

**MEETING MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON AUGUST 27, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:06 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, Chairwoman
Michele Gruet
John Vajda
Rita Chevalier
P.J. Pimpinelli
Tovah Kopan
Christine McGrath - Council Representative

Absent:

Kathleen Francis
Michelle O'Neill
Naura Reynoso
Michael McMahon - Verona Recreation
Diane DiGiuseppe - Superintendent of School
Claudine Pascale - Verona Public Library

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the June Meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – Plans are underway for Hispanic Heritage Month and Fall-O-Ween.

Schools update – No update at this time.

Recreation – Part-time special needs coordinator role has been filled. Fall dance programs will be re-instated after a brief decision to cut them. There is now a revised traffic flow pattern at the Verona Community Center near the accessible playground. The search continues for the Director of Community Services position.

Town update - C.McGrath attended a forum to discuss age-friendly communities. The Township has secured a \$70K grant to work with NJ Future to develop a survey which will result in a set of recommendations to make improvements to the Township. MIAAC has been invited to have two members be a part of the Township group that will oversee the survey and recommendations. C.McGrath shared that as a result of the Community Block Grant, the Township will update the Verona Community Center doors to be accessible. C.McGrath gave an update on Everett Field and stated the ADA playground is being planned with cost covered by a grant. Field and playground plans are on the Township's website. The Township received a \$250K grant which is to be used to promote an inclusive healthy community.

NEW BUSINESS

Disability Pride Month - MIAAC and the Township offered a free public webinar about inclusive hiring practices. Barbara Stockton, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, led the webinar. Thank you to Michelle O'Neill for organizing the webinar.

Hispanic Heritage Month - MIAAC will join the Library's event, a Puerto Rican dance performance, and offer food and children's crafts. The event is set for Saturday, October 4 at 3pm at the Library.

Fall-O-Ween - MIAAC will have a table for the first time at the Library's Fall-O-Ween event which draws a large crowd every year. MIAAC's table will feature teal pumpkins and offer non-food treats as an inclusive practice for children with food allergies. Also for the first time, the Library will offer a special first hour of the bounce house as a sensory friendly experience.

Diwali - Sub-committee is meeting to discuss plans. Date TBA.

Hannukah - Sub-committee is meeting to discuss plans. Date TBA.

Fair in the Square - Event is set for Saturday, December 6. MIAAC will volunteer in the sensory friendly space in the Library for the Photo Sessions with Santa.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by R.Chevalier. Seconded by J.Vajda. Meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm.