



## **Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford**

**Meeting: in person and via zoom**

**Mayor's Conference Room -10th Floor**

*Government Center, 888 Washington Blvd Stamford*

**January 30, 2023**

### **Attendance and quorum check:**

Members attending the meeting in person: Eva Weller, Peter Dao, Yelena Klompus, Pilar Pelaez and Ana Gallegos. Sandra Jean Barrett, Shobhna Bhatnagar, Deborah Goldberg, James Hinton, Francise Jean-Louis, Sonal Patel, Malinda Polite and Ajmal Qureshi attended by zoom. Corey Paris, and Eva Padilla responded that they were unable to attend the meeting.

Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

### **Welcome:**

Eva, as Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting in-person and virtually. She welcomed two new members. Yelena Klompus and Ajmal Qureshi. Yelena has been working in different roles at the Ferguson Library for many years and is currently the ELL, Citizenship & Cultural Programs Manager at the Library. She shared that she is very interested in working with the MMC on programs that benefit our community. Ajmal Qureshi thanked the Council for the opportunity to be part of the MMC. He was born in Pakistan and served in many diplomatic roles in the government of Pakistan. Currently, he is a Senior Fellow at Harvard University and member of the Advisory Board of the United Nation Association of Greater Boston. He said it is a privilege to contribute to the mission and initiatives of the MMC. We are so pleased to welcome Yelena and Ajmal as members of the MMC.

### **Approve Minutes: January 11, 2023**

Eva asked members to review and approve the minutes from the January 11, meeting. Peter Dao made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Pilar Pelaez seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Budget Report:** Treasurer Shobhna Bhatnagar indicated she will present an updated budget report next meeting. Eva Weller reported that the remaining funds for the fiscal year are approximated \$7,878.

### **Projects/Events Updates:**

#### **MLK Events: January 15 & 16th**

*City-wide special celebration:* Chair Eva Weller thanked council members Shobhna Bhatnagar, Ana Gallegos, Deborah Goldberg, and Sonal Patel for joining her in attending the city-wide special celebration in honor of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Junior. The event was held on January 15th at UConn Stamford. Music, dance performances, and other expressions of unity were presented.

*MLK March:* Eva Weller, Corey Paris, James Hinton, Malinda Polite and Ana Gallegos attended the annual celebration and MLK March on January 16. Chair Eva Weller was invited to present on behalf of the MMC for the first time this year as part of the program.

*Vision Board Event:* On January 20, Ana Gallegos and Eva Weller, joined the City of Stamford employees to create individual vision boards as part of the City's celebration of Chinese New Year led by Carmen Hughes from IDEAS. It was an opportunity for MMC to connect with others who work for the City of Stamford and envision the year 2023.

*Black History Month or Community Conversation:* Eva shared that she had discussed briefly with Carmen Hughes and Alice Knapp the possibility of holding a Community Conversation. They supported the concept of a community wide partnership for this type of event.

*MMC Afternoon of Jazz:* Eva shared that the sixth annual Afternoon of Jazz concert 2023 will be held on March 12<sup>th</sup> at the Ferguson library and will be a fantastic program. The participating groups are: The *Stamford High School Band*; *Joe Corsello Trio* with Joe Corsello, Felix Endico and Tony Truglio; *Zully Ramos and The OGs*. The *Roylety Steelpan Band* still needs to be confirmed. Eva presented a budget proposal with the following expenses: \$1,500 (honorarium for 15 musicians), Program Printing: \$350; food \$350, DJ: \$450 and Advertising & Flyers \$375 for the total budget amount of \$3,025. Sandra Jean Barrett made the motion to accept the Afternoon of Jazz budget proposal presented by Eva Weller. Peter Dao second the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Eva thanked Ana Gallegos for creating the Save the Date Flyer for the event and Yelena Klompus for her help to distribute the flyer and promote the jazz concert through the Ferguson Library. Reservations will be suggested. Ana will receive reservations by phone and through the MMC email. The event will be published in the MMC social media, newspapers and Eventbrite.

*Building Bridges with Books:* Eva asked Deborah Goldberg to report about the event. Deborah informed that the event was a great success. The book that was read was *I'm Possible: A Story of Survival, a Tuba, and the Small Miracle of a Big Dream* by Richard Antoine White. Reading groups to discuss the book were done first by zoom. An in-person and zoom culminating program was held at the Ferguson library. First a video clip to learn more about the author's life was shown and was followed by a panel discussion with the participation of Project Music's Program Director Gabriela Molina, Artistic Director Garret Mendez and alumnae Selin Agurcia. The conversation was informative and personal, so related to the book nicely. The character proved that people who said you can't, were wrong. The story inspires students to expand their dreams and talents and overcome barriers to succeed. Deborah thanked Eva W., Sonal, and Ana for attending in-person.

*Stamford Day:* Eva Weller reported that in partnership with Mill River Park Collaborative, Stamford Day 2023 will be held on May 21 with the same popular format as last year. This day is also celebrated as World Day for Cultural Diversity which works well with the Stamford Day theme. She invited Council members to be part of the planning committee. Shobhna Bhatnagar, Ana Gallegos, Peter Dao, Sonal Patel, and Pilar Pelaez agreed to be part of the committee again this year. Yelena Klompus will also join the committee.

*World Fest/One City:* Yelena Klompus informed that the Ferguson Library is presenting the World Fest/One City for which MMC is a partner on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Different dance groups from India, China, Slovakia will participate. Other groups were invited, and she is waiting for their confirmation. Food and refreshments are offered to the participants. Yelena also informed that on February 12 the library is hosting different events: Mini golf on February 11 and 12 from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Lunar New Year event on Sunday, February 12 from 2 to 4 pm with presentations of dance, music and martial arts, and the concert of Old School 203 on Sunday, February 5 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Yelena will share the flyers with the Council.

*White Party:* It was discussed that the MMC should continue to explore options to hold the White Party this year and that the mall could be a good location. Co-chairs Malinda Polite and James Hinton will research the ideas and include Council members Khadija Hamran and Hayate Jandar who work or have a business at the mall. Holding a fashion show is also being considered.

*Rhythm & Rumba Salsa Nights:* Hispanic Heritage Month. Eva reported that Mill River Park is thrilled to continue the partnership with the MMC and would like to hold the event on four consecutive nights: September 15 to October 15. This event will under the budget year 2023-2024 beginning July 1, 2023.

**Old Business:**

Film: Reflecting on Anti-Bias Education in Action: The Early Years. There were no updates.

**Announcements:**

It was recommended and agreed that the meeting to be at 6:30pm instead of 6:15pm on Mondays.

**Next Meeting:** February 27

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm

Submitted by:

Ana Gallegos, MMC Secretary