

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

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:05 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

Present:

Michele Gruet
Kristen Dunleavy
Roxanna Tirado
Wesley Tahsir-Rodriguez
Michelle O'Neill
Rita Chevalier
Christine McGrath - Council Representative

Absent:

Carla Buglione
Kathleen Francis
John Vajda
Diane DiGiuseppe - Superintendent of School
Elisa Northrop - Public Information Officer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the August 23rd meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

- Christine McGrath – Jim Cunningham is retiring after dedicating many years of service to the Recreation Department. The status of the new disability coordinator will be discussed by the next committee meeting. The recreation department is currently going through a reorganization.
- Michelle O’Neill – CHILD is in the planning phases of the 2nd Verona Inclusive Schools week that will take place the week of Jan 22, 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion:

- Hispanic Heritage Event – The subcommittee consists of W.Tahsir-Rodriguez, R.Tirado. The date of the event will be October 15th from 2p-4p. The subcommittee has partnered with the library. 2p-3p will be kids crafts (provided by the library) and food and 3p-4p will be the concert. The budget for the event was confirmed at \$250. The subcommittee is researching local food vendors to provide bite size food/dessert for the event. The estimated number of people attending is approximately 40. Elise created a social media banner. Subcommittee to have banner translated into Spanish, as well.
- Diwali – The subcommittee consists of W.Tahsir-Rodriguez, R.Tirado, and J.Vajda, who are collaborating with Verona Resident, Toral Patel. An initial meeting was held with a request by T. Patel to potentially move the event to 10/23. M. Gruet added that the library is planning a Diwali celebration and that it may be best to coordinate with the library. M.Gruet to meet with T.Patel on 9/29 to discuss. The Diwali event at the library will take place on Saturday, 11/4/23, at 2:30p.
- Fair in Square – M.Gruet and M.O’Neill to meet to discuss the quiet photo session with Santa. S.Neale handled the coordination in the past. The goal is to have CHILD work with MIAAC and township on this effort.
- Accessibility Report – The subcommittee consists of M.Gruet, J.Vajda, K.Dunleavy, and M.O’Neill. M.Gruet discussed a summary of the drafted report on the ADA recommendations provided by the subcommittee. C.McGrath to review report and provide M.Gruet with feedback. Once received/approved, M.Gruet will forward to township manager. Subcommittee to continue to place focus on areas of accessibility and will report to subcommittee. M.Gruet to distribute “Making Events Accessible” to the subcommittee.
- High School Representatives – The committee is searching for two high school volunteers. Challenges have come up with recruitment efforts. C.McGrath and M.O’Neill to discuss leveraging the National Honor Society for recruits.

- Open Public Meetings Act – C.McGrath reminded the committee that email cannot be used to discuss meetings or for committee planning purposes as this could be in violation of the Act. It is acceptable to discuss planning with a subcommittee, but it is important to remember not to “reply all.”

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ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM