically prepared for post-secondary opportunities;
  - b. Good health and wellbeing;
  - c. Strong character;
  - d. Informed decision making;
  - e. Civic engagement;
  - f. Job-Readiness;
  - g. Developmentally-appropriate levels of independence;
  - h. Cultural awareness and sensitivity: Educated and exposed to their own, as well as other cultures.

4. The Board may use such reference materials, data, and research-based methods, such as the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, or other relevant, similar publications, in order to meet its objectives.
5. One of the long-term goals of the Youth and Young Citizens Board shall be to establish Youth Participatory Program in the City of Monessen. The goals of a Youth Participatory Program would be to establish a program led by youth that focuses on promoting youth's understanding of city government work, developing youth leadership, elevating youth voices in the City of Monessen, and providing a platform for youth to propose and fund projects that directly relate to their concerns. Monessen's City youth and children have limited access to government officials, they lack programs that promote their direct engagement with city government, and are often absent in the conversation about development. The youth and children of Monessen are one of the most vulnerable groups that are directly affected by development and changes in the City. They are affected by decisions on property values, school districts, and access to city amenities like public transportation, recreational facilities, and even the political process. Nonetheless, their voices are not always represented in the political decision-making process. These challenges play an important role in promoting a sense of place and belonging for young individuals of Monessen. The voices of Youth and Children are usually excluded from the political process, as they are not allowed to vote, and not well equipped to advocate for their preferred policies.

Objectives and learning outcomes include:

- a. Advancing a sense of civic engagement through program participation;
  - b. Equipping youth with skills to advocate for themselves;
  - c. Equipping youth with skills to engage in the City Council processes;
  - d. Empowering youth to advocate for issues they are passionate about in the city;
  - e. Empowering youth to make informed decisions about city budgetary choices;
  - f. Exposing youth to organizations, groups, allies and individuals who work on youth and children;
  - g. Identifying key issues and areas of collaboration with the City;
  - h. Involving youth in the political and legislative processes;
  - i. Growing a sense of place with youth and children of Monessen;
  - j. Learning about City Council work, functions, challenges and limitations;
  - k. Learning advocacy strategies;
  - l. Learning from and about local organizations that support youth and children;
  - m. Learning skills to use feedback to develop work strategies;
  - n. Learning to identify areas for collaboration within City Council and organizations in Monessen.
6. Recognizing this need and the importance of highlighting youth's lived experiences, the Youth Participatory Program would aim to provide youth

with the skills, opportunity and access to engage city government directly with project proposals that directly pertain to Monessen's youth.

**Section 6. Severability**

In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid, such invalidity shall be severable and shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sections, sentences, clauses, or parts of this Ordinance; it being the intent of the City of Monessen that the remainder of the Ordinance shall be and shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 6. Repealer.**

All ordinances or resolutions or parts of ordinances or resolutions insofar as they are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and rescinded.


**Section 7. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall come into effect ten (10) days after enactment.

**ORDAINED AND ENACTED** this 13<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL, 2021, by the Council of the City of Monessen, in lawful session duly assembled.

ATTEST:

  
Cheryl Gordon  
City Clerk

  
Matthew T. Shorraw  
Mayor and President of Council

[SEAL]

