



Mayor's Multicultural Council of Stamford

Meeting held in Person in Mayor's Conference Room
(10th Floor, Government Center) and via Zoom

Monday, September 30, 2024

Attendance and Quorum Check:

Members in attendance in person: Eva Weller, Malinda Polite, Shobhna Bhatnagar, Carmen Hughes, Meera Banta, Sandra Barrett, Yelena Klompus, Sonal Patel, Pilar Pelaez, and Ana Gallegos. Via Zoom: Naomi Osei-Mensah and George Johnson. Ajmal Qureshi, and Deborah Goldberg, provided reasons for their absence.

Meeting Called to Order: Eva Weller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:17 pm.

Welcome: Eva Weller thanked everyone for responding and welcomed them to the zoom and in-person meeting.

Approve Minutes: Eva asked members to review the minutes from the July 22, 2024, meeting. No meeting was held in August per bylaws. Meera Banta made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Yelena Klompus seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Budget Report:

Treasurer Shobhna Bhatnagar informed about events where MMC participated. Two events had actual expenses.

1. Salsa- Rhythm and Rumba Night: 9/20/24 & 9/28/24 Actual Expenses: \$1,600.00 In kind: \$760.00 (paid by Mill River Park Collaborative for percussion); Total: \$2,360.00
2. HBUC Movie Night in Jackie Robinson Park: 08/23/2024. Shobhna said she was waiting for copies of invoices from Carmen, Eva and Ana for popcorn, popcorn bags and printed flyers to promote Stamford Day. Eva thanked Sonal, Malinda, Sandra and Ana for joining her at the event where MMC bags from Stamford Day were distributed.

Projects/Events Report:

Eva thanked council members who joined her or attended flag raising and different events:

- * **Jamaica Celebration** 8/7
- * **Ecuadorian flag raising** 08/11/2024. Eva Weller, and Shobhna Bhatnagar joined Ana Gallegos, president of the ECCFC at the Government Center and at UConn Stamford.
- * **India Independence Day**, presented by GOPIO on 8/11. Chair Eva Weller and treasurer Shobhna Bhatnagar attended the event at Government Center and Mill River Park.
- * **Bolivian Flag Raising** on 08/18; presented by PLTI, PEP and SPEF, Chair, Eva Weller, joined Ana Gallegos UConn PEP facilitator.
- * **Concert for Peace** "En Vivo con Maricarmen" and the Ferguson Library presented the Concert for Peace, honoring community arts and leaders on 8/18. Eva Weller, Malinda Polite, Sonal Patel and Ana Gallegos joined MMC council member Yelena Klompus, coordinator of the event.
- * **HBUC Movie Night** in Jackie Robinson Park 08/23, Sandra Barrett, Malinda Polite, Sonal Patel and Ana Gallegos joined Chair Eva Weller.
- * **Uruguay flag raising** 8/25 Chair Eva Weller attended the event with Council member Pilar Pelaez.
- * **The Trinidad and Tobago flag raising** 8/26 at the Government Center.
- * **Miss Guatemala organization** celebrating Guatemala and her traditional election of Miss Guatemala, Mrs. Guatemala and Niña Monja. Chair Eva Weller and Secretary Ana Gallegos attended the event.
- * **Ferguson Library Hispanic Heritage Month** event cosponsored by MMC 9/15. Eva Weller, Sonal Patel and Ana Gallegos joined MMC council member Yelena Klompus, coordinator of the event.
- * **Latino Foundation** cosponsored by the MMC presented the Hispanic Heritage Festival 9/22 at the Palace Theater Chair Eva Weller attended the event. Council member Pilar Pelaez was one of the coordinators. There were various dance groups, SPEF Book Giveaway, Art display -- "I'm Frida" from Mexican artist.

Carmen said there is a new process in place to register for flag raising ceremonies, so coordinating and publicizing these events should be easier.

