

**MINUTES OF THE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2020
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MONTCLAIR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES COMMISSION**

**TELECONFERENCE
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Padilla called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Padilla led those present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Arturo Padilla, Vice-Chairperson Darlene Ferraro, Commissioners Richard A. Escalante, Edwin Hernandez, Laurie Milhiser, Rosa Rangel, Diane Wells, and City Council Liaison Bill Ruh

Excused: City Council Liaison Corysa Martinez

Also Present: Director of Human Services Marcia Richter
Administrative Specialist Renee Walker
Senior Recreation Specialist Mayra Cano
Information Technology Specialist Edmund Garcia

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Rangel made the motion to approve the minutes from the Community Activities Commission meeting on October 7, 2020. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Candidates' Forum

The 2020 Candidates' Forum took place on Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Montclair Senior Center. The event was not open to the public but was recorded and posted online to the City website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel on Monday, October 19, 2020. The event was also broadcast on Montclair's Public Access Channel every evening at 7:00 p.m. from Monday, October 19, 2020, through Election Day (Tuesday, November 3, 2020).

All six full term City Council candidates on the City of Montclair General Municipal ballot were invited to attend this Forum. Candidates were asked to confirm their participation in the Candidates' Forum by Thursday, September 24, 2020. The following five candidates confirmed their participation and attended the event: Tenice Johnson, Benjamin "Ben" Lopez, Oscar Miranda, Juliet Orozco, and Robert Pipersky; no response was received from Michael Tadrous.

Although the Candidates' Forum was closed to the public, residents had the opportunity to submit a general question or a candidate specific question to be answered during the event by completing the online question form on the City website. The deadline for the public to submit a question was Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 12:00 noon. Due to time constraints, it was possible that not all questions submitted would be asked of the candidates.

Tim Walborn, a representative from the Montclair Chamber of Commerce, served as the moderator for the Forum. Commissioner Wells read the welcome statement, introduced the moderator, and read the closing statement at the event and Vice-Chairperson Ferraro was the timekeeper during the Forum.

Vice-Chairperson Ferraro commented that she thought the Forum went well and appreciated that all of the candidates respected the designated time limits when responding to questions. Commissioner Milhiser agreed that the event went well and stated that watching the Forum online almost made her feel as if she were actually attending the event. She thanked Tim Walborn for serving as the Forum moderator and expressed gratitude to the Information Technology staff members for assisting with the Forum by recording, uploading, and broadcasting the event. Commissioner Milhiser also congratulated the candidates who participated in the Forum stating that they did a good job; she also acknowledged that due to the pandemic, the candidates at the event were there without their support system.

B. Children's Virtual Halloween Activities

The City had five virtual or socially distant activities planned for the month of October. The five activities included the iSpy Montclair coloring template, a Virtual Pumpkin Carving Contest, a Virtual Halloween Costume Contest, the Montclair Unsolved Mystery scavenger hunt, and the Drive-Thru Halloween Party.

Ms. Richter announced that four entries were received for the Virtual Pumpkin Carving Contest and that each contestant received a prize for participating. Ms. Walker announced that the

Virtual Halloween Costume Contest, which had seven judging categories, received thirteen entries, however some of the entries were submitted from the same household and were grouped into the “Family” category; a participation prize was presented to each contestant who entered the contest. The prizes for the Virtual Halloween Costume Contest were donated by the Women’s Club of Montclair. Ms. Walker stated that pictures of the entries received from the Virtual Pumpkin Carving Contest and the Virtual Halloween Costume Contest are available to view on the City website on “Community Events” page.

Ms. Richter also noted that the virtual Halloween scavenger hunt event called Montclair Unsolved Mystery: The Case of the Missing Egyptian Medallion, which was held over Halloween weekend, had a quite a few participants, but only 20 of the players correctly identified the medallion thief and submitted the right answer at www.cityofmontclair.org to enter a raffle to win a \$100 Barnes and Noble gift card donated by Montclair Place. Ms. Richter added that Montclair Place Marketing Director, Robbin Weeks-Wynne, selected the winning ticket during the raffle.

