



Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford

Meeting to be held via conference call

phone # 605-475-4700

access code: 331855

Our Mission:

To inform, celebrate, promote, understand, appreciate and respect the many diverse cultures that enrich Stamford

MINUTES June 1, 2020

Attendance and quorum check:

Members attending the meeting via conference call: Eva Weller, Corey Paris, Marty Levine, Sandra Jean Barrett, Shobhna Bhatnagar, Eileen Heaphy, Deborah Goldberg, James Hinton, Hayate Jandar, Pilar Peláez and Ana Gallegos.

Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM.

Welcome:

Eva Weller welcomed MMC members and thanked everyone for attending the virtual meeting. She thanked James for facilitating this meeting via conference call. Eva invited each member to share their experiences related to COVID-19. Each member shared his or her personal experiences about home, family, health, work, volunteer work with affiliated organizations and groups as well as many experiences helping in the community.

Everyone agreed the MMC should be supportive to the special needs of the community resulting from the consequences related to COVID-19. The Council discussed events in Stamford and across the country that were acts of racism toward Blacks including the tragic death of George Floyd.

We also shared the sad loss of Jack Bryant, a member of the Stamford Board of Education and President of the Stamford National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). A suggestion was made for the MMC Chair to reach out to the new NAACP President to see if there were opportunities to work together on programs or projects. We will also explore ways the MMC could be helpful and supportive of their initiatives. Eva thanked the members for their concerns and suggestions and she said that she would contact Guy Fortt, current President of the NAACP and also Donn Reid, Chief Values Officer, Domus Kids, who has been working on the Anti-Racist Alliance initiative for many years. She added if any members would like to be involved on this issue to email her or Ana. Eileen expressed her interest in working on this initiative. Marty asked if any member knows how Jere is doing. It was great to hear from one of the members that she is doing well.

Minutes

Eva Weller, asked members to review and approve the minutes from the April 27, 2020, Deborah Goldberg made the motion to approve the minutes. Sandra Barrett seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Projects/Events:

International Dance Festival: October 4, 2020

Eva informed the Council that she has contacted Matt Quinones, Chief Executive Officer of Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) about the event in the fall. She said that SPEF has a date of October 4th for US Day/Marcus for Change, but because of COVID 19 they have not begun to plan for the event. They welcome partnering with us again this year. Eva said the Corey has suggested that CLC join us as another partner of the event. Corey is the Director of Development of The Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC). He stated that the CLC serves working minority families with children six weeks to five years old and that having CLC as partner would attract more people to the event. Everyone agreed that the partnership with CLC could be a plus because the event is a family event. Eva said that she would share this idea with SPEF.

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Eva asked Ana about the groups that participate during the fall. There were questions if the groups are still working or have not been able to practice or get together because of COVID-19 restrictions. Ana said that she would send a letter to the groups and reach out so we will have a preliminary idea of how they are doing before sending a formal invitation.

Budget Update & Report:

Eva said that the current amount remaining in the MMC budget is around \$4,000.00 because we were not able to hold an event in May, however, it was expected that the MMC return the monies to the City because of the budget cuts as consequence of the Pandemic. She added that the MMC budget submitted for next year is \$9,000.00.

The Board of Representatives has final approval of the budget. Eva reported that at the Board of Finance budget meeting a member made a motion to cut the budget for the MMC. He did not receive support for his motion. The Board of Finance approved the MMC budget in total. Eva offered to send a letter to the Chair of the Fiscal Committee of the Board of Representatives before they meet so they have additional information about the MMC should questions arise about the work the MMC does and events the MMC sponsors. She read a draft of a letter she wrote and asked for feedback. Everyone thanked and supported the idea of the letter. Some members emphasized that it is important that they have information about the MMC mission and what we do to bring people together to celebrate Stamford's diversity.

New Project/Event:

Stamford Day: May 16, 2020

Eva said that there are no updates at this time about Stamford Day.

Old Business:

Census 2020 Update

Ana said that the Census Bureau continues announcing resumption of operations, such as fingerprinting new hires.

The Stamford Counts campaign continues encouraging people to respond on their own online, over the phone or mail without having to meet a census taker. Census takers will start interviewing households on August 11th to October 31st.

Debby shared her experience of sending information to churches and faith groups to help to get the word out. Ana said she has contacted churches; and some, such as St. Mary's Church and St. Benedict Our Lady of Montserrat, published a text about Census in their weekly bulletin given to their parishioners.

Ana asked everyone to continue encouraging their friends and contacts to respond to the Census. Pilar said she is chair of one committee and plans to contact religious and faith groups to continue the campaign. She also said she sent a letter to Eva asking the Mayor's Multicultural to participate in the Census Digital Campaign. The Census office suggests adding the logo and phrases in different languages. She is going to send the information asking for feedback about the Census visual.

New Business:

Opportunities and role of MMC during current restrictions

Eva thanked MMC members who offered to participate and help families and the community as individuals, rather than as MMC.

Hayate asked about the cloth masks donations that cost \$10. Pilar said she had suggested the MMC donate them, but a community member donated them already.

Pilar added that currently she is part of Mutual Aid, a new organization helping our community with food. She said that Mutual Aid and St Andrews Church are collecting non-perishable food and cleaning supplies each Sunday for four consecutive Sundays, starting May 24th in the parking lot of the church from 9:00 am to noon.

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Hayate asked that members help this new organization helping families in our community. Since we will not be able to use Council's money, there was a proposal for the MMC put a box in the Government Center lobby for members and the public who would like to donate non-perishable food, diapers, baby formula, etc.

Announcements:

Eva Thanked Ana for posting important information on the Facebook page, even when information comes at the last minute. One suggestion was to email the posted information to members.

Eva said she would be in touch with the Council about the flyer so the MMC members can help to reach their communities about participating in the Census.

Eva suggested members who would like to be part of the committee for the October 4th event to email her or Ana. Shobhna, Debby, Eileen, Pilar and Ana expressed their interest to be part of the event committee.

Next Meeting: Monday June 29, 2020 at 6:15 pm.

Since the MMC meeting was moved to June 1st because of Memorial Day, the Council agreed to hold the June meeting on the last Monday of June.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41

Submitted by:

Ana Gallegos
MMC Secretary