MEETING MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING OF THE

MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON AUGUST 26, 2026.

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

A. **CALL TO ORDER** ***meeting was called to order at 7:02 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
Kathleen Francis
Michelle O'Neill
Diane DiGiuseppe – Superintendent of School
Corey Schor – Town Council
Pam Priscoe – Director of Community Services
Catherine Adair Williams – Verona Public Library

Absent:
Naura Reynoso
Michael McMahon – Verona Recreation
Sinaileen Dacoff – Student Representative
Elissa Pena – Student Representative

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting for 8/24/26 were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPRESENTATIVE UPDATES

Library update – C. Adair Williams stated that the fall programs for the library are being finalized. This includes Falloween, October 24th, 11am-2pm, with a quiet hour for children with sensory sensitivities.

Schools update – D. DiGuiseppe stated that schools are getting ready to reopen and that she is looking forward to the continued partnership with MIAAC.

Recreation – P.Priscoe provided several town updates. The first being the Inclusive Healthy Communities grant program. P.Priscoe stated that the surveys were completed and the target goal of over 100 responses was achieved. P.Priscoe stated that the feedback was helpful and that the final findings were pending and will be reported out once they are available. P.Priscoe stated that the Young Adult Social Club had another successful meeting. The ARC of Essex was also present and Verona is looking for a potential partnership with the organization. P.Priscoe provided information on the second grant program, the Age-Friendly Community Grant. MIAAC members requested to be provided with information on the results of the survey and P.Priscoe stated that she would look into this. P.Priscoe also stated that based on the results of the survey, she is looking to implement programs to help shovel out seniors. P.Priscoe will work with D.DiGuiseppe on this in order to gather volunteers for this initiative. The goal is to have Verona receive a list of who needs assistance with shoveling. P.Priscoe also stated that there are plans to host a workshop to assist property owners with tax relief help. P.Priscoe updated on a fall program for a dance class that will be for ages 18-28 and will be accessible to all. Another update was given on the Verona Community Pool with an inclusive initiative to provide wristbands to any caregiver requesting one for their child who may have special needs. This was in an effort to ensure lifeguards and other pool staff were aware that the child may respond differently when approached.

Town update - C.Schor also echoed the success of the Inclusive Social Club. C.Schor discussed the Verona pool and stated that he would like to create additional programs to promote diversity and inclusivity. C.Schor also brought up the wristband and there

were many questions asked about the wristbands, balancing labeling these children as different, even if the goal is to ensure pool staff understand how certain children may respond differently. Discussions will continue before the pool season next year and C.Schor and P.Priscoe both stated that training is the most important aspect of this and both will look into training programs for the pool staff through inclusive modules. C.Schor stated that he is working collaboratively with P.Priscoe and M.McMahon to implement inclusive programs into the recreation programs.

NEW BUSINESS

Accessibility Committee: Subcommittee to reschedule meeting to discuss gender-based harassment incident in NJ. The plan will be to contact Verona's recreation department to understand if there are policies to prevent a similar occurrence happening in Verona.

Diwali: Subcommitte met and tentative date is 11/5 at the Verona Community Center. Date will be finalized and reported back to committee.

Hispanic Heritage: MIAAC to partner with library on Hispanic Heritage events with the tentative dates being in October.

Hanukkah: K.Francis and T.Kopan will schedule sub-committee meeting to discuss the celebration of Hanukkah. C.Schor stated that he would find out where event is to be held.

R.Tirado stated there is an opening for a committee member and asked if MIAAC members could gauge interest on this. C.Schor stated that he would assist getting a social media post out and D.DiGuiseppe will help ensure there are high school replacements.

During open forum, several suggestions were made by J.Vajda to have the Age-Friendly subcommittee overlap with the Accessibility Committee, renaming it to the Accessibility and Age-Friendly subcommittee and MIAAC members were in agreement with this. MIAAC members also asked to review results of surveys before the results are released to the public and C.Schor stated he would look into this.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.