

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

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON OCTOBER 22, 2025

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:07 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

Tovah Kopan

John Vajda

Michelle O'Neill

Rita Chevalier

Christine McGrath - Council Representative

Absent:

P.J. Pimpinelli

Naura Reynoso

Kathleen Francis

Claudine Pascale – Verona Public Library

Michael McMahon – Verona Recreation

Diane DiGiuseppe – Superintendent of School

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the 8/27/25 and 9/24/25 meetings were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None. One guest was in attendance to observe the meeting.

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – Update to be provided next meeting.

Schools update – Update to be provided next meeting.

Recreation – Update to be provided next meeting.

Town update - C.McGrath provided an update regarding the Integrated Community Grant that was received that totaled \$250k. The focus of the grant is to study and make changes to policies and programs to become a more inclusive community. The requirement is to make long standing changes to be more inclusive. This can include updating ordinances and the creation of new policies. A townwide survey will be sent out in the spring to community members. The age-friendly community survey will be rolled out in January. The project is supported by NJ Futures.org, who were hired to project manage both the integrated community project and the age-friendly projects.

C.McGrath also stated that the parking lot was paved at the Verona Community Center. A resident reached out regarding additional handicap spots and C.McGrath reported that two additional sports would be added alongside where the playground is.

NEW BUSINESS

Diwali Recap – R.Tirado stated that the event was well-received and had a great turnout. R.Tirado thanked J.Vajda, T.Kopan, and other community members who helped make the event successful. R.Tirado stated that there was a beautiful cultural performance that occurred and both R.Tirado and C.McGrath echoed that the event was family-friendly and very inclusive.

Q4 Events – R. Tirado provided an overview of the Q4 events, including Falloween, which occurs Saturday, 10/25. M.Gruet stated that MIAAC has a table at the event that will focus on food allergy awareness. Non-food treats will be distributed.

Fair in the Square is scheduled for 12/6/25. M.O'Neill stated that the event has a working planning document to plan off and will coordinate a meeting with the sub-committee in the near future.

The Hanukkah event is scheduled for 12/16, at 6pm. E.Northrop will start promoting this week. T.Kopan stated that there was a location change from the town center to the Verona Community Center. T.Kopan stated that the Rabbi, band, and local baker have been secured.

2026 Planning – R.Tirado thanked E.Northrop for all of the efforts in planning and publicizing events. It was requested that in 2026, all dates be determined by early April. This is to help with budgeting, planning, and securing entertainment for certain events.

R.Tirado stated that meeting dates need to be finalized for MIAAC by December 1st. Last year, the July meeting was skipped, as MIAAC skips one month per year and the committee was asked to think about if July would work well in 2026.

Volunteer Recruiting – R.Tirado asked the subcommittee to volunteer for the Volunteer Recruiting committee as there is only one MIAAC member. MIAAC is in need of volunteers and there have been some interested individuals that have completed google forms. R.Tirado also encouraged MIAAC members to reach out to their friends, families, and networks to get more volunteer engagement.

Election Reminder – C.McGrath reminded MIAAC members of the upcoming election and discussed early voting. C.McGrath stated that there will be a reorganization in January and she will keep the committee updated.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.