

**MINUTES OF THE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 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**

Vice-Chairperson Ferraro led those present in the salute to the flag.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Richard Escalante, Vice-Chairperson Darlene Ferraro, Commissioners Hector Martinez, Laurie Milhiser, Arturo Padilla, Rosa Rangel, Diane Wells and City Council Liaisons Bill Ruh and Corysa Martinez

**Excused:** None

**Also Present:** Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Services Marcia Richter  
City Attorney Diane Robbins  
Deputy City Clerk Krystal Roman  
Community Services Supervisor Jordi Ubaldo  
Community Recreation Coordinator Angela Franco  
Administrative Specialist Krystal Rabino

**SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES COMMISSIONER**

Deputy City Clerk, Krystal Roman officially swore-in the new (Hector Martinez) and returning (Arturo Padilla and Diane Wells) Commissioners.

**PRESENTATIONS**

City Attorney Diane Robbins made a presentation on the Brown Act Requirements and City Official Responsibilities to the Commission.

After the presentation, Ms. Robbins invited the Commission to ask questions and Commissioner Milhiser asked how the Commissioners should react to comments on their social media posts about various events such as the Halloween Spooktacular. She explained that some people would disagree if a Commissioner posted a positive comment about an event. Ms. Robbins mentioned that is up to the Commission what they post, but their response to the comments is critical.

Commissioner Padilla explained that he has heard the presentation previously and suggested to the Commissioners to be careful what they post and how they reply. Ms. Robbins added that once you post or text any information, that information is always available to the public, and Commissioner Padilla agreed. Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that although the Commissioners have relationships outside of the Commission including clubs, organizations and church, they need to be careful of the information they speak about outside of the meetings.

Commissioner Wells asked who enforces the Brown Act and Ms. Robbins explained that the DA enforces the Brown Act if criminal penalties are sought. She further explained that in regard to conflicts of interest, staff doesn't decide if an individual has violated the policies, instead it is the Fair Political Practices Commission who decides. Ms. Robbins explained that the Commission cannot rely on her opinion as they are responsible for their own actions and decisions. Chairperson Escalante thanked Ms. Robbins for her time.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Padilla made the motion to approve the minutes from the Community Activities Commission Special meeting on June 12, 2024. Commissioner Rangel seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

## **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Richter informed the Commission that Community Benefits Funding recipients, Anthesis and AgingNext sent thank you cards for the funding they received. Anthesis also sent their annual reports, and VNACare sent invitations for an upcoming event to the Commissioners. All documents were distributed for the Commission to review.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### ***A. 2024 Home Beautification Program***

The winners of the 2024 Home Beautification Program were announced at the City Council Meeting on Monday, July 15, 2024 and were presented with a framed certificate and a gift card to a Montclair business or restaurant of their choice. The winners of the program included:

Home of the Year – Traditional  
4641 Highland Street

Home of the Year – Drought Tolerant  
9553 Helena Avenue

Chairperson Escalante thanked the Commissioners for taking time to find houses to nominate and explained this program gave him inspiration for his own yard. Commissioner Milhiser asked if residents can self-nominate for this program and Chairperson Escalante responded

that residents cannot nominate their own home. Ms. Richter explained that residents are not allowed to self-nominate their own home because they would need to be pre-screened by the Community Development Department.

Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that the winners were very pleased to receive their awards. She explained from experience that renovating a yard is expensive and is a tremendous amount of work. She also explained that due to how the map for this program is partitioned, sometimes two homes in your selected neighborhood did well, but you can only choose one.

Ms. Richter informed the Commission that the Home Beautification Program signs are complete and letters have been sent to the winners to contact the Public Works Department for the installation of their sign. The signs are expected to be installed by the end of the month. Sign removal letters were also sent to last year's winners, and signs will likely also be removed by the end of the month. Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that the sign in her neighborhood has been removed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***A. 2024-2025 Tentative Calendar of Events***

Ms. Richter reviewed the Tentative Calendar of Events to discuss events listed that will involve the Commission's participation.

Ms. Richter explained that some of the events are mentioned earlier in the CAC meetings to start planning for them and talking about them.

Ms. Richter mentioned that she and Ms. Rabino met with Commissioner Martinez to review the upcoming programs and activities. She invited Commissioner Martinez and the entire Commission to ask any questions. Chairperson Escalante thanked Ms. Richter. Mr. Ubaldo distributed flyers for upcoming events. Chairperson Escalante remarked the graphics on the flyers are nicely done. Ms. Richter said the Commissioners should be receiving the brochure at their homes in a week or so.

### ***B. Candidates' Forum***

The Candidates' Forum will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Commissioner Wells asked why the Candidates' Forum is being held in the Council Chambers instead of the Senior Center. Ms. Richter explained that the last forum was held in the Council Chambers, but during the pandemic it was held in the Senior Center due to the number of candidates. Since there are four candidates running for the two City Council positions, the forum will be held in the Council Chambers.

