



**MINUTES OF THE
DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

Oakton Community Center
4701 Oakton Street, Skokie, IL 60076
Thursday, May 31, 2018 – 7:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present: Commissioner/Chair Maureen Yanes

Committee Members
Present: None

Staff Present: Executive Director John Ohrlund
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Jon Marquardt
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

Public Present: Joseph Tamraz
Jelly Carandang
Jin Lee
Frances Roehm
Krishna Goya
Anwar Haq
Dipak Jhava
Nancy Kim Phillips
Brian Williams

CALL TO ORDER

Diversity Advisory Committee Chairman Maureen Yanes called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. followed by the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Yanes thanked everyone for attending. There were a few new attendees and Commissioner Yanes asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

BOARD UPDATES

Commissioner Yanes said Pramod Shah's application for the Diversity Advisory Committee was approved by the Park Board at the May meeting.

Commissioner Yanes asked about a Facebook page for the Diversity Advisory Committee.

PRESENTATION ON SEED (National Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) PROJECT

John Ohrlund gave a detailed presentation on the SEED (National Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) program. The program is being promoted by Skokie Cares which is made up of representatives of public and private organizations. The “Skokie Welcomes Everyone” yard signs and buttons was the first project of Skokie Cares. The organization is trying to promote togetherness, leadership and community involvement. One of the ways of doing this is by sharing stories and meaningful conversations with participants. The SEED program trains facilitators to conduct the meetings which are held monthly for 3 hours for a period of 10 months. Fouzia Khan, Childcare Manager will be trained as a facilitator this summer. The Park District will be sponsoring a program this fall which will include District staff and community members. School Districts 219 and 73 ½ offer the training also SEED Program information is available on the Skokie Cares website.

Previous attendees said SEED is an opportunity for internal reflection and learning about racism, gender and all things that keep us apart. SEED is about building trust in the group, sharing your story, having powerful conversations and breaking the concept of stereotypes. SEED opens up experiences and ideas that you may never have taken the time to hear, perspectives that you may never had the opportunity to see or feel. All are encouraged to consider participating in the SEED program. The SEED program is free to participants.

WELCOME CENTER

John Ohrlund and Nancy Kim Phillips discussed a recent a brainstorming session at the Skokie Library concerning a welcome center. The discussion included the needs of the community and what is already provided to the new community member.

Mr. Ohrlund said some of the community needs discussed were: schools, licensing, childcare, employment resources, language resources, volunteer opportunities, housing, garbage collection, transportation, vehicle stickers, etc. There are multiple models for a welcome center to be considered depending on the needs of the residents. Skokie Library research librarians are going to compile information on existing Skokie resources.

Discussion took place on historic welcoming programs within the community.

Commissioner Yanes said Skokie has great resources but residents frequently don't know how to access them.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Commissioner Yanes asked for comments on the Holi event at the Skokie Festival of Cultures. She said the pictures of the event were amazing and congratulated Jon

Marquardt for the great job organizing the event. Participation and excitement levels were high.

The general lack of media coverage was discussed.

Commissioner Yanes asked for any new ideas for cultural events. Recommendations included showing ethnic movies, printing fliers in various languages, more weekday programs such as poetry reading and movies, not necessarily at large events.

The Taste of Korea at the Old Orchard Mall in July and the Mexican culture celebration at Ravinia with mariachi bands, food from all regions of Mexico and art were discussed as examples of well run events.

Jin Lee suggested celebration of different National Heritage Months like African American Heritage Month, Asian Month etc.

Mr. Marquardt said the District is contemplating a program or event for National Diversity Month next April. Jon said he is also working with the Village of Skokie on cultural events including a possible pride parade.

Ms. Roehm suggested considering some type of celebration for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Jelly Carandang suggested a talent show showcasing ethnic talents.

Commissioner Yanes asked the committee to email any other ideas for cultural events to her at myanes@skokieparks.org.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Diversity Advisory Committee will be Thursday, August 2, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Maureen Yanes adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Maureen Yanes, Commissioner

John Ohrlund, Executive Director

Vision Statement

The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all of its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first rate facilities.

Mission Statement

The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

Core Values

The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through:

- Commitment ● Integrity ● Innovation ● Service ● Openness ● Environmental Stewardship