

# Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Constitution

Proposed: November 2020      Approved: January 2021

## MISSION:

The mission of the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council is to teach life skills by providing positive, hands-on, and educational opportunities for and with youth, through the recruitment, training, and development of caring 4-H volunteers in the hope of creating healthy proactive future leaders and lifelong learners in a global world.

## ARTICLE I:      NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council. (Hereinafter referred to 4-H Council)

## ARTICLE II:      PURPOSE

The purposes of this Council are:

1. To maintain and strengthen the 4-H program by assisting the Montana State University Extension. (Hereinafter referred to as Extension)
2. To support a progressive 4-H youth program and promote educational 4-H club activities in Ravalli County through event and activities committees that plan project training workshops, group activities and the fair.
3. To give leaders and youth a forum for offering suggestions and helping develop a countywide program.
4. To enable leaders and youth to undertake projects or activities on a countywide or district-wide basis, and to offer suggestions for the state 4-H program.
5. To provide a channel of communication and exchange of ideas for leaders, youth and Extension personnel.
6. To provide closer association and exchange of ideas for leaders and other youth organizations.
7. To provide opportunities for leader training and development through a wide range of leadership and training opportunities.
8. To plan and conduct fundraising activities necessary to carry out the work of the Council.
9. To hold title to any property owned by the county 4-H Council.
10. To set and approve the 4-H Council budget at or before the November Council meeting each year.
11. To help develop leadership skills and life skills in youth.
12. To use the "Montana Guide, 4-H Councils and Committees" and the New 4-H Family Handbooks (Montana and Ravalli County) as our governance.
13. To make sure that all information generated through the 4-H Council, committees and Extension Office is passed on to all members of the 4-H Community.
14. To serve as the planning group for the 4-H Council.

## ARTICLE III:      AUTHORITY

The authority of the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council to administer the county 4-H program and to use the 4-H name and emblem is derived from the legal responsibilities of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Land Grant University System, and Montana State University Extension.

4-H is the youth education program of the Montana State University Extension, cooperating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and local county governments. **The MSU County Extension Agent(s) has the ultimate responsibility for and leadership of the 4-H program.** 4-H program policy authority is held by Extension personnel whether at the county or state level, and is administered by the Director of the

Montana State University Extension. The County Extension Agent(s) has final authority in matters of conduct, discipline, health and safety in connection with 4-H members and leaders attending 4-H events and activities in the county, in the state, or outside the state.

The role of the salaried Extension 4-H staff and interns is to educate youth and adults, and to develop and manage a system through which Extension and non-Extension volunteers provide educational programs that enhance subject matter knowledge and life skills development in youth. Extension personnel serve as educators, change agents, leaders and program managers, including ensuring fiscal responsibility of 4-H programs.

#### **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

1. The membership of the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council meetings shall be open to all leaders and teen members enrolled in the County 4-H program.

#### **2. COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

- a. 4-H Council Membership is open to all adult leaders, parents, senior youth members and Extension Agent or staff. 4-H Council issues are voted upon by designated voting representatives only, each registered 4-H Club getting one voting representative, which may be an adult or teen 4-H leader. If the club's voting representative is unavailable, the club may send an alternate representative.
- b. Two (2) Youth Ambassador Representatives are also a portion of the Council in voting positions. At least one (1) Extension Agent will serve in a non-voting ex-officio position.
- c. A club whose representative that serves as President of the 4-H Advisory Council shall be entitled to have an additional voting representative on council.

#### **3. SENIOR YOUTH MEMBER:**

- a. Any senior youth 13 years and older, as of October 1<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H year, may be a member of the 4-H Council, is eligible for membership in this Council if he/she has enrolled in the Ravalli County 4-H program on the appropriate forms, and is associated with a recognized club for the current year.

#### **4. ADULT LEADER:**

- a. Any person ages 19 and over, is eligible for membership in the 4-H Council, if he/she meets the county requirements, and has enrolled in the Ravalli County 4-H program on the appropriate forms, and is associated with a recognized club and/or county sub-committee as defined in the 4-H Council By-Laws for the current year.
- b. Adult volunteers under the age of 21 are not eligible to serve as chaperones for 4-H activities or trips.

#### **ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

1. The Executive Board of the Advisory Council shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and serve for a two-year term as a 4-H Council Representative. A designated Ravalli County Extension Agent will serve as the non-voting ex-officio member.

