



# City of Malden

Malden City Hall  
215 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148

## Meeting Minutes - Final Community Engagement & Inclusion Committee

*Councillor Colon Hayes, Chair*

*Councillor Taylor, Vice-Chair*

*Councillor Simonelli*

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Wednesday, October 9, 2024

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room#113  
215 Pleasant Street

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### Roll Call

**Present:** 3 - Councillor Karen Colon Hayes, Ari Taylor and Chris Simonelli

Councillor Colon Hayes called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

### Minutes to be Approved

### Business

The committee will meet to begin the process of meeting with the applicants for the Malden Youth Council.

*Councillor Colon Hayes asked each candidate to tell a little about themselves and why they are interested in being on the Malden Youth Council.*

*Councillor Taylor asked what they would like to accomplish if you were on this Youth Council*

*Councillor Simonelli asked if they had any questions for the committee and if there is anything else they would like to add about themselves*

*The committee began interviewing candidates for the Malden Youth Council with the following applicants:*

*Julia Brzeski Gamitto. Julia is a Senior at Malden Catholic High School. She was born here then lived in Brazil for 10 years and has been back living in Malden for the past eight years. She is part of mock trial and part of the STEM community at MC. When she came back to America she was illiterate she couldn't speak or write English and it was very difficult to assimilate herself into the culture. She feels being aware of that she thinks we need change. She is a second english learner. She is also the President of the Latino Association at MC. She said an example is that MC doesn't offer ESL programs. The Malden Community is very diverse and she said we need change and she wants to be part of it. After High School she would like to study Political Science and then attend Law School. She will be the first person in her family to graduate from High School and go on to College. She said with the English programs in Malden she feels that we need more to help. She feels we need more community support for all the schools with the students who cannot communicate. The after school programs are often to expensive for the parents of these students.*

*Petra Luisa DiMarco Davilla-Devyn is a student at Malden Catholic. She is very into community work and helps out in the warming center. She is very faith oriented and goes to youth group at the church. She is part of the habitat for humanity club at MC. She is*

very involved in social clubs and public clubs so that she will know about what is going on in the community. Her goal for being on this committee would be more of recognizable community spaces and more environmental work. She has lived in Malden for the past 15 years of her life. She feels there has been a decrease in nature overall. She has two dogs and in the summer when she takes them for walks it gets very hot and there are not enough trees around which provide necessary cooling and necessary environment for animals and bugs that are essential to the environment. It makes it hard for people to be outside to walk around. She feels like that is one of the more important things she has noticed. She feels that older people don't understand the environment because it isn't going to be their world and younger people have been taking up the torch because it is the world they will be living in. The younger generation will have to deal with the effects of what those older people in charge have decided more concrete, more buildings and they will have to change things that have been implemented for years when they are able to.

Guilliannah Amina Dormevil she attends Malden Catholic. She is on the JV Field Hockey team, works backstage with drama this year, likes helping out and does community events when she can. She was interested in the Youth Council because with MC she doesn't feel she is in the Malden community. It is kind of off to the side and she feels this would be a great opportunity to get engaged with the Malden Community and meet more people and make connections. As a member of the MYC she would like to work on is when she goes to different events in Malden she doesn't see much youth helping out with participating. She would like to help engage specifically High School students in Malden to make more connections and participate more in the community. A passion of hers would be to introduce people to new experiences and helping them find things they like and where they fit in.

Elissa Irene Dodge-Ollie she attends Malden High School and for hobbies she likes theater and is very active in the Malden Community Theater and play production at MHS. She loves reading and writing and has two cats at home she likes spending time with. She is in the pathways program at MHS which is an alternative school program and is great. She feels that for someone who is getting assistance in school she could offer a big voice that might not be heard other wise. She feels like all the programs we have at MHS are not properly advocated for. A lot of youth in the City are kids struggling. As a very low income community she feels that someone from a low income household and is getting assistance in school she could offer a wide narrative that a lot of people can't. She cares a lot about everybody's voices being heard. She loves living in Malden it is such a diversity community where there are so many voices for every topic you can imagine and feels it's very beautiful and a great way to live in such a flourishing community. She likes a lot of the things the City Council stand for and feels like we have a very diverse Council as well and would love to work hand in hand. She also applied for the Youth School Committee Representative. She likes to share her voice. She was on the student council freshman year, helped bring homecoming to MHS, helps out with the Teen Center and loves to keep herself busy. She likes to have a schedule and have things to do and help other people and help out and be a part of the community. It helps her feel fulfilled with her life and get out of bed in the morning. She likes to be everywhere she can be all of the time. She feels like since this is a new thing it is hard to know what she is able to accomplish from this position. What is actually within reach for where she will be standing. She definately thinks some things she is thinking target youth from a youth standpoint. She also said she feels there is a very big issue in Malden with youth and vaping and drug usage. She feels it comes from lower income people and lower income teenagers who need more help. She knows there is Malden Overcoming Addiction and that at MHS they have a lot of resources for teenagers in

Malden. She also mentioned the teen health center in the High School. She feels we can be the domino effect of the community that starts a change. Everybody has school spirit. We have students and teenagers that want to be part of the community but don't know where to begin. So many people whose voices are not heard because they aren't comfortable being in a position to share their voices especially if they are struggling with something like addiction. She feels if we reach out to these young adults Malden has a strong group of adults that kids trust at the schools and the City with the help of the Youth Council she feels they can make a difference with these teenagers who are struggling with addiction. She feels everyone offers a different perspective and that's what she loves about this community everyone has different ideas. She wants to major in Psychology when she goes to college to help people.

Ruth Fedna is a student at Malden Catholic High School. She was interested in this Youth Council because she works at the YMCA and really likes working with the youth as in school age kids. She feels this opens her eyes up to things at MC she feels she is in a small bubble and doesn't see things. She is not from a wealthy family but feels she is pretty much privileged. She would like to bring more attention to children in unstable households and the programs they can go to.

Councillor Colon Hayes explained that this is the first Youth Council in Malden and there will be meetings about 10 hours a month but it is flexible and we will all be learning together. If you are interested that would be great.

Ruth asked if she could recommend someone who she thinks would benefit from something like this they are a young activist themselves and interested in their community. She is not 100% sure she is a perfect fit.

Councillor Colon Hayes gave the information to Ruth to share with the person she wanted to recommend it to. She appreciates her honesty that she is not sure about not being sure. She asked her to let her know her decision.

The committee had a brief discussion and were very pleased that each one of the candidates has a different answer. The majority of applicants were from Wards 5, 7 & 8 which is very different from candidates on Boards and Commissions which are heavily represented by Ward 3. The candidates were very enthusiastic and passionate about what they would like to accomplish on this Youth Council. They will continue with the remaining candidates interviews next week, Wednesday, October 16, 2024.

## Other Business

### Adjournment

**Motion to was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor Taylor, that this meeting be adjourned at 7:06 PM. The motion carried unanimously.**