

Citizens' Academy Overview



What is the Citizens' Academy?

The Citizens' Academy is a unique opportunity designed to offer citizens the chance to learn more about their city government and gain insight into how the city operates. The Academy is a series of hands-on workshops concluding with a Graduation ceremony. Through informative presentations and interesting tours that focus on city departments, participants will become familiar with the structure and functions of City government. The City hopes to build positive relationships and increase communication between City government and citizens, as well as inspire future municipal leaders

What will I learn?

Citizens go behind the scenes of city government to experience the relationship between City Commission and City administration; they will meet with City departments that manage the budgetary process, provide clean water and safe streets, offer various recreational services, tour the performing arts hall, visit with police divisions, learn about operations of the emergency services, what's the latest on transportation, hear about sustainability efforts and a host of other services the City provides.

When and where will the Citizens' Academy sessions be held?

Sessions are 2 ½ hours starting at 5:30 PM, held once-a-week, generally Thursday evenings, for eight weeks starting on Thursday, January 23, 2020. There is one Thursday afternoon session starting at 11:30 PM at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall on February 6, 2020. The Citizens' Academy will conclude with a Graduation ceremony at a City Commission meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020. Sessions will be held at various locations around the City according to the schedule.

Are there any requirements?

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age; and must either live, own property or own a business in the City of Sarasota. There is no fee to attend the Citizens' Academy. The program is limited to 30 participants and applicants are selected through an application process on a first-come basis provided the application is completed in its entirety and submitted by the due date of Friday, December 13, 2020.