

City of Brodhead

Youth in Government Program

2016 Handbook

AUTHORS & STAKEHOLDERS

It is with great anticipation of high achievement that the City of Brodhead wishes immense success to all Youth in Government participants. It is the Council's fervent hope that this program leads to life changing experiences for youth members and positive personal growth for mentors, City of Brodhead elected and appointed officials, and citizens of the City of Brodhead.



City of Brodhead

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2 WELCOME

The Brodhead City Council welcomes all participants to the Youth in Government (YIG) program, an initiative designed to increase youth participation in City government. The Council promotes this program to allow youth a voice in local government, with a goal of greater involvement in public service.

The YIG program is a project dedicated to providing a platform through which young students of the community can volunteer and immerse themselves in a year-long, real-life, extraordinary educational experience. Volunteer service in the YIG program provides youth with an opportunity to develop practical leadership and problem solving skills, increase community awareness, and participate in representative government. The Brodhead City Council warmly offers its guidance to all YIG youth and leaders, and extends its wish of success to all participants.

3 ABOUT THE YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

Youth leadership development is critical in building civic capacity and long-term community success in Brodhead. Programs that teach useful skills and build the self-confidence of young people ensure capable, effective leaders for the next generation. Recent national trends indicate an increase in youth civic service. Renewed emphasis on civic education in schools indicate a growing need for leadership training to ensure young people are prepared to participate in political and civic life.

The City of Brodhead YIG program is established as per City of Brodhead Council resolution 10-2015. This program creates four advisory seats on the City of Brodhead Council to be held by high-school aged youth. As part of the youth positions on the Council, youth will serve on at least one City committee.

4 PURPOSE & BENEFITS OF YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

4.1 PROGRAM GOAL

The City of Brodhead values the youth in our community. The purpose of the Youth in Government program is to create a model of youth empowerment within Brodhead through direct participation in local government. The overall goal is to bring the youth voice to community issues and concerns while fostering the development of confident, independent, and motivated youth leaders.

4.2 PROGRAM BENEFITS

These following benefits are based on evaluations, focus group findings, surveys, and interviews of youth, local elected officials, and UW-Extension educators who are involved in Youth in Government programs in other communities.

4.2.1 A Public Voice for Youth.

Youth in Government programs give young people a forum to ask questions, speak their minds, and influence community politics.

4.2.2 New Connections.

Youth who serve generate a buzz of excitement that carries back to their schools and student bodies.

4.2.3 Retaining Youth.

Getting young people involved in local government gives them a stake in their communities.

4.2.4 Civic Responsibility.

Young people see democracy in action.

4.2.5 Mutual Respect.

Adults and youth gain a newfound appreciation for each other.

4.2.6 Life Skills.

Young people learn to pay attention, speak in public, dress appropriately, and relate to adults. Evaluations indicate that youth also build decision-making skills and self-confidence.

4.2.7 Networking Skills.

Students gain valuable contacts. Experience on local government boards and committees gives youth networks of local leaders they can call on for academic and career references.

4.2.8 Future Leaders

Young people who serve on boards come away with a desire to serve their communities. Many youth say Youth in Government has made them more eager to serve in local government.

4.2.9 New Perspectives.

In addition to differing viewpoints, both youth and adults report that young people bring energy, idealism, and compassion to meetings. What's more, youth sometimes ask questions that adults don't feel comfortable asking, expanding the discussion.

4.2.10 Grassroots Government.

Youth learn how local government works. On the council and committees, youth learn how budgets come together, what their taxes pay for, and what constituents care about.

Program Participation Requirements

1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

1.1.1 Selection of youth will be based on equal opportunity.

2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

2.1.1 Youth participation in the City of Brodhead Youth in Government program requires the following:

- Youth will apply in the spring semester of their freshman, sophomore, or junior year of high school.
- Youth must have a grade point average of 2.5 or greater on a 4.0 scale.
- Youth must either attend the Brodhead School District or be a City of Brodhead resident.
- Youth must commit to attending a mandatory YIG orientation prior to participating in the swearing in ceremony.

3 APPLICATION PROCESS

3.1 APPLICANT RECRUITMENT

- 3.1.1 The City of Brodhead, the Brodhead High School, and Green County UW-Extension will work in partnership to promote the Youth in Government program and recruit youth applicants.

3.2 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- 3.2.1 Completed applications must be submitted to the Green County UW-Extension office.