Ms. Richter commented that the Drive-Thru Halloween Party was a success. She thanked the Community Activities Commissioners for assisting at the event by helping to distribute bags and candy. Senior Recreation Supervisor Fernando Saltos also wanted to extend his gratitude to the CAC for their support during the event. It is estimated that 180 cars drove through the event and approximately 300 children participated in the Drive-Thru Halloween Party. The event featured inflatable Halloween decorations and Halloween themed canopies which were set up around the parking lot. CAC and staff members were stationed at the canopies and passed out candy as the cars drove around the event. Montclair Place and Burrtec Waste Industries sponsored the event and donated a combined total of over \$1,000 that was used to purchase candy for distribution at the event. Commissioner Milhiser stated that Ms. Richter has a great staff. She noted that she was impressed with the Halloween event and commented that it was the best that could be done under the circumstances, but asserted it was still a great event and the City should be proud.

C. *Military Banner Programs*

Ms. Cano has received twelve Military Banner applications for current members of the armed forces and one Military Banner application for a veteran. She reminded the Commission that the application for the Military Banner Programs is available on the City’s website and the 2020 Human Services Fall brochure.

The deadline for new banner submissions is Thursday, November 12, 2020. Ms. Cano is currently in the process of verifying the information in the Military Banner applications already received. Ms. Richter added that new banners will be installed for display in January.

D. *Tree Lighting Ceremony*

Ms. Richter provided an update on the plans for the 2020 Tree Lighting Ceremony, which is being referred to as the Drive-Thru Holiday Event this year. The Drive-Thru Holiday Event will be held on Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Richter noted that staff members are still finalizing event details, but she has submitted a request to have the large Canary Pine tree in

front of the Youth Center decorated for the event. She noted that even if funding is available to decorate the community tree, she would still need to confirm that West Coast Arborists are available to hang the lights on such short notice. Additionally, no tree lighting ceremony will take place, but guests will receive a pre-packaged hot chocolate goody bag and other treats during the drive-thru event. Santa Claus will be in attendance at the event to wave at guests as they drive by and collect their holiday goody bag. Commissioner Escalante volunteered to be Santa Claus during the Drive-Thru Holiday Event. Chairperson Padilla suggested that we keep the event as similar to the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony as possible by also having someone volunteer to be Mrs. Claus. Ms. Richter noted that the City does not own a Mrs. Claus costume. The Commission asked if Ester Vargas-Pipersky or her daughter would volunteer to be Mrs. Claus during the Drive-Thru Holiday Event. Ms. Richter replied that Ms. Pipersky and her husband, Robert Pipersky, volunteered as a couple when portraying Santa and Mrs. Claus. Ms. Richter offered to ask Mr. and Mrs. Pipersky if they would play Santa and Mrs. Claus at the upcoming event. Vice-Commissioner Ferraro encouraged Ms. Richter to contact the Pipersky family to ask if they are available to volunteer at the event; she suggested that if they are unavailable, then Commissioner Escalante will be Santa Claus at the event.

Letters to Santa will be accepted during the event. A free stationary template is available to download from the City website so that children can use it to write their letter at home. After they compose their letter at home, they can drop it off during the Drive-Thru Holiday Event. Children can also bring a letter for Santa Claus and deposit it in a specially marked mailbox outside of the Montclair Recreation Center beginning Monday, December 7, 2020 through Friday, December 11, 2020 from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Letters that include a legible first and last name as well as a complete mailing address may receive a response from Santa Claus.

Commissioners are asked to arrive at 6:00 p.m. to assist with the event. Ms. Richter suggested that Commissioners park their vehicle at Alma Hofman Park because Parking Lot A behind City Hall will closed for the event.

E. Holiday Home Decoration Contest

The Holiday Home Decoration Contest application deadline is Friday, December 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19, the contest will be virtual and Commissioners will individually view the nominated homes and score them on a scale of 1-10.

The entry form is available in the Human Services Department fall brochure and on the City's website. Commissioners were mailed a map that outlines their randomly assigned area for their nomination selection. Each Commissioner will nominate two homes within the area they are assigned; nominations are due by Friday, December 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Walker stated that she will mail Commissioners another copy of the map and list of ineligible homes closer to Thanksgiving in order to remind them about the upcoming nomination deadline. She also informed the Commission that she has received one self-nomination from a community member which will be added to the final judging map and scored by the Commission.

