



Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford
Meeting held in-person: Mayor's Conference Room,
10th Floor. 888 Washington Blvd & Via Zoom

September 18, 2023

Attendance and quorum check:

Members in attendance in-person: Eva Weller, Malinda Polite and Ana Gallegos. By zoom: Sandra Barrett, Peter Dao, Deborah Goldberg, Francise Jean-Louis, Yelena Klompus, Naomi Osei-Mensah, Sonal Patel, and Carmen Hughes. Shobhna Bhatnagar was in mourning, Pilar Pelaez and Ajmal Qureshi were unable to attend.

Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:23 pm.

Welcome:

Eva Weller welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Approve Minutes: July 31, 2023

Eva asked members to review the minutes from the July 31st meeting. Deborah Goldberg made the motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Sonal Patel seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Budget Report:

Eva reported that \$9,500 was approved for 2023/24 MMC fiscal budget with new fiscal year beginning July 1st. The MMC co-sponsored with others the HBCU Movie Night on August 18th. The approved expenses for the event were \$60 for popcorn bags and popcorn. Printing of handouts was \$22 with \$9,318 remaining for year.

Projects/Events Updates:

- Concert for Peace: Find Your Cultural Voice: August 6th- Yelena Klompus informed that the *Concert for Peace- Find your Cultural Voice* was presented in partnership with *En Vivo Con Maricarmen*, Alianza Internacional de Capellanes and Nosotras CT, Ladi's Beauty Salon, *La Voz Hispana de Connecticut*, the Mayor's Multicultural Council and the Stamford Arts & Culture Commission. She added there was dance, music and singing. She thanked Eva Weller and council member, Sonal Patel for attending and supporting the event.
- Jamaican Flag Raising: August 10th: Eva Weller informed that the event was well attended with around 80 people. Sandy Senior, who helped to organize the event, asked to be a guest at the next MMC meeting. Eva thanked council members, Meera Banta, Sandra Barrett, and Pilar Pelaez for attending the event.
- 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington: August 14th - Eva Weller reported that the documentary was excellent. Presenters shared their personal memories of the March and its impact on U.S. history.
- First Bolivian Flag Raising: August 13th - Ana Gallegos informed about the First Bolivian flag raising in Stamford. It was a new project of the 2022 UConn PEP class, where she is the facilitator. Dr. Tamu Lucero, SPS Superintendent greeted the many Bolivians and invitees who attended the event. Mike Meyer, Stamford Public Schools and Regan Allan, Stamford Parent Leader Training Institute coordinator, were recognized during the event.
- Ecuadorian Flag Raising: August 13th - Ana Gallegos, President of the Ecuadorian Civic Committee reported that the Ecuadorian Flag-raising event was well attended. Seven residents from Ecuador were recognized for their positive impact in our community, as professionals, leaders, students, and for their community service. An art exhibition, dance and musical performances and traditional Ecuadorian gastronomy were highlights.
- Trinidad Tobago Independence Day: August 28th - Carmen H. invited MMC to attend and share information about this first Stamford flag raising ceremony at the Government Center. Ana reported that it was well attended, and the NY Council of Trinidad Tobago were present at the event.

HBCU: WEE Act Movie Night: August 18th - Eva Weller thanked co-chairs Malinda Polite and Naomi Osei-Mensah and Ana Gallegos secretary for helping with this event. Malinda attended the planning meetings and reported back to the MMC. She was unable to attend due to unforeseeable circumstances, but Naomi and Ana managed the table. Ana went to storage area for MMC tablecloths and banner, but access was not possible. Naomi suggested that these be used for future events and more items were available to give away.

Malinda added that tablecloths were provided for all tables and some groups brought their own. Ana said that it was a good opportunity for the community to learn about the MMC and its upcoming events like Salsa Nights 2023.

