



Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford

Meeting held Via Zoom

November 27, 2023

Attendance and quorum check:

Members in attendance: Eva Weller, Peter Dao, Deborah Goldberg, Yelena Klompus, Naomi Osei-Mensah, Sonal Patel, Pilar Pelaez, Malinda Polite, Carmen Hughes, and Ana Gallegos. Sandra Barrett and Ajmal Qureshi were unable to attend.

Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:19 pm.

Welcome:

Eva Weller welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. She hoped that everyone had a nice Thanksgiving.

Eva mentioned that Sandra Barrett met Sandy Senior at the Jamaican Flag raising event and Ms. Senior was interested in attending an MMC meeting. She was invited to attend as a guest.

Approve Minutes: October 30, 2023

Eva asked members to review the minutes from the October 30th meeting. Peter Dao said that the minutes omitted his comments and do not accurately reflect what he stated at the meeting. Peter asked to postpone the vote to approve the MMC bylaws until MMC members had the opportunity to review the revised document. Since he was driving, there was no opportunity for him to see the changes. He and Carmen had an exchange that he wanted to include in the minutes. Eva suggested we wait for Carmen to attend so the discussion could be clarified. Eva also suggested that approval of the minutes be postponed until Peter can submit what he feels was omitted. Council members agreed to postpone approval of minutes.

New Business:

** Proposed events, invitations, and co-sponsorships.*

Eva Weller informed that she had received an invitation from the Stamford St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee for the MMC to participate in the Parade that will be held on March 2nd, 2024. It was agreed that the MMC participate in the Parade to show that the MMC supports different groups and is a diverse council representing the diversity of Stamford. Eva called for a motion. Peter Dao said, "I motion that we participate, especially if we were invited". Deborah Goldberg seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Eva Weller informed that the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) reached out to MMC because they are trying to bring back an interfaith seder which they held in the past. They are in the planning stage for the event and currently plan to hold the seder on April 11 and invite the MMC to participate. Deborah Goldberg made the motion for the MMC to participate in the seder ceremony presented by the JCRC. Peter Dao seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Eva will share more information when it is available.

Eva Weller said that Miller River Park Collaborative is interested in partnering again with the MMC for Stamford Day and Rhythm and Rhumba Salsa Nights. They want to confirm and hold dates for these events. Eva mentioned that May 12 is Mother Day and suggested to hold Stamford Day on May 19th. Yelena Klompus motioned to hold Stamford Day on May, 19 at the Mill River Park. Ana Gallegos seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Eva W. said that Rhythm and Rhumba Salsa Nights event will be under next year's budget (2024), Mill River Park Collaborative will hold the dates for Hispanic Heritage Month. Yelena K. shared that the Ferguson Library will also present an event for Hispanic Heritage Month, and we should coordinate so there are more events for people to attend. It was agreed to coordinate with Alisa for available dates. Pilar Pelaez made the motion to have two nights of Rhythm and Rhumba Salsa. Sonal Patel seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Eva Weller stated that the jazz concert has been a success each year. Since we held the event at the Ferguson Library, there is no rental fee, and we should coordinate dates with the Ferguson Library to see what dates are available. Yelena Klompus motioned to have the MMC jazz concert in the Ferguson Library, either March 24 or 31st. Sonal Patel seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Bag purchase:

Carmen informed that she researched vendors and compared prices of bags. She reported that she purchased 1,500 bags for the approximate price of \$1,400. This was the best price at less than a dollar for each bag, not including shipping costs. The bags are blue with the MMC logo in white and are slightly different in size.

Carmen addressed minutes. Peter stated that the minutes don't reflect his request for an extra day to review the by-laws before a vote is taken on the changes. Carmen's response was that the committee had a schedule that was announced early on with a timeline for the process to revise and approve. The last meeting was scheduled to discuss, review and approve the proposed MMC By-Laws. Carmen said the changes were not substantial and each change was voted on. The By-laws can be revised again, if necessary. Carmen added that she offered to have an offline conversation with Peter, but she did not receive a reply when she called. Carmen complimented Ana Gallegos in her role as secretary and noted that the minutes reflect the decisions and discussion that take place at the meetings. Eva suggested Peter send a summary "for the record" that can be included in the minutes for approval at the next meeting.

Budget Report:

Eva Weller said that after incorporating Carmen's bag purchases, the remaining budget for the fiscal year is \$6,028.

Announcements:

Eva W. said there is no December meeting scheduled, instead she suggested holding a meeting and dinner in January, as we have done in the past. Each member pays for his or her dinner. The dinner meeting is planned for the second week of January. Eva will confirm the date and location with council member, Shelly Nichani, who has generously provided the boardroom at the Hampton Inn in past years.

Eva invited the MMC to attend the Jewish Historical Society's Norma and Milton Mann Lecture: "Can Jews be the Most Loved and Hated Religious Group in America?" presented by Alan Cooperman, Director of Religion Research at the nonpartisan Pew Research Center Washington, D. C. It will be open to everyone, on December 3 at 11:30 am in Congregation Agudath Sholom, 301 Strawberry Hill. Antisemitism is a topic in the news every day. Mayor Caroline Simmons has made statements about discrimination in our community.

Eva congratulated Yelena on her December 3 birthday. Yelena K. thanked council members who helped at the Diwali event in the Ferguson Library on December 12. She added it was a wonderful event with more than 250 attendees. Eva thanked Yelena for recognizing and acknowledging the MMC at the event. She also thanked Sonal P., Ana G., Malinda P., and Sandy B. for helping at the event and Yelena K. for coordinating the event.

Ana Gallegos shared that the Ecuadorian Civic Committee will be having their Christmas Party 2023 on December 9 and 10. They will be giving away 140 Christmas bags to parents and more than 200 toys to children, thanks to the sponsorship of Jeff' Kids, Toys for Tots, and the support of the SPS.

Ana mentioned Carmen H. and Mayor Simmons' "Kindness Project" initiative. Which began on December 7 and will last until December 25. Carmen said she would love the MMC members to show kindness by doing something for others -- sending a card, giving a gift card, playing a game or other activity to show love to others.

Eva W. announced she has a new granddaughter, named Caroline after her late husband, born October 16th.

Next Meeting: meeting/dinner during second week of January

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 pm

Submitted by:

Ana Gallegos,
MMC Secretary