Commissioners will be mailed a final map with all nominated homes marked and numbered, a packet of pictures showing each nomination with their address and assigned number, and a

judging score sheet listing each nomination by address and number. Commissioners are asked to drive around individually to view each home and give it a rating between 1 and 10 (10 being the highest). The Commission will submit judging score sheets via email or mail by Monday, December 14, 2020. Staff will tally the judging score sheets and the winners will be announced at a future City Council meeting.

A. Election of Officers

In compliance with the provisions of Resolution No. 96-2096, authorizing the Montclair Community Activities Commission, an election shall be held each calendar year at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the CAC to elect officers for the upcoming year. The November meeting of the CAC is the last regularly scheduled business meeting for 2020; therefore, elections for the offices of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are in order.

Chairperson Padilla opened the nominations; Chairperson Padilla nominated Vice-Chairperson Ferraro to serve a term as president; Vice-Chairperson Ferraro politely declined the nomination. Commissioner Rangel nominated Chairperson Padilla to serve another term as Chairperson; no other nominations were made. Commissioner Escalante seconded the nomination for Chairperson Padilla; all were in favor and the motion was carried that Chairperson Padilla will serve another term as Chairperson.

Commissioner Milhiser nominated Commissioner Escalante to serve a term as Vice-Chairperson; no other nominations were made. Chairperson Padilla seconded the nomination; all were in favor and the motion was carried that Commissioner Escalante will serve a term as Vice-Chairperson.

B. Community Benefits Funding Program

The staff report listing the agencies invited during the 2019 – 2020 fiscal year was reviewed and Commissioners discussed the agencies previously awarded, the services they provide to the City of Montclair, and whether there were any other non-profit agencies that should be invited.

Ms. Richter stated that there are tentative plans to host an in-person hearing for the Community Benefits Funding Program, however, the details regarding in-person agency presentations are subject to change based on COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the event. If in-person meetings are still discouraged at the time of the scheduled hearing, then the presentations will likely take place via teleconference.

Commissioner Milhiser asked if it would be possible to host an in-person and socially distant CAC meeting and Community Benefits Funding Program hearing in the Senior Center. Ms. Richter replied that hosting the meeting in the Senior Center may be an option, but the Information Technology Department would need to be available to setup the microphones and record the meeting audio. Chairperson Padilla agreed that it would be best for the hearing to take place in-person so that the Commission can conveniently discuss the funding recommendations for each agency. Ms. Richter also reminded the Commission that someone

will also need to sanitize the microphone and podium between each presentation. Commissioner Milhiser suggested that the Commission revisit the discussion about an in-person hearing at the January CAC meeting.

Chairperson Padilla suggested adding an agency to the Community Benefits Funding Program invitation list. He informed the Commission that Food for Humanity is an organization that supplies the commodities for the food pantry at a local church. Commissioners Escalante and Milhiser agreed that Food for Humanity is an agency that serves the City and would benefit from additional funding to support the growing needs of the community.

Chairperson Padilla suggested that, in addition to the eleven organizations that received funding last fiscal year, Food for Humanity should also receive an invitation to participate in the Community Benefits Hearing; the Commission unanimously agreed.

The following twelve agencies will receive an invitation packet:

1. AgingNext
2. Anthesis
3. Care & Company
4. Christian Development Center
5. Family and Collaborative Services
Montclair
6. Food for Humanity
7. Foothill Family Shelter
8. Hope Through Housing Foundation
9. Montclair Meals on Wheels
10. OPARC
11. Project Sister
12. Visiting Nurses Association

ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- Ms. Richter announced that donations for the Holiday Food and Toy Basket Program will be accepted beginning November 16, 2020 through December 11, 2020. She noted that appointments to submit an application for the Holiday Toy and Food Basket Program have already been scheduled, however, CAC Members should contact her by Tuesday, November 10, 2020 if they know someone who may qualify and is interested in applying for the program.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Padilla adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Walker
Administrative Specialist