

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

**FROM A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON May 24, 2023**

**VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**A. CALL TO ORDER** *meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Michele Gruet.*

**B. STATEMENT REGARDING PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT - read by Michele Gruet.**

*The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied with respect to this meeting of the Multicultural Inclusion & Accessibility Advisory Committee which is being held via Zoom video conferencing. This information, along with the public internet link and telephone call-in information was posted in the Municipal Building, and sent the official newspapers of the Township, the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger and MyVeronaNJ.com, TAPinto and the Patch, the official online news source(s) of the Township, at least 48 hours preceding the start time of this meeting. A public comment period will be held in the order it is listed on the meeting agenda and instructions on how to comment will be provided at the appropriate time.*

**C. ROLL CALL** (Michelle O'Neill; late 7:30p)

**Present:**

Michele Gruet (Chair)

John Vajda

Steven Neale

Christine McGrath

Kathleen Francis

Kristen Dunleavy

Michelle O'Neill

Maura Barrett

Carla Buglione

Sarvenaz Singh

**Absent:**

Wesley Tahsir-Rodriguez

Diane DiGiuseppe

Emma DePaul

Verena Mikhael

Carla Buglione

Claudine Pascale

Andrew DiChiara

## **Approval of May 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes:**

*Michele Gruet asks the Committee if there are any questions/changes to the May 4, 2023 Minutes. Minutes from the May 4, 2023 meeting are approved unanimously.*

## **Public Comment:**

**None**

## **Updates:**

### **Volunteer Sub-Committee**

- Michele Gruet gave an update on the online form that was worked on by the Volunteer Sub-Committee; Sub-Committee provided the criteria to Steve Neale; Steve Neale created online submission form.
- Goal: To have the form completed and operational by the Pride Event.
- Christine asked if a question could be added to ask individual applying for volunteer positions if there was any additional information/feedback they would like to provide to the MIAAC.
- Diwali also has to be added to questionnaire.
- Sarvaez requested to have paper forms available at the event and Steve agreed this would be the case.
- Michele also stated that she bought lanyards for committee members that would identify who was a member of the committee and encourage attendees of events to approach committee members.

## **New Business:**

### **1. Update on smart phone tutorial event for Older Americans Month**

Michele gave update stating that Claudine asked to move this event to June. Michele thanked John for the work and research he did for the event. Michele stated that she would work with Claudine on a new date for the event. John is unavailable for June. Michele stated that Claudine can probably run it. Michele will follow up.

### **2. Discussion of efforts leading to Disability Independence Day (July 26)**

Michele/Kristen provided updates that they began discussions about Disability Independence Day. The Disability Flag was discussed as it is new and not official. The flag is mostly used electronically and through social media. Christine asked if the Summer Concert series could be used to raise awareness, specific to Disability Awareness. Christine mentioned including NAMI, CHILD, and other organizations that would bring awareness to disabilities. This was well-received by the committee. Steve

provided the dates for the concerts series (July 12, 19, and 26<sup>th</sup>). The sub-committee will meet to further discuss plans for this event.

3. Dates for Meetings 2023-2024 Year

Michele provided dates for MIAAC meetings for the 2023 and 2024. The dates were reviewed with other committee/town dates and the public school calendars. The following dates were chosen for MIAAC meetings: June 28, 2023; August 23, 2023; September 27, 2023; October 25, 2023; November 29, 2023, December 20, 2023; January 24, 2024; February 28, 2024; March 27, 2024; April 24, 2024; May 22, 2024; and June 26, 2024. All committee members were in favor, no committee member opposed; There was a motion to approve and a second.

4. Recruitment

Michele mentioned that the goal is to recruit new representatives, specifically in the high school. Christine stated that the high schoolers would have to apply.

5. Juneteenth

Acknowledgement of this date/event was done but timing is being looked into by Steve. 6/19 appears to be the date that Juneteenth would be acknowledged; Carla added context regarding Juneteenth in that many persons of color, do not want to “celebrate” this event. Committee was thankful for Carla’s perspective; Steve stated that a flag raising may be best way to acknowledge the week; Christine stated that it may be a good idea to include story time for the little ones and then do the flag raising. Michele will follow up on this event.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm. **The next meeting is scheduled for: June 28, 2023.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Michelle O’Neill  
Secretary, MIAAC**