

# CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

## Mayor's Hispanic American Advisory Board (MHAAB)

### Board Members

Jennifer Silva  
Chair

Jose Cuetos  
Vice Chair

Meredith Moore  
Secretary

Dr. Cristina Echeverry

Tomas A. Jimenez, Jr.

Jose Morales

Elizabeth M. Pantoja

Angel Santiago

Agustin Vautier

Marivi Wright

### Staff

Laura Davis  
Liaison to Board

Dr. Johnny Gaffney  
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### MINUTES

Tuesday, November 20, 2018, 9:00 am to 11:00 am  
Mayor's Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of City Hall

**Board Present:** Jose Cuetos, Cristina Echeverry, Meredith Moore, Jenifer Silva, and Marivi Wright

**Board Absent:** Tomas Jimenez, Jose Morales, Elizabeth Pantoja, Angel Santiago, and Agustin Vautier

**Staff Present:** Laura Davis

**Guests/Visitors:** Dr. Johnny Gaffney, Dr. Rigo Gomez, Tom Larsen and Dan Merkan

#### I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:10 am. Pledge of Allegiance recited, followed by a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the California wildfires.

#### II. Action Items

October meeting minutes tabled no quorum present.

#### III. Information/Discussion Items

Chair Jen Silva reviewed the MHAAB attendance report from October 2017 to September 2018 and encouraged members to demonstrate their commitment to board service through attendance.

Tom Larson, who works in community development and financial capacity building for Jax Metro Credit Union talked about the credit union's mission to assist in home ownership for minorities in neighborhoods like Arlington and Springfield. He stated that 9% of foreclosures in Jacksonville are Hispanic homeowners, and how the credit union is offering programs to reach them. In response to questions about specific help to Hispanics, Mr. Larson explained the four branches of the credit union: financing, seed capital, support services via collaboration with the United Way, and flexible procedures. Member Jose Cuetos will share this information with the Hispanic Realtor Association.

Dan Merkan, Director of Policy at JASMYN, stated that 2019 marks their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Mr. Merkan stated that a survey found that 20% of young people self-identify as LGBT. JASMYN is significantly increasing programs and services; they now have three (3) buildings in Riverside and are opening shelter facilities for rising numbers of LGBT homeless youth. They also provide food, clothing, art, health workshops, and coordinate treatment and support for STD and HIV patients. Family support is key, and Gay/Straight alliances to improve student clubs for middle and high school students is very important. JASMYN host a very popular prom each year. They serve young people aged 13-23, provide case management for age 18+, provide treatment through age 29, and also offer PrEP treatment to prevent HIV. Chair Jen Silva asked that studies or information on services for LGBT youth under 13 be shared so that MHAAB connections have a more complete referral picture. JASMYN has seen over 1000 youth impacted by homelessness. They also collaborate with the Youth Crisis Center, which has designated 10 beds for LGBT youth. Member Meredith Moore offered LGBT support from FSCJ, especially for Spanish speakers who need to finish a high school diploma or GED. Mr. Merkan stated that JASMYN already worked closely with FSCJ. Members were provided with JASMYN information packets including the 2017 annual report.

Chair Jen Silva reviewed the mission statement of MHAAB as well as rationale for the standing committee configurations. Amendment revisions were discussed by not voted on; specifically increasing the number of members from 11 to 15 in order to better represent Hispanics, who make up 9% of the Jacksonville population. How to schedule MHAAB board meetings was also discussed. Dr. Gaffney suggested that the board consider ex-officio members. Member Meredith Moore suggested changing the proposed language for phone-in meeting attendance, since members phoning in would not be counted for a quorum. The board will take November and December to work on the strategic plan, submit to the Mayor, and then ask for an operating budget. Dr. Gaffney stressed the importance of accountability.

Dr. Rigo Gomez, Associate Provost for Institutional Research and Planning at Edward Waters College, provided guidance to the board on framing the strategic plan. He has worked with the Gates Foundation and Achieving the Dream, and he is driven by giving back. He stressed the import of creating short and long-term goals, rating the process, setting up a timeline, and considering the strategic plan a living document. Provide the Mayor with two (2) options, showing the limited impact the board will have without financial support, as well as the high impact effect of MHAAB with a budget. Develop a goal for Education or Education and Workforce. Provide activity costs and a template for each committee to follow; the Mayor's pitch document should be one page, unified and concise.

Dr. Gaffney share the importance of not being a "best-kept secret" as a board. Invite Council members- they have money to spend and can donate extra funds to our board. Dr. Gaffney pledged to support Council member attendance at MHAAB, and in turn, we should be educating Council members on Hispanic needs. Also, consider strengthening the relationship with the

Sheriff's office. Capitalize on what MHAAB is already doing. Consider safety goals, education through the Sheriff's Office and LGBT Victim Assistance, gun violence programming, youth and gangs, neighborhood responses to shots fired, as well as high school dropout/completion as possible issues of focus.

Dr. Gomez challenged board members with the following question: If you could be a catalyst of change, which area would you like to change? Discussion included:

- a safety education campaign in English and Spanish
- K-5 literacy
- increased funding to reduce youth violence
- simplifying VA professional development
- health literacy through education, prevention, and awareness

Goals should be in line with Mayor Curry's priorities; to provide him a platform in the Hispanic community. Goals should be simple and flexible: strategies, activities and timelines but no more than two (2) per area. The MHAAB awards should center on those completing the goals. Once approved, the plan should be shared broadly.

Meeting concluded at 11 am.

Minutes submitted by Meredith Moore, MHAAB Secretary, 12/9/18