

**MEETING MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON JUNE 25, 2025

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Roxanna Tirado.*

B. STATEMENT REGARDING PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT - read by Roxanna Tirado.

The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied with respect to this meeting of the Multicultural Inclusion & Accessibility Advisory Committee which is being held via Zoom video conferencing. This information, along with the public internet link and telephone call-in information was posted in the Municipal Building, and sent the official newspapers of the Township, the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger and MyVeronaNJ.com, TAPinto and the Patch, the official online news source(s) of the Township, at least 48 hours preceding the start time of this meeting. A public comment period will be held in the order it is listed on the meeting agenda and instructions on how to comment will be provided at the appropriate time.

C. ROLL CALL

Present:

Roxanna Tirado

Michele Gruet

P.J. Pimpinelli

Tovah Kopan

Naura Reynoso

Charlie Miller (for Diane DiGiuseppe - Superintendent of School)

Claudine Pascale – Verona Public Library

AJ Kiernan

Kathleen Francis

Michelle O'Neill

Rita Chevalier

Absent:

Christine McGrath - Council Representative

Michael McMahon – Verona Recreation

John Vajda

Diane DiGiuseppe – Superintendent of School

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the April meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – Fall events are in the process of getting planned. This includes Hispanic Heritage event, where Bomba will play folk music and perform dance, Italian Heritage event, where La Musica will perform, and Diwali. Diwali is scheduled for October 21st.

Schools update – C.Miller provided an update on the success of the AAPI celebration at Verona High School on May 30, 2025. C.Miller stated that the dances, songs, and performances from India, China, Korea, and Polynesia were well received by the kids, teachers, parents, and audience.

Recreation – Update to be provided next meeting.

Town update - Update to be provided next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Pride Event Recap – M.Gruet gave an update regarding the Pride event and celebration that occurred in June. M.Gruet stated that this as the 5th year of the flag raising and also stated that the celebration has gotten bigger each year. M.Gruet reported that state legislators were present, in addition to entertainment such as a nail artist and face painter. M.Gruet expressed a special thanks P.Pimpinelli for photos, J.Vajda, N.Reynoso, K.Francis, and Tamara Gesario (teacher at HBW and coordinator of Safe Club). M.Gruet stated that the balloon project was a success where individuals could write a message or name of a loved one in the LGBTQ+ community. M.Gruet was thankful for the community volunteers, as well.

Disability Pride Month – M.O'Neill provided an update regarding the speaker engagement virtual event to occur for Verona Businesses and the community. The discussion will be led by Barbara Stockton, from the State of NJ, and topics will be based around the benefits of inclusive hiring practices. B.Stockton will discuss not only the benefits to businesses and the community but also the services to any individual (with a disability) that is interested in working, starting at age 14.

Chair Update – R.Tirado reminded the committee that there was no July meeting and that the next meeting would be held 8/27. R.Tirado also discussed a \$250k grant received by the township and how she will reach out to determine how MIAAC can provide support. R.Tirado further discussed the Pride event, thanking all for a successful event. R.Tirado addressed misinformation shared via social media about the flag raising and how the Pride flag replaced the American flag, which was not accurate.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm.