

MHAAB Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2017

Location: Mayor's meeting room 4th floor - City Hall

Meeting called to order at 9:05am

Members in attendance: Elizabeth Pantoja, Marivi Wright, Mario Decunto, Jose Cuetos, Jen Silva, Tomas Jimenez, Cristina Echeverry, and Alicia Burst

Guest: Lutheran Social Services: Cristina Purcell, Services Manager, Mary Strickland, CEO, and Mike Clark of the Times Union.

COJ representatives present: N/A

Chair Burst permitted guests to present before Committee Reports out of respect for the presenter's time constraint.

Ms. Purcell reported on status of concern of Refugee Programs being threatened to end due to negative stereotypes conveyed in the media. Requested for members to utilize term undocumented instead of "illegal's" due to their status being a civil matter, not for breaking a law. Refugee's settled this year in Jacksonville by all agencies functioning as refugee resettlement programs = 880 persons.

Ms. Strickland reported refugees repay all expenses incurred to travel to the USA and must be independent with a job and home within 90 days.

Ms. Purcell informed the board of JSO working with ICE, which allows JSO to detain a person for 48hrs if they are unable to present documentation of their citizenship.

Chair Burst inquired of LSS ability to help undocumented persons gain legal status. Ms. Purcell reported referring persons to Immigration attorneys.

Chair Burst inquired of LSS history of working with other agencies such as Children's Home Society to help children get established.

M. Decunto inquired of LSS ability to assist families in the schools. Ms. Purcell reported having improved communication recently from Principals who enter the community and provide reassurance to families.

J. Silva inquired of LSS success with media to inform the community of issues.

Motion to approve March minutes by J. Cuetos. Minutes reviewed, C. Echeverry noted typo which was noted by Secretary. Seconded by E. Pantoya. Motion approved unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Health and Public Safety:

E. Pantoya reported: Currently being involved in a limited Genetic project, whose aim is to teach the minority communities including Hispanics, about basic genetic research through Focus Groups. The goal is to educate the community in the arena of genetics and help them understand how Individualized Medicine works and more importantly how it will continue to impact their health.

Some of the topics that covered are the use of bio banks for medical research. Also discussed is the importance of participating in clinical trials and what it will mean to them. Furthermore, the group wants to hear the concerns of the community and answer any questions surrounding this sensitive topic. This information will help to develop a survey that will be more culturally sensitive and the survey will be utilized by physicians in the future, when addressing patients that are undergoing genetic testing.

Currently our group is recruiting participants from partner churches. These volunteers are being compensated for their time.

E. Pantoja reported that so far the response has been very positive.

E. Pantoja reported upcoming events involve our HOPE project. Where they will be hosting some educational talks as part of the health ministry series.

E. Pantoja reported their Medical Residents have taken a special interest in educating the Hispanic community and agreed to give presentations:

First presentation is on April 27th at Centro Cristiano El Gigante de Piedra on 9755 Jupiter Ct. N. at 7:00 PM. The topic will be Nutrition and Obesity.

Second presentation May 6th at Centro Cristiano Por La Familia on 3226 Beach Blvd at 2:00 PM. The topic will be Alzheimer's.

Lastly, the Health Department will be hosting a Hispanic Health Council meeting on Thursday, April 13th at 6:00 PM.

M. Decunto reported attending Postpartum Depression training and informed of services available for pregnant parents. M. Decunto reported interest in connecting Hispanic Pediatric Physician with the board who presented at the training. M. Decunto plans to invite Hispanic doctor to MHAAB meeting to discuss further work in the community.

M. Decunto also reported attending Congressman Al Lawson's town hall at FSCJ downtown campus. M. Decunto reported asking the Congressman's stance on the immigrant population, Refugee Programs being in peril of losing funding, and police partnering with I.C.E., instilling fear in the Hispanic Community. M. Decunto reported the Congressman responding positively to support the Hispanic community and immigrant's through Refugee Program.

Education

C. Echeverry reported attending Beauclerc Elementary's Dual Language Open House on March 9th. Literacy and academic instructions are presented in both languages following the same general education curriculum program. All academic areas: Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Science, are taught in both languages. Social and academic learning occur in an environment that values the language and culture of students and sets high standards to achieve academic success in both Spanish and English.

C. Echeverry attended education fairs at Mayport on March 16th and 21st as well as NAS on March 22nd. She also hosted the Diversity Council meeting at Webster University on March 28th. MHAAB flyers were also displayed at the Webster University booth at the SHRM Jacksonville Conference on March 30th and 31st. In addition, information was handed out at transfer fairs at FSCJ's various campus locations through April 4th – April 6th.

J. Silva reported: Attended the Florida Council for Resource Development Conference hosted in Jacksonville for college funding professionals across the state including Foundation and Grant directors of the Florida College System.

J. Silva spoke at the conference discussing state legislative budget cuts on higher education. Of the budget cuts to colleges and universities, 75% are directed only to colleges. Since FSCJ has over 50,000+ students this will have a major fiscal impact on the programs served and ultimately hurt the regional workforce.

J. Silva reported colleges are still battling legislators to protect workforce baccalaureate degrees that the universities do not provide. Not all non-traditional students can uproot their families and leave their current employment to go attend University of Florida or Florida State University, many of which would not even get into these universities.

J. Silva discussed FSCJ Promise Launch and Press Conference with Mayor Lenny Curry, wonderful event last month. MHAAB Chair Alicia Burst also attended.

J. Silva reported over 1,200 students will be served across Duval and Nassau Counties. As graduates from those high schools, students will be eligible to apply for financial aid and qualify for debt-free tuition for two years based on funding provided by FSCJ. Open Houses begin this week with events at each campus.

J. Silva reported Congressman Al Lawson's Town hall for the American Health Care Act is Wednesday, April 12th from 6pm-8pm at 101 West State Street, FSCJ Downtown Campus Auditorium.

Economic and Faith Based Communities:

T. Jimenez reported working with Urban League to provide scholarships to MHAAB. Deadline is 4/28 for undergraduate students.

T. Jimenez plans to meet with Congressman Lawson tomorrow morning to discuss his interest in assisting in this cause.

J. Cuetos reported meeting with Meredith Moore of FSCJ during his homebuying workshop.

J. Cuetos reported having 6 more workshops he is planning to teach to FSCJ students in the upcoming year.

Old Business:

Chair Burst reported on HLA: Chair Burst reported not hearing back from J. Lacayo on a date to reserve for the HLA awards. Chair tentatively scheduled the HLA awards for October 12.

Chair discussed needing to relocate conference room due to Mayor's meeting room being occupied next month.

Chair informed the board of the city being open to placing more members on MHAAB.

New Business: Board plans to meet to create committees for HLA.

Chair adjourned meeting 10:22am.