Hispanic Heritage Month – MMC Rhythm & Rumba Salsa Nights: September 22 & 29th - Eva Weller asked the council to share this exciting family night event next Friday, September 22nd from 6:00 to 9:00pm. She has been in touch with Mill River Park Collaborative and Alisa's House of Salsa to make sure everything is in place. Eva stated that there are no rain dates scheduled, however, if it rains, the event will be held in the lobby of the Government Center. She also informed that the press release was sent to the Mayor's Office. Ana G. translated it into Spanish and sent it to the Spanish newspapers. Ana shared that flyers are posted at the MMC Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as, at Stamford Patch, Hey Stamford, Stamford Downtown. Kadisha was asked to post at Eventbrite. Invitations have been sent to the organizations in Stamford. Sandra Barrett offered to donate water for the event.

New Business:

- Guatemalan Flag Raising: September 17: -Eva Weller informed that Maria Sandoval and Gloria Finn, president and vice-president, respectively of Grupo Quetzal invited the MMC to be a part of its 202 Independence Celebration and raising of the flag at Columbus Park. The date is also an important Jewish Holiday, so she was not able to attend. She thanked council members Eva Padilla, Beatrice Chodosh and Ana Gallegos for extending this invitation. Eva Weller also thanked Eva Padilla and Ana Gallegos for attending the election of Miss Guatemala as leaders in the community and representing the MMC.

Eva Weller said that flag raising events are an important part of recognizing and celebrating the city's diversity, and the MMC should be a presence at these events. She asked the council to share information about flag raising events, so MMC can attend and post the event on social media. Eva thanked Ana G. for creating a Calendar with Independence Day events and for posting them in MMC social media.

City of Stamford Health Fair at Yerwood Center: September 30th -Eva shared the invitation to participate at the 18th Annual Family Day to be held at Yerwood Center at 90 Fairfield Avenue. A raffle prize is requested for a table. Malinda P. made the motion for the MMC to participate at the City of Stamford Health Fair - Family Day on September 30th Yelena seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Malinda made the motion to have a budget up to \$200 to purchase: stress balls, hand sanitizers, and water for the event. Peter Dao seconded the motion. Eva asked the council to vote. Motion was approved.

SPEF FALLFEST: October 1st - Eva shared SPEF's invitation to participate in their FallFest at Mill River Park with an interactive activity. MMC's map activity was popular last year. Where participants' country of origin is marked on the map and diversity of the event's participants is evident. Eva asked for a motion. Yelena K. made the motion that the MMC participate in the FALLFEST event and Malinda seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Hispanic Heritage Event at Ferguson Library – Zully & that Og's- October 1st & Taller Marinera Dance Studio: October 7th Yelena K. requested the MMC co-sponsor these two events celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. Eva said the MMC and the Ferguson Library have been partners for different events and thanked Yelena for bringing these opportunities to the MMC. It was agreed that both organizations benefit from the partnership.

Old Business: By-Laws committee:

Carmen thanked the By-Laws Committee members: Eva Weller, Deborah Goldberg, Francise Jean-Louis, and Pilar Pelaez for tirelessly working to revise the bylaws which went from 2 pages to 10 pages. She said that the first draft of the proposed bylaws will be shared with the MMC so they will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and have input. In two weeks a special bylaws meeting will be scheduled. Eva expressed her gratitude for Carmen's leadership in strengthening the MMC so the MMC can do more in the future.

Purchase proposal

Eva Weller reported that the remaining funds of \$1,675 were returned to the city because the deadline for submitting expenses (June 15th) had passed. Carmen suggested that the MMC vote at a meeting to purchase bags after quotes are presented. The consensus was that bags were the best option to use as giveaways. Deborah proposed that instead of using \$200 for giveaways at the Family Day event, MMC could use the \$200 to purchase bags instead. Carmen offered to donate water, from one of the providers, for Family Day. Eva asked Malinda and Yelena to rescind the previous approved motion for \$200 for various items. Malinda and Yelena withdrew the motion. Deborah made the motion for the MMC to use the \$200, discussed previously, to purchase bags with the MMC logo to use at different events throughout the year. Yelena seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously. Carmen, Eva, and Francise will review size and material options and get three quotes for bags and present the proposal to the Council for approval.

Announcements:

MMC member, Malinda Polite, announced the annual NAACP dinner to be held on Friday, October 20, 2023, at The Water's Edge at Giovanni's. she said to Please contact her for questions or tickets.

Next Meeting: October 30, 2023

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm

Submitted by:

Ana Gallegos, MMC Secretary