

Mayor's Hispanic American Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2015

Meeting called to order: 9:07 a.m. by Chair Gropper

Board Members Present: A. Burst, C. Mantay, I. Gropper, J. Montero, M. Decunto, R. Caldera, C. Echeverry

Absent Board Members (Excused): N/A

Staff Present: N/A

Guests: N/A

- I. **Welcome:** 9:07 AM Meeting was called to order by Chair I. Gropper. A quorum was confirmed.
- II. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance: Led by C. Mantay
- III. **Minutes Approval** – The minutes for August 10, 2015 were approved with no corrections. (A. Burst motion; C. Mantay second)

III. Fiscal and Executive Updates

No change since last meeting. There is \$889.95 in the Trust Fund assuming that there was no interest accumulated in the account. Once a liaison is assigned to MHAAB, we'll receive more detailed information (I. Gropper).

I. Gropper and R. Caldera met with Kerri Stewart, the Chief of Staff, expressing need for a MHAAB liaison, to fill the vacant board positions, and to inquire about events for the Hispanic American Heritage Month, including the Mayor's Hispanic Leadership Awards. The Mayor's office is pleased with MHAAB's committees as they are aligned with the Mayor's agenda regarding the community. K. Stewart will work on identifying a Board liaison and provide information regarding the Hispanic events and awards. K. Stewart will serve as the board's liaison until one is appointed. (I. Gropper).

I. Gropper expressed the importance of picking up tasks that the liaison had previously handled and has worked with the City's Information Technology Department to update 2014 and 2015 minutes on the website until a liaison is appointed. It was requested to like the Facebook page of MHAAB currently managed by J. Montero, and update according (I. Gropper).

At this time, the City of Jacksonville's Mayor's Office has not communicated with MHAAB about any Hispanic events (such as the Hispanic expo, art walk, leadership awards). Previously, these types of events were led by the efforts of Betzy Santiago in conjunction with the City's Events Department, but Betzy is no longer with the City. (R. Caldera).

IV. Committee Reports

a. Education

It was reported that all seven (7) MHAAB members expressed interest in attending the Achieving the Dream Scholarship Event (A. Burst, C. Mantay, I. Gropper, J. Montero, M.

Decunto, R. Caldera, and C. Echeverry). We are waiting to hear back from the First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce regarding how many seats are available per table. It was discussed that in the past there were 8 – 10 seats available per table (C. Echeverry). C. Echeverry and C. Mantay participated in the Hispanic Institute for Life and Leadership (The H.I.L.L) of Northeast FL's Blue Ribbon Panel Breakfast on September 1st. The purpose of the event was to educate the public on the organization's mission and to recruit community support as well as recruit board members. Approximately 10 – 12 two year board terms will be available beginning December. The primary responsibility of the HILL's Board Directors is to participate in the development of policy and major decision-making at board meetings held once a month. Some duties of board members include giving \$750 annually and getting \$2,500 in donations annually to support the organization financially. There was representation from Florida Blue, CSX Corporation, Winn-Dixie, University of North Florida, Duval County Public Schools, Webster University, JEA and NAI Hallmark Partners (C. Echeverry).

b. Health and Public Safety

M. Decunto reached out to Dr. Sharon Wilburn, Professor Emeritus, from UNF via email and phone to assist with the work on the White Paper. There has been no progress since last meeting. Student support is needed. M. Decunto sent a letter to the Times Union Editorial Board and subsequently has been invited to participate in discussions about a Hispanic Health study conducted by the Health Department. Others invited include Patty Solo-Josephson and Maira Martelo.

c. Economic and Faith Based

J. Montero reported attending the Hispanic Job Fair hosted by Eco Latino at UNF.

A. Burst and J. Montero attended the Women of Influence event at the Hyatt and mentioned it was a successful event.

A. Burst has tentatively committed to sponsoring a table for the Achieving the Dream Event on behalf of her company, APPS of North Florida, and MHAAB. Sponsorship cost is \$400/table (A. Burst).

d. FCHCC Liaison

J. Montero reported that Rafael and Alicia purchased a table for MHAAB. All of the proceeds were to go towards the scholarships. J. Montero also emailed FCHCC with the current openings for MHAAB. Maribel Hernandez FCHCC President asked for a meeting with the Mayor to discuss issues related to the Hispanic community and FCHCC.

e. Community Partnership Meeting –

A. Burst had no update regarding community partnership. Effort has been made by several MHAAB Members to support The H.I.L.L. initiatives. A. Burst attended the Hispanic Health Council meeting. Judy and Jose Rodriguez were in attendance as well as Elizabeth Pantoja. La Guia was discussed. A. Burst and other Hispanic Health Council members will be meeting with Heritage Publishing on the 14th to discuss a partnership in printing La Guia. Information could possibly include important health data and advice compiled in multiple languages. (A. Burst).

