

**MINUTES OF THE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MONTCLAIR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES COMMISSION**

**MONTCLAIR CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5111 BENITO STREET, MONTCLAIR, CALIFORNIA**

7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Escalante called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Hernandez led those present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Richard Escalante, Commissioners Alex Hernandez, Laurie Milhiser, Arturo Padilla, Rosa Rangel, Diane Wells, and City Council Liaison Corysa Martinez

Excused: Vice-Chairperson Darlene Ferraro and City Council Liaison Bill Ruh

Also Present: Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Services Marcia Richter
Community Services Supervisor Jordi Ubaldo
Administrative Specialist Krystal Rabino

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Padilla made the motion to approve the minutes from the Community Activities Commission meeting on March 6, 2024. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. *Community Benefits Funding Program - Recap*

Ms. Richter mentioned that, following the Community Benefits Funding Program hearing on March 6, 2024, staff prepared and submitted an agenda item for the April 1, 2024 City Council meeting to request approval of the Commission's funding allocation recommendations for the thirteen participating agencies. The Commission's recommendations were approved by the City Council, and staff is preparing payment requests to submit to the Finance Department. The checks are expected to be received by requesting agencies within the month of May.

Chairperson Escalante expressed his delight that the Commission was able to accommodate some agencies with more funding this year.

Ms. Richter mentioned that Aging Next agreed to bringing their Building Bones Program to the Montclair Senior Center, and the program is scheduled to begin at the start of next fiscal year in July. She also mentioned that Montclair will now be part of Aging Next's service area. Aging Next was previously based out of Los Angeles County, but they will now serve San Bernardino County as well. Ms. Richter included that Aging Next is also working on partnering with and recruiting drivers for the Montclair Meals on Wheels Program.

B. *Easter Eggstravaganza - Recap*

The 2024 Easter Eggstravaganza event took place on Saturday, March 30, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. inside the Community Center and Senior Center due to inclement weather.

Chairperson Escalante expressed that he was very impressed by the event and praised Mr. Ubaldo for his work in transforming an outdoor event into an indoor event. He explained that the Human Services team was prepared and relaxed the day of, and the event turned out beautiful. He explained that he was stationed at the photo booth, and was delighted with this year's Easter Bunny. Commissioner Wells agreed and said this year's Easter Bunny was the best yet. Ms. Richter informed the Commissioners that the Easter Bunny was a Human Services staff member, and expressed that she did phenomenally in this role as she did not just pose for the camera, but instead interacted with the attending families. She also mentioned that the staff member explained that her enthusiasm was generated by the children's energy.

Chairperson Escalante was also impressed by the balloon art at the event and explained that he believed someone was contracted for this duty, however, Ms. Richter informed him that another staff member created the balloon art.

Ms. Richter explained that she was pleased by how well the event was received by the community and was proud of the staff for reconfiguring the event quickly due to the weather. Chairperson Escalante added that the children loved the event.

Chairperson Escalante requested a count of attendees. Ms. Richter mentioned that around 4,000 eggs were distributed throughout the event out of the 5,000 that were purchased. She also explained that 224 children participated in the opportunity drawing, IT reported that over

300 photos were taken with both IT cameras and personal cell phones and cameras, and the Kiwanis served over 250 pancake breakfasts until all food was served. Mr. Ubaldo added that he believes 1,000 people attended the event.

Chairperson Escalante mentioned that he saw photos of the event on Montclair Connects on Facebook. Ms. Richter asked the Commissioners if they were able to view the Instagram reels that Mr. Ubaldo helped create of the Easter Bunny in Alma Hofman Park and the Recreation Center. Chairperson Escalante explained that he viewed the videos and was amazed by them since this is the first time they have been produced, and he thought they were a great addition for marketing the event.

Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that two individuals from the Kiwanis Club of Ontario-Montclair spoke highly of the event which meant a lot because they are residents of a neighboring City.