- a. These officers shall be elected by the Advisory Council at the September Meeting.
- b. There is one exception to the elected rule and that is the Treasurer. They may be either elected from the 4-H Council or be an appointed person from outside the Council: this is subject to a majority Advisory Council vote.
  - i. If appointed the position will have no voting privileges: however, banking signatory privileges will not be impacted.

- ii. If the previously appointed Treasurer stand for election and is voted into office, voting privileges are restored.
2. The President shall preside at Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Meetings, formulate committees and perform other appropriate duties while following Robert’s Rules of Order.
  - a. The President shall only vote in the event of a tie of any vote of the 4-H Advisory Council.
3. The Vice President shall substitute for the President when needed and shall also help to plan for the Advisory Council meetings.
  - a. If neither President nor Vice President are able to attend the meeting, an Executive Board member or Extension Agent shall preside.
4. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meeting and submit them to the Extension Office to be recorded in the Minutes book upon approval at the following meeting.
5. The Treasurer shall be accountable for presentation of reports to the Council Meetings summarizing all activity on 4-H Council Accounts. The Treasurer will provide information to the Budget Committee.
  - a. Two signatures are required for all checks. All adult representatives are eligible to be signers on the accounts.
  - b. An annual financial review of all 4-H Council accounts will be completed by and 4-H Council approved and appointed committee.
6. Vacancies in Executive Board will be filled through a majority vote by the voting representatives.
7. The Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council and Executive Board shall follow the guidelines set forth under The Emblem of 4-H. If actions by an officer or member of the Ravalli County Advisory Council or Executive Board fall short of the guidelines, a discussion and majority vote of Advisory Council members and the Extension Office approval, may remove that person from his or her position with due process. (Please see the “4-H Councils and Committees” and “The 4-H Name and Emblem” for Guidelines.)
8. The 4-H Council and the Extension Agents has final authority over all disbursements of the Ravalli County 4-H Program assets.
9. Situations where financial and/or other decisions must be made quickly and cannot wait until the next regular meeting, a majority of the Executive Board with approval from the Extension Agents may decide to disburse 4-H funds which benefit the program. An explanation of such activity will be given at the next 4-H Council meeting.
10. When the 4-H Council chair decides the demands of privacy exceeds the merit of public knowledge the Executive Board reserves the right to move into an executive session.

**ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**

1. The President, the Executive Board or Extension Agent may appoint committees when needed to handle an event, activity or special task.
2. Standing Committees:
  - a. Exist for ongoing and reoccurring events and issues
  - b. Standing Committees shall be listed on the enrollment forms and may be changed as needs arise.
  - c. Recommendations of policy changes within committees will be a result of a simple majority vote of committee members present.
  - d. Standing Committees will meet to review their policies. Minutes will be available at the Council meeting.
3. The Executive Board and Extension Agent has final authority over all Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Sub-Committees policies and policy changes.

4. All committees will report to the 4-H Council. Any changes to committee policies must be approved by the 4-H Council.
  - a. No committee has power to act unless explicitly given permission to do so at a 4-H Council meeting

**ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS**

1. The 4-H Council shall meet regularly with the time and place published in advance in the 4-H newsletter.
2. The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting should be mailed or emailed to the Advisory Council Members and Organizational Leaders at least one week prior to the meeting.
3. All 4-H Leaders, teen leaders and parents are encouraged to attend the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Meetings and participate in the discussion.
4. A quorum will consist of one third or more voting representatives, calculated from the total of all county recognized clubs plus the Junior Ambassador and Senior Ambassador present at an Advisory Council Meeting.

**ARTICLE VIII: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

1. The Constitution shall be reviewed biennially by the Constitutions and Bylaws Committee.
2. A separate document of the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Bylaws shall be maintained.
3. A current copy of the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Constitution and Bylaws will be sent to all Organizational Leaders annually.
4. The Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Constitution may be amended or replaced at any one of the 4-H Advisory Council Meetings provided the amendments or changes have undergone the following procedures:
  - a. Changes to the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Constitution is proposed to the Advisory Council.
  - b. The proposed changes to the Ravalli County 4-H Advisory Council Constitution are published for availability in the 4-H Newsletter and sent by request.
  - c. The proposed changes to the Ravalli County 4-H Council Constitution will be voted on and approved by the majority of the 4-H Advisory Council present at the next scheduled meeting following the proposed changed.