



Where Life is Sweet

Hispanic Advisory Committee Minutes

March 18, 2024

Chair Jose Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Committee members present were Mark Gomolski, Jessica De La Cruz, Alberto Munoz, and Jesse Roa. Also present was Council Representative Maria Duron and City Recorder Lilly Alarcon-Strong. Councilor Roy Barron was not present. Youth Advisors Sarahi Gutierrez, Leslie Mendoza Romero, and Jeanine Heredia were also in attendance. The pledge of allegiance was given.

Meeting Minutes

Mark moved and Jessica seconded to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Updates from Senator Wyden's Office

Lilly stated Kathleen Cathey reached out to her prior to the start of this meeting as Kathleen needed to reschedule for the following month.

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates

Sleep Center Coordinator Cindi Jorgensen gave updates to include:

- A wonderful amount of donations and support that is regularly receive from the community, including food, and financial gifts to purchase necessities. Weekly needs/grocery lists are placed on social media so the public can purchase and drop off those items to the shelter
- Volunteers have dropped by about 50%, from about 40 individuals to about 20 individuals and SSA is very much in need of volunteers and nightly meals to continue to remain open every night and serve those in need. SSA is grateful for all the support received that allows them to remain open
- Thanked Hermiston's High School Next Steps Program for their help cleaning the Sleep Center facility
- Fundraising opportunities are being planned and will be shared as soon as possible
- Average number of guests has increased and SSA is seeing closer to 16 people each night. In January and February SSA had close to 400 stays by 41 and 51 (respectfully) unduplicated individuals
- SSA received a grant to purchase a shuttle bus to transport guests to and from the Sleep Center to Hermiston City Hall. The shuttle bus will also be used to for transportation needs to/from appointments and other guest needs. SSA is hiring shuttle bus drivers. Those interested are encouraged to apply
- Permanent location is getting closer to being ready. There are electric and water issues still being worked on. The permanent site will have laundry services, kitchen, bathrooms, computer stations, and more.
- Recently hosted volunteer workday party to complete final punch list items on the individual shelter units in the near future
- A security company has been hired to stay at the shelter each night and help with the daily guest intake and check out process

Cinco de Mayo Event Updates from the Cinco de Mayo Board/Volunteers (not a City Board)

Jessica, Alberto, and Jose gave updates as Cinco de Mayo volunteers stating Board and volunteer members are working on the following items for the event: Mexican band/entertainment; Mexican bull riding; accepting application for all types of vending and pageant; many volunteers will be needed the day of the event to help direct people, set up, clean up, and tear down; seeking sponsorships; flyers are being pushed out with event information and a QR code; car show, and more.



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Student Advisors pledged to help with pushing out information and encouraging students to participate in the pageant and volunteer during the event.

Review & Assign 2024 Committee Goal Tasks

Lilly stated at last month's meeting the Committee established goals they wanted to focus on for the year and stated other Committees have members volunteer or are assigned to work on specific goals and give regular updates and asked if this is something the Committee wanted to do to help move the goals forward.

The Committee agreed to this suggestion and gave the following updates:

- Rural Engagement- Water Nitrate Outreach
 - Jose volunteered to be the project lead on this item and stated he will give updates as they become available.
- BMCC & Student Advisory Outreach & Information Meeting
 - Jose volunteered to be the project lead on this item and stated he has emailed his BMCC contact and is waiting to hear a response.
- Increase the Latino Vote- Women Voters of Oregon
 - Mark and Alberto volunteered to be project leads on this issue.
- Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15th through October 15th) Celebration
 - Jose asked that all members of the Committee be involved in this goal as planning this event will be a large undertaking. The Committee agreed.
Community Member Virginia Rome asked to be a part of the planning process.
There was some discussion regarding if the Committee would be able to meet outside of public meetings in order to plan the event. Lilly informed the Committee they would be able to meet outside of public meetings but only to discuss event planning.

Closing Comments

Public Comments

None given.

Committee Comments

Mark stated members of the City's Faith-Based Advisory Committee reached out to him regarding him and the Committee helping with community meals for the needy.

Youth Representatives

Jeanine stated she would be happy to help and push out information to the many school organizations she is a part of with regards to the vast majority of projects and events the Committee is working on.

City Representatives

Maria and Lilly spoke on the following:

- Hiring Ignacio Palacios as the Finance Director
- Budget issues and information regarding possible legalization of selling marijuana inside of City limits and the discussion/decision that will come before the City Council



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- I Love My City event on May 18th
- Increase in Solid Waste rates
- Business License Fee discussion and implementation process

Next Meeting

Monday, April 15th at 7:00pm at City Hall Council Chambers.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:11pm.

DRAFT