Commissioner Padilla explained that the ticket collection area, where he was stationed, went smoothly and he thought the event was well organized and staff did a great job. He asked what organization the photos with the Easter Bunny was fundraising for, and Ms. Richter informed him that it was for the Women's Club of Montclair who donates towards Montclair Youth Programs. Commissioner Padilla mentioned the fundraiser was well deserved.

C. *Volunteer Recognition Program*

The 2024 Volunteer Recognition Program is scheduled to be held during the City Council Meeting on Monday, April 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Richter explained that due to controversial topics at recent City Council meetings, she expects a large turnout at the meeting; therefore the reception will be held in the City Hall Lobby, similar to last year's event. There will be reserved seating for all 9 volunteers, their agency representative and their guests. Doors for the pre-reception event will be open to the public, but only those on the RSVP list will be allowed entry. Supervisor Curt Hagman will attend and present certificates, and the Office of Senator Rubio has delivered certificates to be presented at the event. Ms. Richter also mentioned that Mr. Ubaldo, Ms. Franco and Ms. Rabino have been working on the refreshments and program.

Ms. Richter informed the Commission that the following donations for the gift bags were received:

- The Canyon Montclair - eighteen tickets to the Judy Collins performance on May 11, 2024
- Metro Honda/Acura - two detailing gift certificates
- Paradise Buffet - nine \$15 gift cards
- Olive Garden - one \$35 gift card
- Commissioner Milhiser - One box of Logan's Candies chocolate, one pound See's Candy gift card, one \$25 See's Candy gift card, one \$25 Lucille's BBQ gift card, one \$25 AMC Theater gift card and one \$25 Barnes and Noble gift card

- Commissioner Wells - nine \$10 gift cards for target and nine \$5 gift cards for Layered Cakerie

Commissioner Padilla informed the Commission that he will be picking up gift cards from Los Portales as soon as possible. Commissioner Rangel mentioned that Mr. You Express also offered to donate sixteen gift certificates for a drink and dinner plate, and she will be picking them up soon. She also mentioned that Yum Yum donuts has offered to donate a box of donut holes for each volunteer. Ms. Richter requested that staff pick up the donuts at 10:00 a.m. the day of the event to ensure that they are fresh. She also mentioned how nice the gifts will be for the volunteers this year and thanked the Commission for their work on retrieving donations or donating personally. Ms. Richter said that staff is looking into either a heart shaped vase or heart shaped frame to include with the gifts. She explained that if the frame is chosen, staff may be able to add photos taken after the ceremony.

Commissioner Milhiser asked the theme of the event and Ms. Richter reminded her that it is Montclair Volunteers – The Heart of our Community.

Ms. Richter changed the arrival time for the Commissioners to 5:00 p.m. to accommodate all Commissioner’s schedules.

D. Memorial Day Program

The Memorial Day Program is scheduled to be held on Monday, May 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Memorial Garden adjacent to City Hall. The following updates were shared.

Memorial Wall Plaques(s) Update

Ms. Richter explained that the Memorial Wall plaque for Ricco Williams is in its final stages and staff will order the plaque after the proof is approved by his family members. Chairperson Escalante volunteered to present the plaque during the event.

Dignitaries

Ms. Richter announced that staff has sent official invitations to the Dignitaries. Supervisor Curt Hagman, and Representative Nadya Bahena from the Office of Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez plan to attend. Responses from the offices of Senator Susan Rubio and Congresswoman Norma Torres are pending.

Review Updates Program Outline

Ms. Richter informed the Commissioners that Veteran Marine Major Matthew Murawski will not be in town so he is unable to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Padilla volunteered to recite the pledge in Mr. Murawski’s place.

Ms. Richter informed Commissioner Rangel that she has been placed in charge of giving the flower to the family members of Mr. Ricco Williams.

Chairperson Escalante inquired on what the Commissioners should wear to the event, and Ms. Richter said it is their decision, but they should be sure to wear their name badges. Commissioner Milhiser mentioned she will be wearing red, white and blue and Commissioner Padilla mentioned he will be in uniform.

