



VERONA MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

7:00 P.M.

July 23, 2024

CALL TO ORDER- meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Coordinator Ann Jocelyn via zoom call.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-

Coordinator Jocelyn read Open Public Meeting Act statement, and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL- In attendance: Colin Boyle (Community Representative), Katie Cuartas (Laning School Representative nominee), Councilwoman Cynthia Holland (Verona Town Council), Elizabeth Hynes (Forest Avenue Representative), Ann Jocelyn (Coordinator), Rachel Klansky (Past Chairperson), Kimberly Manis (Community Representative), Officer Pinto (Verona Police Department), Staci Puleo (Brookdale Avenue Representative), Regina Tully (FN Brown Representative)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from April 17, 2024 Meeting- Colin Boyle moved to approve, Rachel Klansky seconded approval.

READING OF THE VISION/MANDATE/ MISSION STATEMENTS

MEMBERSHIP & OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

Membership

- At a regular meeting of the Township Council held on July 1, 2024, Jim Day was appointed as a member of the Municipal Alliance Committee to the 3-year unexpired term ending 6/30/25. Coordinator Jocelyn welcomed Mr. Day to the Committee, and thanked him for his ongoing service to the Township of Verona.
- Elizabeth Hynes (Forest Avenue Representative) and Rosanna Gionni (Laning Avenue Representative) are stepping away from their VMAC roles to more actively participate in a different township committee and the SCA, respectively. Coordinator Jocelyn thanks Representatives Gionni and Hynes on behalf of the Committee and community for their

efforts this past year, especially with regard to coordinating the BABES program for our 2nd graders.

- Katie Cuartas has been nominated to represent Laning School, and subject to Council approval, will join the Board as a voting member.
- The Forest Avenue SCA is planning to name a new representative prior to the October VMAC meeting.
- Julianne Boyle is leaving the Committee after over a decade of service as a VMAC youth representative and Secretary. Coordinator Jocelyn thanks her for her dedication to the organization and Township of Verona, and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.
- The Committee has an open committee position, which may be filled by a Verona resident who must be 18 years old to vote. Ideally, this position will be filled prior to the October meeting and the new member will have the capacity to represent the youth or senior population of the Township. Coordinator Jocelyn will reach out to Verona's senior citizen club to solicit applications.
- Superintendent Diane DiGiuseppe named Director of Athletics and Special Programs, Laura Palmerezzi, as her designee. The Committee welcomes Ms. Palmerezzi.

Officer Appointments

- As discussed at April 17th meeting, two officer positions are open: Chairperson and Secretary. Rachel Klansky (Past Chairperson) will remain on the Committee, and Julianne Boyle (Past Secretary) has resigned from the Committee.
- Kimberly Manis volunteered to serve as Chairperson, and was subsequently nominated by Coordinator Jocelyn. This nomination was uncontested. Committee Member Day moved to vote on Ms. Manis' nomination, which was seconded by Committee Member Boyle. A vote was subsequently conducted and Ms. Manis was unanimously voted to serve as Chairperson.
- Staci Puleo volunteered to serve as Secretary, and was subsequently nominated by Coordinator Jocelyn. This nomination was uncontested. Coordinator Jocelyn moved to vote on Ms. Puleo's nomination, which was seconded by Committee Member Day. A vote was subsequently conducted and Ms. Puleo was unanimously voted to serve as Secretary.
- VMAC bylaws allows for a Vice-Chairperson. Members interested in pursuing a leadership role may reach out to Coordinator Jocelyn or Chairperson Manis.

FINANCIAL & PROGRAM REVIEW

4th Quarter Financial Review

Ann Jocelyn provided a review of 4th quarter (April-June) spending and program activity. \$11,976.75 was expended from State & Township funding, which is comprised of:

- \$7,005.10 for school-based program stipends and activities;
- \$2,471 community activities; and
- \$2,500.00 Alliance Coordination Stipend

Of note, \$3,345.99 of in-kind contributions were recorded including coordination expenses, volunteer hours, township administrative support, business donations, and rooms provided by the schools and library

4th Quarter Program Review

- **Heroes & Cool Kids** - 3 training sessions. 3 trips to HBW with a record number of applicants for FY25
- **HBW Peer Leaders** - 4th grade orientation for parents and students, a spirit day fundraiser for a teacher running the NYC marathon, and awareness and celebration of Asian & Pacific Islanders month in May.
- **DEA TakeBack Day** - Saturday, April 27th; a day to encourage responsible disposal of unused or expired medications, and promote Verona's dropbox in the police station. Verona Police Officers followed up with a visit to the Verona Senior's Club luncheon on May 22. A total of 169 pounds of medicine was collected for disposal.
- **AwareAwakeAlive** – assembly and meetings between VPD and students to raise awareness of 911 Amnesty Law and dangers of overdosing and alcohol poisoning. PSA placed in myVerona for 2 weeks beginning Memorial Day weekend, extended through 4th of July by VPD using Opioid settlement funds.
- **Project Graduation** – an event the night of graduation for all interested graduates from VHS.
- **BABES** (Beginning Awareness Basic Education Studies) - 5 lessons to give 2nd graders positive living skills and non-judgmental information about substance use and abuse.
- **Art Therapy** – This new program sponsorship consisted of 4 sessions in May on the healing benefits of the creative arts. Approximately 11 Verona senior citizen participated in this program.

1st Quarter FY2025 Plan Submission & Program Review

Based on the resolution passed on January 22, 2024, by the Township Council, and the plan approved by the Committee, the plan for the allocation of the FY25 grant in the amount of \$21,151.58 was submitted to the County (\$16,921.26 from the State and \$4,230.32 from the Township).

Allocated \$2,500 to Alliance Coordination (12%), \$17,062.25 (81%) to School-based programs, \$1,589.33 to Community-based Activities (8%). \$12,690.95 in-kind donations.

1st Quarter FY25 Planned Activities & Announcements (July-September)

- National Night Out – August 6th in Cedar Grove, will work with VPD to support efforts
- VHS Peer Leaders - confirm continuation with VHS Principal Cogdill and guidance staff
- Welcome Back events for VHS & HBW Peer Leaders

- SAFE Homes-distribute Back to School
- Family Night rescheduled from October 10th to 9th
- Red Ribbon Week October 23-31 led by HBW Peer Leaders

VMAC Committee volunteers are needed to manage and execute on activities related to BABES, parent seminars/community event, Fair in the Square, and Senior Citizen outreach. Please reach out to Coordinator Jocelyn or Chairperson Manis with your preferences for service.

Coordinator Jocelyn will circulate a Conflict of Interest attestation to Committee members who need to submit written attestations.

Coordinator Jocelyn provided revised FY25 quarterly meeting schedule for the fourth Tuesday following quarter-end: July 23, 2024; October 22, 2024; January 28, 2025; April 22, 2025. New meeting dates are reflected on the VMAC website. Committee member Day and Coordinator Jocelyn discussed the potential for date conflicts with the Verona Board of Education meetings.

Coordinator Jocelyn led the Committee through the planning and approval timeline for securing funding for VMAC-sponsored activities and materials at the request of Committee Member Day. Ms. Jocelyn extended an open invitation to all Committee members to meet with her for a deep-dive on VMAC grant coordination and critical milestones.

PUBLIC COMMENT- no public comment

ADJOURNMENT- meeting adjourned 7:40pm by Committee Member Klansky.

Submitted by: Kimberly Manis