

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

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON MARCH 25, 2026.

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

A. CALL TO ORDER *meeting was called to order at 7:01 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

P.J. Pimpinelli

Tovah Kopan

Michelle O'Neill

Diane DiGiuseppe – Superintendent of School

Cynthia Holland - Council Representative

Sinaileen Dacoff – Student Representative

Elissa Pena – Student Representative

Absent:

Kathleen Francis

Naura Reynoso

Michael McMahon – Verona Recreation

Claudine Pascale – Verona Public Library

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting for 1/28/26 meeting were approved. The minutes for the 2/25 meeting were approved, as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – R.Tirado provided the library update stating that the library will be hosting Women of Impact at 3pm this upcoming Sunday. The women nominated for the award were Virginia Citrano, Kate Kelly, Lisa Loudon, Mary Ellen McHugh, and S. Rogers. Bake Me Pretty and Threefold are providing the refreshments for the event. The library will also participate in the Pride event. A new ADA system will be installed and is an assisted listening system.

Schools update – D.DiGiuseppe provided updates on Black History Month and how lessons reflected age-appropriate action and empathy, equality and community service for all students. D.DiGiuseppe also discussed Women’s History Month and how emphasis was placed on a resilient and equitable future and long term equity. The budget was also briefly discussed and D.DiGiuseppe stated that state aid was received but it was not enough to bridge the gap and efficiencies are being identified.

Recreation – An update was provide regarding the creation of an Inclusive Social Club for neurodiverse young adults, aged 18-28.

Town update - C.Holland thanked MIAAC for all of the efforts, specifically mentioning the Women of Impact event. Updates were provided on ongoing business, including focus on affordable housing and the budget. C.Holland briefly mentioned the pilot agreement and stated that anyone with questions should reach out to her. C.Holland stated that the Everett Field Development is moving along. C.Holland also stated that pool funding is a major focus.

NEW BUSINESS

Older Americans Month – R.Tirado stated that the age-friendly survey was closed and that there were 278 responses received. The data is being reviewed and the report should be available by 4/17. After that date, a strategy meeting will be planned.

Pride Month – P.Pimpinelli shared the date for the Pride Event, which is scheduled for 6/7, from 12:30pm to 2:30pm. The rain date for the event is 6/13. P.Pimpinelli stated that the committee is reaching out to businesses and M.Gruet is looking into engaging

with the schools for awareness and M.Gruet asked the high school volunteers for assistance.

Lunar New Year – R.Tirado discussed conversations with Elissa regarding Lunar New Year and how to best pivot the event. The event is very large with over 600 attendees and it has been difficult to hold an indoor event of that size. Committee members shared many ideas including doing an two-day event, a virtual event, and selling tickets. More discussion will occur regarding the event in the future.

Volunteers – R.Tirado and T.Kopan updated the committee that the active list of volunteers is currently at 20. R.Tirado and T.Kopan are working to reduce the questions on the google form and also make sign ups available in person, at events.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm.