

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

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON OCTOBER 25, 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
John Vajda
Kathleen Francis
Kristen Dunleavy
Roxanna Tirado
Carla Buglione
Wesley Tahsir-Rodriguez
Michelle O'Neill
Rita Chevalier
Christine McGrath - Council Representative

Absent:

Diane DiGiuseppe - Superintendent of School
Elisa Northrop - Public Information Officer
Claudine Pascale - Verona Public Library

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the September 27th meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

- Christine McGrath – Jim Cunningham has retired 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 consisting of W.Tahsir-Rodriguez and R.Tirado, held the event on October 15th from 2p-4p. The event was a great success and the subcommittee was thanked for all of their hard work putting the event together.
- Diwali – The subcommittee consists of W.Tahsir-Rodriguez, R.Tirado, and J.Vajda, who are collaborating with Verona Resident, Toral Patel. The Diwali event at the library will take place on Saturday, 11/4/23, at 2:30p. There will be a candle lighting celebration, speeches, food, and crafts for the children. E.Northrop will be sending out information via social media on the event.
- Fair in Square – M.Gruet and M.O’Neill are in discussions regarding the quiet photo session with Santa and the coordination of that event. CHILD will assist where needed and M.Gruet and M.O’Neill will work with E.Northrop on the planning and coordination. J.Vajda to join the subcommittee and will assist with the planning. The event is to be hold on 12/2/23 from 10a-12p.
- Hanukkah – M.Gruet stated that the Hanukkah celebration will take place on 12/7/23. M.Gruet will reach out to E.Northrop to see if MIAAC can assist with the event.
- 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