Compiling and verifying community data for La Guia was previously done through the assistance of the Ponte Vedra High School Spanish Club. (I. Gropper).

V. New Business

A. Board Openings – With Jose Bonfante’s resignation, there are now 4 open positions to fill; other resignations are Patty Solo-Josephson, Victor Pacheco, and Judy Rodriguez. There have been several applicants interested in serving on MHAAB: Sonia Alvarez, Ana Linares, Tomas Jimenez, Elizabeth Pantoja and Ivan Pena. Community leaders interested in applying may send resume to Jordan Elsbury jelsbury@coj.net. (I.Gropper)

A. Burst discussed succession planning initiatives and encouraged interested parties to attend the MHAAB meeting. While Board members may make recommendations to the Mayor’s Office to fill board positions, members are appointed by the Mayor (R. Caldera). The First Coast Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will host a Hispanic Heritage Night with the Armada on September 26th at 7:30PM at Community First Park. Tickets are \$25 and include: Match ticket in reserved section of 118; choice of a hotdog or hamburger plus unlimited popcorn and soft drinks for 60 minutes; exclusive early access to the stadium and private area for your group to relax and enjoy the spectacular views of Jacksonville (A. Burst).

B. Nominations and Election of Chair

I. Gropper opened the nominations for 2015-16 Board Chair by nominating the current Vice Chair, Rafael Caldera. C. Mantay seconded the motion. Discussion ensued and no additional nominations were presented. A vote was taken by the board and the motion passed unanimously. J. Montero requested that the MHAAB board be more relevant and not an afterthought. I. Gropper added that there should be more of a time commitment to the board besides monthly board meetings and that all board members are responsible for serving as advocates and leaders in the Hispanic community.

VI. Old Business

A. Burst researched cost for tablecloth for use when MHAAB is participating in Fairs, etc. The cost starts at \$100 (depending on the material, size and logo). The MHAAB logo will be needed in order to proceed with the order. It was noticed that the logo may be both the City of Jacksonville as well as the MHAAB (Hispanic Community, Government logo).

R. Caldera appointed A. Burst and M. Decunto on the nominating subcommittee for Vice Chair and Secretary. Subcommittee meetings need to be open to the public. Notification of meetings should include the entire board and request public notice by copying the Chief of Staff, Kerri Stewart, who is currently serving as MHAAB’s liaison.

A. Burst announced that there will be a Cuban American Club meeting on September 23rd. The location is off Lourcey Road.

I. Gropper informed the Board that Catholic Charities has an accredited Legalization Program to provide affordable immigration-related services. Representatives assist clients with application preparation for US Citizenship and Immigration Services and, if necessary, with referral services. Fees are based on income.

VII. Guest Speakers

None.

VIII. Public Concerns

Carlos Bouvier (former MHAAB Member) mentioned that Jacksonville’s Hispanic community is 450 years old with approximately 70,000 documented Hispanics. Since the departure of Alvin Brown and his administration, there has been a lack of representation of the Hispanic community. He recommended that MHAAB meetings take place at a library so that there is more attendance by the public.

Tomas Jimenez, Jr. (who submitted his application for MHAAB) addressed the board. His dad was a founder of the MHAAB board. Tomas practices law and has been a resident of Jacksonville since 2 years old. If he is appointed to serve on MHAAB he suggests taking a grass roots approach for community needs. He attends church at the downtown location at the Hispanic mass and has many connections within the Jacksonville community that can support MHAAB initiatives.

IX. Reminders:

- a. Next Meeting – October 13, 9-10:30 a.m.
Location City Hall, 4th Floor Conference Room
- b. 3rd quarter service hours
 - i. Due December 1st

Meeting Adjourned at: 10:10 am

Minutes Submitted by:
Cristina Echeverry 9/8/2015
Amended on 11/4/2015