Rehearse Reading of the Poem

The Commissioners rehearsed the poem “One Thousand Men are Walking” by Joshua Dyer. Commissioner Milhiser requested that the backstory of the poem be read during Councilmember Ruh’s introduction of the poem, because she believes it is a good story that should be mentioned. Ms. Richter said she will be sure to include the backstory in the script. The Commissioners rehearsed a stanza each in the following order: Commissioner Milhiser, Commissioner Rangel, Commissioner Wells, Commissioner Padilla, Commissioner Hernandez, and closed with Chairperson Escalante in place of Vice-Chairperson Ferraro. Chairperson Escalante agreed to read Commissioner Hernandez’s stanza as he is unable to attend the event. The Commissioners agreed to practice the poem again the day of the event, however, Commissioner Rangel suggested that only one Commissioner read the entire poem. She said she believes it is more meaningful and does not lose rhythm; and Commissioner Hernandez agreed. Ms. Richter explained that the poem was originally read by the entire Commission to ensure that every Commissioner had a part in the program. She reminded the Commission that everyone has a duty except Commissioner Hernandez. At that time, Commissioner Hernandez mentioned that due to his work schedule, he will likely not be able to attend the event.

Commissioner Padilla asked Commissioner Milhiser to read the poem, and Commissioner Milhiser agreed. Commissioner Wells offered to read the poem in the event that Commissioner Milhiser is unable to attend. Chairperson Escalante asked if all Commissioners are in favor of this plan and all unanimously agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Home Beautification Program

Chairperson Escalante introduced a discussion regarding the 2024 Home Beautification Program. Ms. Richter distributed area maps with assigned sections to the Commissioners. A list of the previous three year’s winners will be distributed at the next meeting.

Commissioners are requested to nominate two homes in each of their assigned areas; one drought tolerant home and one traditional home. Commissioners are requested to submit their nominations in person or by mail no later than Monday, May 27, 2024. All nominations will be given to the Community Development Department for review, and they will also nominate homes that have made improvements over the past year. All nominated homes will be judged on Wednesday, June 12, 2024 to ensure that most Commissioners can attend. The judging caravan is tentatively scheduled to meet at 5:30 p.m. in the Senior Center on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, followed by the CAC’s end of the year dinner. The winning homes chosen for the 2024 Home Beautification Program will be presented at the July 15, 2024 City

Council Meeting. Commissioners are encouraged to attend, and a member will be asked to read the presentation script. Chairperson Escalante is unable to attend the Council Meeting, and requested that Vice-Chairperson Ferraro read the script.

For the dinner, Commissioner Milhiser suggested that staff find a restaurant that has the room to accommodate all attending. Ms. Richter mentioned that at least a dozen people typically attend and that Black Angus has worked in the past, and suggested Ms. Rabino can check to see if the private room at Olive Garden would accommodate all expected to attend. Chairperson Escalante suggested Los Portales Restaurant. Black Angus, Olive Garden and Los Portales are the restaurant options for their end of the year dinner, and the Commission will select their choice at the May meeting.

Ms. Richter asked Commissioner Hernandez if he will be able to attend the judging caravan, and Commissioner Hernandez mentioned that the date is too far out to know if he is able to attend due to his work schedule.


ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Ms. Richter mentioned that Commissioners Hernandez, Padilla and Wells' terms will be expiring at the end of June, and they will be receiving emails from the City Clerk when the period to reapply opens. She also mentioned that in June, Chairperson Escalante, and Councilmembers Ruh and Martinez will be serving on the panel for the next Commissioners who will fill these positions. The selected Commissioners will be announced at the June 17, 2024 Council Meeting. If the final results are pending at that time, the Commissioners will be announced no later than the budget meeting on June 26, 2024. Ms. Richter explained that she hopes the current Commissioners plan to reapply.

Commissioner Padilla asked if the Commission is to be involved in the National Day of Prayer event. Ms. Richter informed him that the program is not a scheduled event of the Community Activities Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Escalante adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Krystal Rabino
Administrative Specialist