

Mayor's Hispanic American Advisory Board Meeting

Minutes

Date: Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Board Members Present: Cristina Echeverry, Jen Silvia, Marivi Wright, Dan Merkan, Miguel Di Pierri, Demika Jackson and Alina Prior

Absent Board Members (excused): Elizabeth Pantoja

Staff Present: Matthew Jackson, Liaison to Mayor

Guests: Dina Boscio, Aida Sezzj

Introduction: 9:09 AM Meeting was called to order by Chair Silva. A quorum was confirmed. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Chair Silva.

Public Comments

Aida Sezzj with the Inspire to Rise Center shared information of her organization and services offered. The company operates on the Westside of Jacksonville due to lack of resources in the community. Inspire to Rise features a Community Center and sanctuary on its campus. Volunteers of Medicine will be partnering with the organization soon. It currently offers health care services, community education, parenting, life skills, nutrition, yoga, art, etc. Its strategy is to offer such services through partnerships with other agencies. Inspire to Rise's goals is to create awareness in Duval and Clay County. Its main source of clients is through referrals through the child welfare system, juvenile justice and community outreach. It offers fee for service options as well as free services such as free tutoring and has received many referrals through the library. It recently offered a back to school event which impacted 250 families by offering free backpacks and immunizations. Recently, Inspire to Rise hosted a block party and inspired community health with United Health and Walgreens with 15 vendors. At the end of the month there will be a trunk or treat due to it being a high crime area. There will also be food baskets delivered to families in need at the end of the month. Inspire to Rise is also the recipient of the azalea grant which helps mothers that have abused substances and are recovering.

Minutes Approval – M. Di Pierri a made a motion to approve the minutes after making corrections (adding Demika Jackson to the list of attendees), seconded by M. Wright. Motion passes unanimously.

New Business

Introduction of new board members

Demika Jackson and Alina Prior are now formally full time board members. Board members introduced one another by sharing information such as place of employments, cultural background, area of expertise and why they serve on MHAAB.

Nominations for Chair 2020

a. Open Debate – J. Silva made a motion to nominate Marivi Wright for MHAAB Chair and C. Echeverry seconded.

b. Board Chair Vote – Motion was approved unanimously to appoint M. Wright as MHAAB Chair. M. Wright humbly accepted the position and expressed that she would like MHAAB to continue to be actively involved in the community and gave examples of how to do so.

Board members are encouraged to nominate someone for Vice Chair and Secretary by the next board meeting. Nominations can be sent to Mathew Jackson at: matjackson@coj.net.

Old Business

A. Hispanic Leadership Awards

This year the HLA was changed to be hosted during Hispanic Heritage Month instead of the spring, which was received well by attendees. J. Silva led the discussion of criteria for HLA awardees as well as gave options for additional awards.

There is a need to promote the event further as well as offer a larger nomination pool. Some ideas discussed included reaching out to organizations featured in La Guilla as well as grass roots efforts and reconnecting with past MHAAB members. MHAAB can also create an HLA committee comprised of other members of our local community to promote a larger diversity of candidates. The goal for the event is to improve every year.

B. Committee Updates and Announcements

a. Public Safety and Veterans

Demika Jackson was appointed to lead the Public Safety and Veterans committee. Dan mentioned that today is the HIV Latina Awareness Day. The “Hambingo” event at Hamburger Mary’s is taking place tonight. The emergence of men’s health symposium was a success. The next series taking place will be sexual health and relationships (D. Jackson). Landlord training will be offered at the City of Jacksonville on the 18th of this month (D. Boscio).

b. Education and the Workforce

There will be an education fair at the City of Jacksonville from 11AM – 2PM on October 29th comprising of the school members of the First Coast Higher Education Alliance (C. Echeverry). Miguel Di Pierri,, Dan Merkan and Cristina Echeverry attended the ATD event, representing MHAAB. It was the fourth event hosted at the Jaguars stadium.

Miguel attended the opening of the Alive Credit Union Event on October 11th.

January 17th will be the Eddy Awards hosted by JPEF (J. Silva). Last year there were over 800 attending. The school leadership initiative is taking shape which is comprised of school principals. Areas needing improvement include recruitment, retention, school climate, community engagement, parent engagement, culture, aging infrastructure, etc (J. Silva).

c. Health and Faith-Based Services

J. Silvia went over the health report given by E. Pantoja.

Mayo will continue efforts with a health conference referred to as, “ Jax Saludable.” It will be held on May 16th , 2020 at 1st Baptist Church downtown campus. We will be inviting 200-300 people from our Hispanic community. They will have an opportunity to get a wide scope view of the current Hispanic health report. Attendees will also have an opportunity to attend several ” breakout sessions” geared to their specific health interests. Registration will be required to attend this free event. We hope that this city- wide event will be a positive and impactful contribution to the City of Jacksonville.

On a separate but very important note, the next Hispanic Health Fair executed by Jacksonville Hispanic Church of God and Arlene Ortiz will be held on Saturday, August 22nd , 2020. It will be held at UNF campus (Herbert University Center) from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM. Please SAVE THE DATE so that we can support this great event. In the past, MHAAB, has always attended.

Open door event for families in need of health insurance for their children. Free assistance to those who need to apply for Medicaid and KidCare. The event will be held on Friday, October 18th, 2019.

M. Wright mentioned through a Patient Centered Outcomes Research grant, Mayo Clinic was able to host the Jax Summit event on September 28th at the Schultz Learning Center. E. Pantoja mentioned in her report that there were approximately 50 community leaders. It was an opportunity to educate our attendees on the overall health status of our Hispanic community and to explore ways in which we can collaborate to find solutions through research, to improve our health outcomes. Based on the surveys, it was very well received.

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d. Media and Public Relations

e. Business and Housing

D. Boscio is working with Hispanic boards on national level with other Hispanic boards assisting the Hispanic community become home owners. Also focused on offering education to the community as to available services offered. As a community, people need to be aware of challenges associated with obtaining home ownership (D. Boscio).

Meeting Adjourned by M. Wright at 10:27AM.

Meeting minutes submitted by C. Echeverry on October 15, 2019.