3.3 SCREENING COMMITTEE

- 3.3.1 Applications will be reviewed by a screening committee composed of Brodhead High School staff. When youth who are not part of the Brodhead School District (i.e. home-schooled youth or City of Brodhead residents who have transferred to another school district), Green County UW-Extension staff also sit in on the screening committee.

3.4 INTERVIEW PROCESS

- 3.4.1 A nomination committee composed of the Mayor, a City of Brodhead Alderperson, and a Brodhead School District staff member will interview youth. If the Mayor and/or an alderperson is not able to serve on the nomination committee, they may choose an alternate to serve in their place from amongst City of Brodhead staff.
- 3.4.2 Committee members who are immediate family to youth applicants shall excuse themselves from scoring, discussions, and voting on that youth's participation.

3.5 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

- 3.5.1 Selection of youth participants is based on ranking of the total number of points acquired from both the written application and face to face interview.

- 3.5.2 The nominating committee will make an effort to balance youth participants who have experience with the program with new program participants.

3.6 NOMINATION & PARTICIPANT NOTIFICATION

- 3.6.1 Youth will be recommended by the nomination committee to the Brodhead City Council for official appointment to City Council and a City committee by the Third Tuesday in April of each year.
- 3.6.2 Youth members will be notified of acceptance by a letter from the Mayor of Brodhead to be sent by the City Clerk, along with a request for youths' confirmation of participation.
- 3.6.3 Youth will be appointed to a City Committee by the Mayor.

4 TERM

- 4.1.1 Youth will serve a one-year term from September through May of the following academic year.
- 4.1.2 Returning members must meet all the program requirements in order to re-apply for a second term.

5 STIPENDS

- 5.1.1 Youth members will not be paid a stipend for attending meetings or receive mileage reimbursements.

6 EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUTH MEMBERS

6.1 OPPORTUNITY

- 6.1.1 The City of Brodhead Youth in Government program creates up to four advisory seats on the City of Brodhead Council to be held by high-school aged youth.

6.2 PROGRAM ORIENTATION

- 6.2.1 Youth will be expected to attend a mandatory YIG orientation prior to participating in the Council swearing in ceremony.

6.3 MENTORSHIP

- 6.3.1 Youth will be provided with a mentor.

- 6.3.2 Youth who are serving on a committee for a second term are expected to be a youth mentor for new youth participants.

6.4 SWEARING IN CEREMONY

- 6.4.1 Youth members will participate in a swearing in ceremony similar to the ceremony that elected officials take.

6.5 COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.5.1 Youth will receive all communications sent to adult committee members.

6.6 COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

- 6.6.1 Youth are permitted and encouraged to participate in discussions and deliberations.

6.7 VOTING

- 6.7.1 Youth members will have a non-binding advisory vote on all issues that come before the City of Brodhead Council and committees on which youth serve.
- 6.7.2 Youth are permitted to vote on all motions made at Council and committee meetings.
- 6.7.3 On roll call votes, youth votes should be taken before the adult members vote to avoid an unintended influence by adult members. The youth vote is recorded in the minutes for the record.

6.8 CLOSED SESSIONS

- 6.8.1 Youth will not be permitted to participate in closed sessions.

6.9 ATTENDANCE

- 6.9.1 Youth must be able to attend at least 75% of the Monday Council meetings and committee meetings for the committee on which they have a seat. Youth who miss more than 75% of their assigned committee meetings will lose their place in the YIG program.
- 6.9.2 Youth are encouraged to attend Tuesday Council meetings. However, attendance at Tuesday Council meetings is not mandatory for youth.
- 6.9.3 If youth are unable to attend a meeting they should contact the City clerk.
- 6.9.4 If youth develop a pattern of missing meetings or inappropriate conduct, the mentor and/or chairperson of the committee should contact the Mayor to discuss concerns.

6.9.5 The Mayor will contact any YIG member regarding attendance or conduct concerns.

6.10 PROGRAM EVALUATION

6.10.1 Youth will complete an evaluation to be sent to Green County UW-Extension at the end of their appointed term. This evaluation will outline their learning experience and suggestions for improvements to the YIG program.

6.11 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

6.11.1 If youth choose to attend a conference and/or other meeting related to their role on a City committee they will do so at their own expense.

6.12 REMOVAL FROM PROGRAM

6.12.1 YIG members may be removed at will and with or without cause at the discretion of the Mayor of Brodhead with confirmation of the City Council.

6.12.2 If a YIG member can no longer serve, an alternate will be appointed from the original applicant list to serve on the committee.