

**MINUTES  
CITY OF WOODSTOCK  
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS COMMISSION  
April 6, 2015**

The Regular Meeting of the Cultural and Social Awareness Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 4:40 PM on Monday, April 6, 2015, by Chairperson Laurie Crain in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall, 121 West Calhoun, Woodstock, Illinois.

A roll call was taken by Deputy City Clerk Amy Weber.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jose Rivera, Ivy Sagrado, John Hudson, and Chairperson Laura Crain.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Alex Mitchell

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Human Resources Director Deborah Schober and Deputy City Clerk Amy Weber.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by John Hudson, second by Jose Rivera to accept the October 6, 2014 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Ayes: John Hudson, Jose Rivera, Ivy Sagrado, Chairperson Laura Crain. Nays: None. Absentees: Alex Mitchell. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

**DISTRIBUTION OF BUSINESS CARDS TO COMMISSIONERS**

Deb Schober distributed business cards to commissioners Jose Rivera, Ivy Sagrado, John Hudson and Chairperson Laura Crain. She also introduced Deputy City Clerk Amy Weber and explained Mrs. Weber's role to the Commissioners.

**SISTER CITY**

Jose Rivera stated that he took a trip to Zacatecas three months ago and met with the Dean of Zacatecas University and recently with Woodstock Mayor Sager. He added that Rockford University and Aurora University are looking into accreditation for the teachers from Zacatecas prior to hiring. He also stated that he has another trip to Zacatecas planned for the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May this year to visit the Dean of the University of Zacatecas to go over what they need to get started with the project.

Laura Crain asked if this will be a short-term or long-term process. Jose Rivera replied that it will be an easy short-term process.

Laura Crain stated that she just had a conversation with the regional office talking about the need to hire teachers.

Jose Rivera introduced to the commission his Nephew Raymond who was in town visiting for Spring Break.

## **NEW AMERICANS' INITIATIVE**

Ivy Sagrado stated the need to discuss possible dates for the New Americans' Initiative event. She also stated that Victoria Delarosa from Rock Valley Initiative is willing to meet with the commission to discuss grants to help fund the program. Ivy anticipated the planning for this event once scheduled would take at least one month.

The commission discussed possible dates for the New Americans' Initiative event and agreed to set the event for Saturday June 6, 2015. Laura Crain indicated she will start seeking permission with the area high schools to host the event.

## **CULTURAL FESTIVAL FOR DECEMBER 2015**

Laura Crain noted that she met with Mayor Sager to discuss planning for a cultural festival in December 2015. She also met with District 200 Superintendent Mike Moen to ask if he would partner with the commission to allow access to school databases as a way to reach out to families who identify themselves as other than English speaking homes. She stated that Mr. Moen agreed and also suggested reaching out to District 200 PTO's.

Laura Crain suggested doing some type of event on the Square and also asking retailers to do a different culture season theme or decorating trees with a different cultural theme. Laura Crain stated that due to time constraints she cannot lead this project and asked commissioners if one of them would take the lead on it.

Ivy Sagrado stated that she is a Chamber member and would be willing to lead the project but also asked why December was chosen as the month to hold the festival. Laura Crain noted that the Square tends to draw more visitors in December.

Ivy Sagrado noted that the Pilipino community does their own seasonal festivities at their church. Laura Crain stated that we need to highlight that and there are many different cultures here in Woodstock that we don't recognize so the questions are; how do they celebrate the season and how can we recognize them.

Deb Schober stated that Chief Deputy City Clerk Cindy Smiley wished to remind the Commission of the City requirement to pull a permit for events at the City to make sure the Square (during that timeframe) is not already occupied. Laura Crain added that she doesn't want to cross over other events and perhaps they could make Wednesday nights cultural night. She stated that the next step would be to talk with the Chamber of Commerce to see what they already have planned during that time.

John Hudson commented that there are a lot of different traditions that time of year for example; Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanza.

Laura Crain stated that there are also various cultural traditions that have nothing to do with religion, however it is a season of celebration and this would be a winter festival celebrating the multicultural aspect of Woodstock. Laura Crain added that the event could instead be hosted in January or February if it's more befitting to everyone's schedule.

Deb Schober commented that she likes the “Christmas around the world” theme and highlighting the way different cultures celebrate the season. She added that the “Woodstock Celebrates” initiative should be up and running by that time, thus this could be Woodstock Celebrates Culture or some other similarly named event.

John Hudson asked if we will have Christmas trees decorated in multicultural décor.

Laura Crain stated that the Opera House still displays Christmas trees and we could reach out and ask that the trees celebrate culture and celebrate who we are as a full community. She suggested to start with small events to increase the chance that the events will be successful and then increase the scale each year until the community makes it an annual event. Ivy Sagrado offered to head the project.

J Hudson commented that he was associated with one of the International Schools of Chicago that hosted intercultural events. He stated that at one of these events the students displayed flags representing different cultures, put on performances and he added that this could be done at one of our schools. Laura Crain added that this would be another great way for the schools to be involved.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Laura Crain announced that she would be meeting with Mayor Sager this Wednesday.

Deb Schober stated that the Woodstock City Council is meeting tomorrow night and are planning to approve an ordinance change whereby public comment needs to be added to each agenda, therefore we need to add in a Public Comments section on the agenda after the roll call.

Deb Schober announced that the next commission meeting is Monday, July 6 and asked the commissioners if there was a preferred time to have it. The commissioners discussed the time change and agreed to change it to start at 4:30 PM.

Laura Crain added that we need to reach out to the citizens and leaders from each cultural community and ask them to come to our meetings and offer comments and suggestions.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by John Hudson, second by Ivy Sagrado, to adjourn this Regular Meeting of the Cultural and Social Awareness Commission to the next Regular Meeting on July 6, 2015 at 4:30PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Ayes: Jose Rivera, Ivy Sagrado, John Hudson, and Chairperson Laura Crain. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: Alex Mitchell. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weber  
Deputy Clerk