

Youth Commission
Wednesday, April 1, 2026
Virtually
6:00 pm

Members Present — A. Ramirez, Z. Febres, M. Tavarez, A. Morales, M. Perez

Others Present – S. Smith, J. Baez

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:14 pm by Ms. Tavarez. She stated that a quorum is present.

Mr. Baez stated that a new application for the Youth Commission was received earlier today. He stated that he is excited that a quorum is present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARIES

Motion was made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Mr. Febres, to approve the September 3, 2025, October 1, 2025, November 5, 2025, January 7, 2026, and February 4, 2026 meeting summaries as written. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Smith reported that after the snow tubing expenses were paid, there is a remaining balance of \$9,333.84.

Ms. Ramirez stated that this was her first time snow tubing and it was really fun but also scary.

Mr. Baez encouraged the Commission to utilize their funding to create events. He expressed the belief that the snow tubing event was great and noted the need for members to stay engaged.

Ms. Ramirez stated that she is a member of the Community Knights Club and they are doing a journey bag project. She explained that journey bags would be

provided to students who need to move so that they have essentials and hygiene products. She questioned if the Commission would be a sponsor.

Ms. Smith questioned if there is a sponsorship form. Ms. Ramirez stated that the form is currently being created.

Ms. Smith stated that the Commission has sponsored events in the past. She suggested that once the form is completed, that the sponsorship be discussed at a future meeting.

Mr. Baez expressed the belief that this would be a good project for the Commission.

Ms. Tavaréz requested that Ms. Ramirez follow up with her via text with additional information. She noted the need to understand the project goals and how they will be met.

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

None.

Ms. Tavaréz stated that the snow tubing event was successful but that there were issues with the catering. She stated that the food arrived late and there was bad communication.

EVENT PLANNING

- Joint Event with YMCA

Ms. Tavaréz stated that she never got a response to her emails.

Ms. Smith stated that there has been staff turnover but she now has the updated information.

Ms. Tavaréz noted her hope to partner with them on a Valentine's Day event. She stated that she will contact them for future events.

Mr. Febres noted the cost increase to attend the YMCA. He questioned whether the Commission could sponsor memberships to help reduce the costs.

- Earth Day

Ms. Tavaréz stated that this is a tabling event and that the Commission had games and prizes last year. She requested that members send her ideas for prizes and stated that there are sunglasses. She requested that members sign up for a shift and stated that this is a fun event with food, music, and lots of organizations to network with.

Mr. Febres suggested that the Commission collect email addresses so that people can receive a newsletter and event information. He stated that this would increase engagement with the Commission.

Ms. Tavaréz expressed the belief that this is a great idea and something that she has been thinking about. She suggested that Mr. Febres prepare a sign-up sheet.

Mr. Febres stated that he will create the sign-up sheet and the newsletter.

Mr. Baez encouraged all to turn their cameras on. He questioned if the Commission had a vice chair. Ms. Tavaréz stated that Ms. Ramirez is the vice chair. *(Note: Ms. Tavaréz and Ms. Perez called into the meeting and did not have a camera option. All other cameras were on.)*

Ms. Perez questioned the budget / spending timeline. Ms. Smith explained the City's budget process and timeline.

Ms. Perez stated that she is interested in an internship. Mr. Baez encouraged all members to attend City Council meetings. He stated that one goal of this Commission is to give members the opportunity to learn about local government.

Ms. Perez suggested an event to connect with the community. She suggested a film fest, art show, or a little free library. She noted the need for long-term projects and also suggested greening neighborhoods.

Mr. Baez described his Party at the Park event. He stated that he is able to network with artists and that he can help connect them with the Commission.

Ms. Morales disconnected from the meeting at this time.

Ms. Perez suggested that the event be for high school students who would enter their art and get to meet professional artists.

Mr. Baez suggested that Ms. Perez begin researching this possibility and to come to the next meeting with specific suggestions.

Mr. Febres agreed with Ms. Perez and suggested that there be a community stakeholder meeting. He stated that there is an RHS art exhibit at Goggleworks and suggested that the Commission work with them to expand the exhibit. He expressed the belief that the event is not reaching the full target audience.

Ms. Perez thanked all for their support of this opportunity. She stated that she was unaware of the exhibit at Goggleworks. She also suggested that students could create films that tell their story that would be shown in parks.

Mr. Baez noted the need for concrete plans to begin the project. He suggested that Ms. Perez follow up with Ms. Tavaréz in two weeks to update the agenda.

Ms. Tavaréz agreed. She expressed the belief that additional projects would also help the community understand who the Commission is.

Mr. Baez stated that wearing the Youth Commission tee shirts to events also helps to identify the Commission members. Ms. Smith stated that there is also a banner for use at events.

Mr. Baez stated that he can also help to highlight the Commission's work.

Mr. Febres suggested creating a flyer about the Commission.

Mr. Baez stated that participating in additional events will increase Commission members' networks and will increase their insight and civic engagement. He noted the need for Commission members to expose themselves and other youth to public service. He stated that they also have direct access to decision-making officials. He stated that today's youth are tomorrow's leaders.

Mr. Tavaréz stated that this was well said and that she agrees with Mr. Baez. She noted the need for the Commission to engage in new ways.

- 6th Ward Block Party

Ms. Tavaréz stated that the Youth Commission does face painting at this event and it is very busy. She stated that there are hundreds of people in attendance and she cannot do this event alone again this year. She stated that the group chat

is active and all members make contributions. She stated that she is grateful for this team.

OTHER BUSINESS

- April Board of Health Meeting

Mr. Febres stated that he will be attending the Board of Health meeting to discuss the dangers of vaping. He stated that he would also like to discuss bringing free medical services by Tower Health and the Berks Community Health Center that were available during COVID-19. He requested that other ideas be brought forward to discuss with them as well.

Ms. Tavaréz suggested bringing ideas forward in the group chat.

Mr. Baez questioned who was in the group chat. Ms. Tavaréz stated that it is current and former Commission members.

OLD BUSINESS

- Adopt-a-Block

Ms. Tavaréz questioned if the sign had been installed. Ms. Smith stated that she would follow up with Mr. Bradley.

NEXT MEETING

Ms. Ramirez disconnected from the meeting at this time.

Mr. Baez suggested that the next meeting be held in person in Council Chambers. He suggested that Ms. Tavaréz survey the group to decide on whether they prefer pizza, Chinese, or another food.

Mr. Baez stated that he was glad that a quorum of members attended this meeting and that the backlog of meeting summaries was approved. He noted the need to recruit additional Commission members and questioned the number of meetings that a member can miss before being removed. Ms. Smith stated that members can miss three consecutive meetings without being excused.

Mr. Baez noted the need for Ms. Tavaréz to follow up with members who are not attending meetings. He stated that this will gauge future participation. He stated that those who are no longer interested in serving can then be replaced.

Ms. Tavaréz agreed and stated that she will follow up with them.

Ms. Smith stated that she needs to readvertise the meeting if it is held in person and noted the need to have this information by April 22.

The next meeting of the Youth Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6 at 6 pm with the location to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Smith, MMC
Deputy City Clerk