

**MINUTES OF THE  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2023  
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 Wells called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

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

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Diane Wells, Vice-Chairperson Richard Escalante, Commissioners Darlene Ferraro, Alex Hernandez (arrived at 7:02 p.m.), Laurie Milhiser, Arturo Padilla, and Rosa Rangel and City Council Liaison Bill Ruh

**Excused:** City Council Liaison Corysa Martinez

**Also Present:** Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Services Marcia Richter  
Administrative Analyst Adriana Navarrete-Campos  
Community Services Supervisor Jordi Ubaldo

**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 October 4, 2023. Commissioner Rangel seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

**ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. *Halloween Spooktacular - Recap***

The Halloween Spooktacular took place on Saturday, October 28, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Montclair Place. Ms. Richter informed the Commission that there were around 10,000 attendees at the event.

Commissioner Milhiser asked Ms. Richter if the City received any press for this event, and Ms. Richter explained that she had not been informed of any news articles about the Spooktacular.

Commissioner Padilla apologized for his late arrival to the event. Vice-Chairperson Escalante and Commissioner Rangel apologized for not being able to attend.

Commissioner Milhiser expressed that the event was wonderful, and applauded staff for their hard work. Chairperson Wells and Commissioner Ferraro seconded this comment, and mentioned that the event was very enjoyable. Chairperson Wells was delighted that the stairs to the main stage were more substantial this year. She also asked Mr. Ubaldo to share her gratitude with his staff for all of their work at the event. Commissioners Milhiser and Ferraro remarked on the creative costumes at the event. Ms. Richter mentioned that there was an abundance of family costumes. She also commended Mr. Ubaldo for his informative staff packet for the event, and invited him to give his recap about the Spooktacular.

Mr. Ubaldo explained that the process to create the event took around three months, with the last two weeks used to finalize and stage the event at Montclair Place. He expressed his gratitude for the relationship that was established between the City, 909 Jumpers, Montclair Place and the Montclair Police Department to ensure all safety protocols were met. Mr. Ubaldo also expressed his gratitude for the morning and afternoon shifts of staff that greatly helped the efficiency of the event.

Ms. Richter added that Montclair Place staff heard many positive comments about the event, including that it was enjoyable and great for families, and attendees could not believe the event was free.

Commissioner Milhiser commented that she found it hard to hear the emcee from the stage, but explained that this may have been due to the Commissioners standing behind the microphone, or the speaker volume. She also explained that the volume may have been loud to ensure all attendees could hear the emcee.

Ms. Richter suggested that the Commissioners walk down from the stage during the costume contest in order to see the details on each costume. Commissioner Milhiser agreed since some costumes were difficult to see from stage. Ms. Richter also suggested that a Commissioner should guide the winners of the costume contest to the stage. City Council Liaison Ruh suggested that the Commission announce the names of the winners and the City where they are from, as was done at past Halloween Spooktacular events. Ms. Richter explained that names are no longer called aloud to protect individuals' privacy, and to ensure the contest does

not last an extended amount of time since this year's contest lasted around 45 minutes. Commissioner Milhiser agreed due to the large amount of participants. Chairperson Wells suggested to give away two family costume awards instead of one since it takes a great deal of effort to dress a group of people.

Commissioner Milhiser mentioned that two attendees asked about job opportunities for the City while at the City booth, and she told them to look on the City's website. Ms. Richter mentioned that the City usually provides a sign with a QR code at each event which links to the City's employment website, and it will be implemented at next year's Halloween Spooktacular.

### ***B. Military Banner Programs***

Mr. Ubaldo explained that the Military Banners will now be his main focus since the Halloween Spooktacular and Health Fair events have been completed. Staff has posted the application information to social media, as well as the City website and Human Services Brochure, and Mr. Ubaldo has begun receiving emails from returning applicants. He has also received one application from a new applicant.

### ***C. Holly Jolly Holiday***

The Holly Jolly Holiday will take place on Thursday, November 30, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Montclair Youth Center.

Ms. Richter informed the Commissioners that the Holly Jolly Holiday Committee made up of City staff has chosen some new decorations for the event, including a large Rudolph and Clarice inflatable which will be placed on the roof of the Youth Center. She also explained that the room once used for Letters to Santa will now be a Northern Lights themed room that will include prismatic decorations. Mr. Ubaldo expanded on the Northern Lights room and explained that there will be an Aurora projecting night light with prismatic decorations to make the room an experience and photo opportunity for families. Commissioner Ferraro asked where the Letters to Santa table will be located and Ms. Richter explained that it will be located near the pool tables and games area of the Youth Center.

This year's Santa Claus will be Reserve Police Officer Ronald Foss. Ms. Richter informed the Commission that Commissioner Rangel volunteered to be Mrs. Claus this year.

Ms. Richter mentioned that invitation letters have been sent to dignitaries. She also informed the Commission that the Mayor will not be in attendance this year due to a prior commitment.

Ms. Richter reminded the Commissioners of their program assignments from last month's meeting and asked them to arrive at the event by 5:30 p.m.

### **Refreshments**

Cookies will be served again this year as well as free hot cocoa for the children. Children will receive a hand stamp after receiving their free goodies. Commissioner Milhiser volunteered to assist at the refreshment station.

## **Entertainment**

The Montclair High School Jazz Band will be performing throughout the event.

