



Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford

Meeting held via Zoom

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Attendance and quorum check: Members in attendance: Eva Weller, Malinda Polite, Shobhna Bhatnagar, Sandra Barrett, Deborah Goldberg, George Johnson, Naomi Osei-Mensah, Sonal Patel, Pilar Pelaez, Ajmal Qureshi, and Ana Gallegos. Yelena Klompus gave reasons for her absence.

Meeting called to order: Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:22 pm.

Welcome: Eva Weller welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. She informed the council that under the new by-laws, when Monday is a holiday, the meeting must be held the next day (Tuesday).

Approve Minutes: April 29, 2024, Eva asked members to review the minutes from the April 29th meeting. Malinda asked to correct the initialism from NNACP to NAACP. Deborah Goldberg made the motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Sandra Barrett seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Budget Report: Treasurer Shobhna Bhatnagar presented the budget on screen. She reported that the MMC had participated in events in partnership with different organizations, where council members had volunteered. Other events had financial expenses, such as the Afternoon of Jazz (\$2,623.66) plus some in-kind help, and Stamford Day (\$3,820). Shobhna stated that the approximate expenses would be \$8,997.61, plus \$1,495.95 for MMC bags, plus in-kind contributions of \$2,734, totaling \$11,431.61. She added that from the initial assigned budget of \$9,500, the available budget is \$502.39.

Eva Weller, Chair, noted that Stamford Day 2024 has not been held, so all expenses have not been accounted for. At the last meeting, a proposed budget of up to \$4,535 for Stamford Day 2024 was approved. A final actual report will be submitted after all expenses are paid.

Shobhna reported that two new retractable banners for \$275 each had been ordered.

Projects/Events Report:

* **Diversity Day Event at Roxbury School:** Eva thanked Meera and Ana for joining her at the Roxbury School event and Ana for contacting the dance groups. Ana reported that three groups participated: India, Ukraine, and a salsa dance group. Daiana Negrón coordinated the event and expressed gratitude to the MMC for bringing music, dance, and culture, which positively impacted parents and students. Eva stated that the MMC's participation was a great opportunity to promote diversity and cultural aspects in a school setting. It was a good advertisement for the council.

Projects/Events Updates:

* **Stamford Day 2024:** Eva expressed gratitude for the generosity of Shelly Nichani, who offered to donate snacks and water for 500 bags. He also offered to bring all the bags to the park on the day of the event and provide space to prepare the bags. Eva encouraged council members to help with the bags. Eva reported that she has been inviting dignitaries and representatives to present at Stamford Day which demonstrates their support of the MMC and the event, as well as to show the diversity of Stamford. Some dignitaries to speak include Mayor Caroline Simmons, Dr. Tamu Lucero (SPS), State Representative Corey Paris, Sergeant Adriana Molina (Citizen of the Year), Sergeant Mike Nguyen (Stamford Police Department), Megan Cottrell (Board of Representatives), Arnold Karp (President, Mill River Park Collaborative), Fanny Ferreira (B1C), Michael Feighan (Irish American Cultural Society), Emma Goings (President of NAACP), and Diana Revolut (Vice-President of Haitian American Collaborative), among others. Their organizations demonstrate Stamford's rich history and diversity. Eva thanked Ana Gallegos and Shobhna Bhatnagar for their roles as co-chairs and Malinda Polite, Vice-Chair, for her support. She asked Ana to share updates.

Ana shared the list of responsibilities for council members to coordinate with volunteers:

* **Registration Table:** Naomi Osei-Mensah (

* **Passport:** Deborah Goldberg

* **Organizations:** Ana Gallegos

* **Banner:** Khadija Hamran

* **Food Trucks - Water:** Pilar Pelaez

* **Parking and Security:** Sergio & Lourdes Roqué

* **Set Up and Clean Up:** Kevin Polanco & Karina Sandoval

* **Volunteers:** Sonal Patel

* **Quilt:** Malinda Polite

* **Dance Groups:** Yelena Klompus

* **Tell a Story:** George Johnson / Frank Skornia

* **Photographer:** Julio Sanchez

Ana have asked volunteers to arrive promptly at 9:00 am, she encouraged all council members to be there early if available. This was also suggested during the committee meetings.

Naomi Osei-Mensah will be coordinating registration. Some council members asked questions about the registration of families. It was suggested to ask families to write their names, email, and their children's school, then give a bag to each family and one raffle ticket (red) to each child. Last year, all 500 bags were distributed. The family's desire should be respected if they do not want to register. Other ideas included tallying the adults and children or using a clicker.

Sonal Patel will register all the volunteers and assign their jobs. Ana mentioned that around 50 registered volunteers will be helping in all areas. Name tags will be provided for the council and volunteers. Each volunteer will receive a name tag and a green ticket for food.

Deborah Goldberg will oversee the passport activity, encouraging participants to visit and learn about the community. Each child will receive a ticket (blue) for one shaved ice.

Malinda Polite will lead the quilt activity, with some volunteers who are teachers and teenagers to help children with their drawings.

Pilar Pelaez said that the food trucks will be there. Ana mentioned that another food truck had contacted her and asked to participate.

Yelena Klompus will call in later with questions about the dance groups coordination

Khadija Hamram will coordinate getting information from the organizations and displaying it on the Stamford Day banner.

George Johnson will assist Frank Skornia from the Ferguson Library with a new activity "Tell a Story." Eva reported that Frank will interview and record participants at Stamford Day to learn about their history and experiences in Stamford. This is an opportunity to record individual's stories and add to Stamford's history. Ana Gallegos will oversee the community organizations, since she has been in contact with them and knows their special requests.

Ana informed that 15 dance and/or performance groups representing various countries, including the USA, Poland, Albania, Peru, Ukraine, India, Guatemala, Colombia, Greece, Ecuador and performers from INTEMPO, Project Music, Martial Arts, and Zumba, have confirmed their participation.

Ana stated that this year payments will be handled by Carmen Hughes because Stamford Day will be held after the cut-off date for submitting invoices for year-end was determined by the city. Ana mentioned that the list of supplies had been sent to Carmen, and purchases made.

This year, posters will be on display instead of printed programs. Eva mentioned that any monetary donations must be accepted by the Board of Representatives, but in-kind donations can be accepted for events.

Eva Weller stated that this will be a fun family event for the community and thanked everyone for their time and help.

***Block Party:** Eva Weller shared that Kadisha had let her know that the Stamford Town Center Block Party is scheduled for June 22 and June 23, but no details are available yet. Eva asked if the council would be interested in participating and holding a MMC Fashion Show, as was done last year. Because there will not be a meeting before the event, she asked for a vote to participate. Previously, Malinda and James expressed their interest in co-chairing. Deborah Goldberg motioned that the MMC participate in the Fashion Show if asked. Pilar Pelaez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

***Juneteenth:** Eva Weller informed that Juneteenth will be celebrated on June 15. MMC will contribute 300 MMC bags. The event will take place in Mill River Park, starting with a flag raising at the Government Center, followed by a parade to the park.

***Announcements:**

Next Meeting: Monday, June 24, 2024

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Submitted by: Ana Gallegos, MMC Secretary