

**MEETING MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 19, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:04 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
John Vajda
Rita Chevalier
Kathleen Francis
P.J. Pimpinelli
Claudine Pascale – Verona Public Library
Diane DiGiuseppe – Superintendent of School

Absent:

Tovah Kopan
Michelle O'Neill
Christine McGrath - Council Representative
Naura Reynoso
Michael McMahon – Verona Recreation

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting for 10/22/25 were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – C.Pascale thanked the MIAAC committee for help with Falloween. The event was very successful and the small teal pumpkin giveaways were very popular and were a good item for children with allergies.

C.Pascale reported that Sensory Santa will again be present at the Fair in the Square on December 6, in the library, as it has been in the past. E.Northrope has again engaged balloon artists Mad Hatters, and there may be therapy dog(s) attending.

Schools update – D.DiGiuseppe reported that preparations are underway for the 4th annual Inclusive Schools Week in January. This emphasizes importance of safeguarding the right to learn in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment. This also promotes disability rights and the Universal Design for Learning concept (UDL). D.DiGiuseppe gave special recognition to C.H.I.L.D. for their very important support and leadership.

Recreation – Update to be provided next meeting.

Town update - Update to be provided next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Q4 events – Hanukkah celebration and Menorah lighting will be held at the Community Center on December 16 at 6 pm. This year the event will be mainly indoors except for the Menorah lighting. This year, due to construction at the Civic Center, the Menorah will continue to be displayed in front of the Community Center for the season.

Fair in the Square will take place on December 6 at the Verona Civic Center. As noted above, sensory Santa will be in the library and MIAAC volunteers will assist there.

Q1 2026 events - Roxana has sent out a subcommittee sign-up list for 2026. We need to review, sign up, and have subcommittees settled by January to begin planning 2026 events. Kathy noted that Elisa would like us to have all event dates for 2026 submitted to the township early in the year. Rita suggested that subcommittees choose tentative dates for all their events by the January MIAAC meeting on Jan 28. PJ wondered if we could have some dates that recur on the same day/date every year to simplify planning.

Lunar New Year will be coordinated by the township this year, tentatively scheduled for March 3. The MIAAC subcommittee will assist.

Black history month is February, subcommittee will be starting to work on this ASAP.

Women of Impact panel is typically a Sunday in March, again the subcommittee will begin planning soon.

Volunteer Recruiting-Some volunteers have signed up through Google sheets, others signed up through physical sign up sheets at one of our events. R.Tirado and M.Gruet are notified of Google sheets sign-ups. K.Francis recalls a form reply drafted in the past to send to those who sign up to volunteer to acknowledge receipt of their offer to volunteer. R.Tirado suggested we have physical sign up sheets at all of our events as there is always a need for extra volunteers at our events (Diwali, Pride and others).

Verona Live Well- J.Vajda reported that the next Zoom meeting of Verona LiveWell will be held on December 3 at 3:30 pm, at which time the final draft of a survey for Verona residents will be submitted for approval. The tentative target for sending out the survey is sometime in January 2026. This work is being done as part of grant that Verona has received, and involved parties include the town council, all town committees, and consultants engaged by the town.

Bloomfield Ave Improvement Project:

There is information on the town website regarding the Bloomfield Ave Improvement Project, which will be bringing some major changes to Bloomfield Ave and Verona downtown.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.