- * **Senior Center Fundraising:** Eva added that the Senior Center fundraising dinner was held on 9/27 at the Stamford Hotel in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. This was the same time as the MMC Salsa Night. Eva thanked Ana for contacting and coordinating the dance groups from Perú and Ecuador and for obtaining books

from the Ferguson Library as one of the raffle prizes donated from MMC in support of the event. She also thanked Malinda Polite for attending and representing MMC.

- * **Rhythm and Rumba Salsa Nights 9/20 & 9/27:** Eva reported that the first Salsa Night was successful with about 100 people attending and 75 attending the second night. She thanked Ana and Sonal for attending and helping to give out bags and water. She mentioned the event start was delayed due to late percussionist. This year there was only one, paid for by Mill River Park Collaborative. Carmen recommended looking for different salsa instructor. It was suggested to have local dancers/instructors and to hold event for only one night. Since MMC partners with Mill River Park Collaborative, we need to discuss and coordinate potential changes with them.
- * **Family Health Fair:** Health Department Family Day Health Fair at Yerwood Center 9/28. Eva, Sonal and Ana participated providing water and MMC bags.

Projects/Events Updates:

- * **Fall Fest organized by SPEF:** Chair Eva said the 5K Race and Fall Fest organized by SPEF will take place on October 6. The MMC will present a cultural celebration with dance groups from different countries. She asked council members to attend and assist at the event. MMC will have a table and give away MMC bags. Ana reached out to dance groups at Eva's request. Dance groups of Ecuador, Perú, Guatemala, India, and Paraguay have confirmed, she is waiting to hear back from Haiti and Ukraine. Poland will not be available because they will be participating in NYC event. SPEF will create a flyer to share in the social media. Eva thanked Ana for coordinating with the groups. MMC will share the cost of a DJ for a total of \$200.00
- * **Italian Event:** Carmen announced that an Italian event will be held in Columbus Park on October 7th.
- * **Diwali event:** Diwali celebration will take place in the community room at the Stamford Police Station on October 31st. Carmen asked for help with ideas from council members and that they participate at the event. Sonal and Meera said they will help with planning and Shobhna will join them if she has time.
- * **Stamford Kindness Initiative:** Carmen also announced the Kickoff of the Mayor's Stamford Kindness initiative, on November 1st. This initiative will be ongoing until the end of the year. She encouraged council members to share ideas and to participate.
- * **Veterans Day Parade and the Thanksgiving Day Parade:** Carmen also asked if the MMC would be willing to walk in the Veterans Day Parade and the Thanksgiving Day Parade. It was agreed the MMC would participate in both. Purchase of a new banner was discussed and the possibility of handing out flags printed with the word Kindness translated into different languages. Carmen will register the MMC and send a Google Doc for council members to let her know in which parade they would like to participate. Another suggestion made by Eva was to paint kindness rocks and create a "Kindness" garden.

New Business:

Yelena shared with the council that the Ferguson Library will host two events: an event in celebration of Polish Heritage Month on October 27th and Diwali event in November. More information will be shared soon.

- * **Diwali at Ferguson:** Yelena Klompus made the motion for MMC to co-sponsor the Diwali event at the library on November 17. Meera Banta seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Yelena will share information about an Indian artist.
- * **Polish event at Ferguson:** Yelena Klompus made the motion for the MMC to co-sponsor the Polish Heritage Month event at the library on October 27th. She said that they will have artist and dancers. Meera Banta seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Council members were encouraged to attend these events and share invitations.

Announcements:

- * **Valor Migratorio 2024:** Ana Gallegos shared the Ecuadorian Civic Committee of Fairfield County (ECCFC) will receive the recognition "Valor Migratorio 2024" on October 12. The Consulate of Ecuador in CT presents this award to ECCFC to recognize their community service and cultural & artistic initiatives for children and families in Stamford. Ana said that as President of the organization, she is grateful for the support of the Stamford Commission of Arts and Culture and Mayor Simmons. Eva, Carmen, and council members congratulated Ana and the ECCFC.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 28, 2024

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Submitted by: Ana Gallegos, MMC Secretary