



Program Year 2017 Syllabus

Program Coordinator

Joshua Ross, (704) 729-6505 or jross@bessemerncity.com

Class Meeting Time

Thursday's from 6:00PM-8:00PM July 20, 2017- September 7, 2017

Program Objective

The Bessemer City Citizen's Academy is an eight (8) week program designed to educate and introduce citizens to local government operations. The program is design to expose participants to all areas of local government as well as community-based organizations. This program will deliver an overview of City roles and responsibilities as well as identify community challenges, opportunities, and ways citizens can become more involved in the community.

At the end of the program, participants should be able to:

- Better understand local government operations
- Identify roles and responsibilities of local government
- Have an understanding of departmental operations
- Understand community strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities
- Identify ways to become more involved in the community

Required Texts

Instructors may assign light reading for program sessions. Material will be provided.

Attendance

It is required for all participants to attend at least six (6) of the eight (8) sessions. Failure to attend at least six (6) classes will result in an incompleton of the program.

Off Site Travel

Certain sessions require off-site travel. It is the responsibility of the participant to plan for transportation for offsite visits. All off-site travel is located in Bessemer City. A list of off-site addresses can be provided upon request.



Program Engagement

It is strongly encourages for participants to actively engage in conversation, ask questions, and participate in session activities. The program is based on interacts and comprehensive discussion from program participants.

Program Courtesy

In order to facility a successful learning experience for participants, it is asked that all cell phones and other electronic devices (not used for note taking, etc.) be turned off and/or placed on silent. It is also asked that participants step out of the classroom for phone calls.

Request for Modifications

Bessemer City is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you have a disability and may need reasonable accommodations in order to have equal access to the City's session and activities, please contact Joshua Ross, BCCA Program Coordinator.

Course Schedule (Tentative)

SESSION 1 Thursday, July 20, 2017- Introduction to Local Government

Items

- Introduction to Program and Participants
- Review of Local Government Structures
- Review of Bessemer City's Governmental Structure
- Exercise- Local Government Comparison
- General Q & A about the Program

SESSION 2 Thursday, July 27, 2017- Cultural and Recreational Services

Items

- Purpose of Cultural and Recreational Services
- Types of Services Offered (Senior, Youth, and Events)
- Facilities Overview
- Exercise- Event Planning
- Tour(s) - Kiser Senior Center and the Allan Farris Community Center/BC Park*

SESSION 3 Thursday, August 3, 2017- City Administration

Items

- Role of the City Manager
- Role of the City Clerk
- Bessemer City Organizational Management



SESSION 4 Thursday, August 10, 2017- Development

Items

Understanding how development works in local government
Planning/Zoning Division- Planning in Bessemer City
Economic Development Division- Projects in Bessemer City
Exercise- Planning and Development Scenario
Tour- Downtown Walking Tour

SESSION 5 Thursday, August 17, 2017- Finance and Budgeting

Items

How Local Government Finances Work
Budget Process Overview
Exercise- Budget Formation

SESSION 6 Thursday, August 24, 2017- Public Works

Items

Streets / Maintenance Division
Natural Gas Division
Water/Sewer Division
Tour(s) – Bessemer City Water Plant and Arrowood Lake Reservoir

SESSION 7 Thursday, August 31, 2017- Public Safety

Items

Introduction to Public Safety in Local Government
Bessemer City Volunteer Fire Department
Bessemer City Police Department
Tour(s) - Fire Department and Police Department

SESSION 8 Thursday, September 7 2017- Civic Groups

Items

Overview of Community Civic and Non-Profit Groups
Identify Ways Citizens Can Get Involved
Tour(s) - Bessemer City Community Garden and/or Bessemer City Crisis Center

GRADUATION Monday, September 11, 2017

7:00PM, City Council Meeting @ City Hall

Disclaimer

1) This syllabus is subject to change upon the Program Coordinator's discretion and for scheduling purposes.