## **Letters to Santa**

Children will be encouraged to write a letter to Santa and those that include a legible complete address may receive a response from Santa Claus, as we have in previous years. Commissioner Hernandez volunteered to assist in the Letters to Santa station. Commissioner Milhiser asked if there will be someone with bilingual capabilities stationed at the Letters to Santa station and Ms. Richter confirmed that Commissioner Hernandez will be able to assist with those who speak Spanish.

## **Photos of children attending**

Staff and Vice-Chairperson Escalante volunteered to help with the photos and Commissioner Padilla will be assigned at the entrance gate to count attendees and stamp hands as attendees enter. Commissioner Padilla reminded Mr. Ubaldo that he will need one, preferably bilingual volunteer to relieve him from his duties during necessary breaks.

## **Volunteers for the event**

Ms. Richter explained that Mr. Ubaldo is working on recruiting volunteers for the event, but not as many volunteers will be invited this year upon the Commission's request.

## ***D. Holiday Home Decoration Contest***

The Holiday Home Decoration Contest application submission deadline for the community is Friday, December 1, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. The entry form is available on the City's website. The entry form was also included in the Human Services brochure which was mailed to all Montclair residents, as well as a social media post.

Commissioners received a map that outlines their randomly assigned area for their nomination selections and also a list of ineligible homes that have won within the last three years. Each Commissioner is asked to nominate two homes within the area they are assigned; nominations are due by Monday, December 4, 2023.

The Commission will meet in the Senior Center at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 for a special meeting and dinner. Commissioners decided on home-made tamales made by Commissioner Padilla's wife, along with enchiladas and rice and beans from Los Portales for dinner. Commissioner Rangel offered to bring dessert. Judging will begin at approximately 6:00 p.m. Commissioners will caravan to view the nominated homes and will score them on a scale of 1-10. Tallies of scores and dessert will take place in the Senior Center at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Ms. Richter requested that the Commission save the date for the awards ceremony which will be held at the City Council meeting on December 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Chairperson Wells volunteered to read the script.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***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 2023; therefore, elections for the offices of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are in order.

Chairperson Wells opened the nominations; Vice-Chairperson Escalante nominated Commissioner Padilla and Commissioner Padilla declined the nomination. Commissioner Padilla nominated Vice-Chairperson Escalante to serve as Chairperson; Commissioner Milhiser seconded the nomination; no other nominations were made; all were in favor and the motion was carried that Vice-Chairperson Escalante will serve as Chairperson starting in January 2024.

Vice-Chairperson Escalante nominated Commissioner Ferraro to serve as Vice-Chairperson and Commissioner Ferraro accepted the nomination; no other nominations were made. Commissioner Milhiser seconded the nomination; all were in favor and the motion was carried that Commissioner Ferraro will serve as Vice-Chairperson starting in January 2024.

### ***B. Community Benefits Funding Program***

Chairperson Wells announced that the Commission received a total of \$45,000, to award to non-profit agencies that serve the Montclair community.

The staff report listing the agencies invited during the 2022-2023 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.

Commissioner Milhiser thanked Councilmember Ruh for the amount allocated to the Commission to distribute, and asked if there were any agencies whom we received no response from last year. Ms. Richter explained that a response was received from every agency that was sent a letter.

Commissioner Milhiser explained that she has no new agencies to nominate this year, and would like to avoid dropping the previous agencies off the invitation list. Commissioner Padilla agreed and made a motion to keep the 13 agencies from last year's program. Commissioner Ferraro seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve this motion.

A total of 13 agencies will be invited to participate in the Program.

Ms. Richter reminded the CAC that the 2023-2024 Community Benefits Funding Program is scheduled to take place at their regular CAC meeting on Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

### **ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

Ms. Richter reminded the Commission about a possible Halloween Home Decoration Contest that the Commissioners had mentioned last year. She explained that October is a busy month for staff, and next year will be even more demanding due to the Candidates Forum, Halloween Spooktacular, Health Fair, Lights on After School Event and Youth Talent Showcase among other regularly scheduled activities. Ms. Richter informed the Commission that staff needs an ample amount of time for contests to gather nominations, prepare the judging list, schedule the judging, contact winners, take photos, make the PowerPoint, and schedule the Awards Presentation during a council meeting.

Commissioner Milhiser commented that Halloween and Christmas are so close together that the Commission would have to choose one contest or the other. City Council Liaison Ruh began by saying he believes more people are decorating for Halloween than Christmas. Commissioner Padilla mentioned that when he drove around the City he observed that there were not nearly as many homes decorated for Halloween than there usually are for Christmas, which would be a challenge for the Commission. He also mentioned that those who decorate for Halloween usually decorate last-minute, and that the Commission can revisit this next year during the calendar review. Commissioner Ferraro mentioned that she is reluctant to overwhelm staff with extra work, and does not want to affect the quality of the October events. Commissioner Milhiser explained that she is content with only executing the Holiday Home Decoration Contest as long as it meets a comparable number of homes. Commissioner Rangel mentioned that Christmas is a more meaningful holiday, and decoration for the holiday is more of a tradition than it is for Halloween.

Ms. Richter suggested to revisit the Halloween Home Decoration Contest at either the May or June meeting so it can be scheduled for the year if the Commission decides to launch this contest.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Wells adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Krystal Rabino  
Administrative Specialist