Commissioner Escalante mentioned that the Commission usually helps at this event. Ms. Richter further explained that the Commissioners usually help hand out the question cards and screen the questions along with staff to ensure there are no duplicates or inappropriate questions before they are given to the moderator. The Commissioners will also help with time

keeping. Ms. Richter suggested that the Commissioners discuss which areas they can help with at the next meeting.

Commissioner Milhiser asked if the questions are prepared before-hand or if they are all from the audience. Ms. Richter responded that there are some prepared questions to start the conversation.

Ms. Richter informed the Commission that Tim Walborn confirmed he is available to be the moderator of the event again. She asked the Commission if they are supportive of this decision and all Commissioners agreed that Mr. Walborn had done a good job at the previous events. Ms. Richter said she will confirm Mr. Walborn's attendance.

### ***Halloween Spooktacular***

This year's Halloween Spooktacular will be held at Montclair Place on Saturday, October 26, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Ms. Richter invited Mr. Ubaldo to present an overview of the event to the Commission.

Mr. Ubaldo explained that the event will be held inside of Montclair Place again and staff is aiming to create a bigger and better event by introducing new ideas. He mentioned that he is looking forward to the Commission helping with the event. Mr. Ubaldo added that Ms. Franco has been working to create a dark room experience which will include glow in the dark axe throwing for a safe and fun family experience. Staff is in the process of finalizing rentals from a jumper company for inflatable games. Many of the same elements will be included in the event, including a maze in the old Nordstrom building, along with animatronics, music, a DJ and entertainment throughout the event. The inflatable games will be used in place of bouncers to ensure that all ages can participate in the activities.

Commissioner Padilla asked if there will be an informational booth and a break room and Mr. Ubaldo replied that there will be a break room with staff supervision where the Commission may leave their belongings and grab snacks. He also mentioned that there will be an informational booth that the Commission may assist at if they are available, as well as the costume contest judging.

Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that there were items that the Commission wanted to discuss from last year. She recommended that the Commission judge the costume contest from the ground level instead of the stage so they are able to judge more effectively. She explained that it would be easier to see the costumes at ground level, especially the family costumes. Vice-Chairperson Ferraro agreed and added that the Commission could walk around and look closely at all costumes from the ground. Commissioner Padilla mentioned that sometimes the Commission can see more costume details from the stage if a participant is covered by a taller participant. The Commission agreed to judge the contest from both the stage and ground level.

Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that it is very difficult to give a prize to only one person. She introduced the idea of giving out first and second place prizes. Commissioner Padilla asked who donates the prizes and Ms. Richter explained that the Women's Club of Montclair donates

funding for the trophies, candy bars and a basket with gift cards for the family. Commissioner Padilla mentioned that the Commission may want to reach out to the Women's Club regarding this matter.

Commissioner Milhiser asked how many attendees were counted at last year's event and Mr. Ubaldo responded that there were close to 10,000 attendees. Commissioner Milhiser thought that the amount of attendees was incredible.

Commissioner Padilla remarked that he appreciates this event because it leaves few people walking on the streets on Halloween, which is much safer.

### **C. Military Banner Programs**

Mr. Ubaldo explained that the flyer was updated and applications opened up September 3, 2024. Staff will be reaching out to previous banner participants via phone calls, emails and letters. The deadline to submit an application for new and returning applicants will be Wednesday, November 6, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. The City website will also be updated with this information, along with the Human Services Brochure which is expected to be mailed out to all residents this month.

Commissioner Milhiser inquired about how many banners exist in the City. Ms. Richter responded that there are around 70 banners in the City as well as two Veteran's banners located near the Post Office and Police Department. Commissioner Padilla asked if the previously established Military Banner Committee will have a meeting to discuss how they can help with the program. Mr. Ubaldo explained that he and Ms. Franco will be able to complete the tasks this year. Commissioner Padilla responded that Mr. Ubaldo can reach out to the Commissioners if he needs their assistance.

### **ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

Ms. Richter informed the Commissioners that staff will be ordering Community Activities Commission polo shirts soon. She asked the Commission if they would like a light or dark gray shirt. Four out of the seven Commissioners voted for light gray, so staff will be ordering light gray shirts for the Commission. She asked the Commissioners to give Mr. Ubaldo their shirt sizes after the meeting. Commissioner Milhiser asked if there are women sizes in the shirts and Ms. Richter explained that the shirts are men's polo's.

Commissioner Padilla asked if business cards have been ordered for Commissioner Martinez and Ms. Richter responded that they have been ordered and should be ready by the next meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Escalante adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
  
Krystal Rabino  
Administrative Specialist