



Neighborhood and Family Services Commission Meeting

Online Meeting

Wednesday, June 30, 2021 6:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

A **Regular Meeting** of the Neighborhood and Family Services Commission of the City of Avondale, Arizona convened using the Zoom Cloud Meeting platform in open and public session at 6:05 p.m. All participants attended by phone or video.

Commission Members in Attendance: Jeffrey Rich, Jerome Brownlee, Michelle McMullen, Dawn Gerundo, Hilary McKillip, Oliver Morrison, Alternate Maxine White

Commission Members Excused: Fabian Prado

Commission Members Absent: Gloria Solorio, Lisa Osborne, Alternate Nellie Goetz

City Staff and Guests in Attendance: Assistant Neighborhood & Family Services Director Edith Baltierrez, Library Manager Terry Ann Lawler, Senior Center Coordinator Erin Lutz, Deputy City Clerk Linda Mendenhall, Administrative Assistant Paula Swenson

1. Call to Order

The Neighborhood and Family Services Commission meeting was called to order by Deputy City Clerk Linda Mendenhall at 6:05 p.m.

2. Review and Approval of the February 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jerome Brownlee, Jr. made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Jeffrey Rich seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously with an Aye by Members present.

3. Election of 2021 Officers

Ms. Mendenhall inquired if there was a motion to nominate someone on the Commission or to volunteer themselves to serve as Chairperson or Vice Chair. Ms. Mendenhall explained the role of the Chairperson and Vice Chair to the Commission. This Commission needs two volunteers; one for Chair and one for Vice Chair. Mr. Brownlee volunteered to Chair the Commission. Jeffrey Rich volunteered to Vice Chair. Ms. McKillip motioned to accept the volunteerism by Mr. Brownlee as Chair and for Mr. Rich for Vice Chair. Ms. Gerundo seconded the motion. Mr. Brownlee accepted the motion for the Chair position and Mr. Rich accepted the motion for the Vice Chair position. The Chair and Vice Chair positions were approved unanimously with an Aye by Members present.

4. Libraries Division Updates

Ms. Lawler presented an overview of current library programs and activities, community partner programming, and plans for the Fall 2021. Ms. Lawler discussed in-person programming with storytime at both locations, splash pad meetups, police station meetups, adult crafting, movies in the Council Chambers, and the new storywalk installation at the Civic Center. Ms. Lawler described the libraries virtual programs with More2Explore STEAM kits, teen crafting kits, preschool storytimes, and citizen science. Citizen science includes a virtual planetarium, ecosystem investigators, robots on Mars, dry

stream mapping and the summer reading program. Ms. Lawler explained that the Arizona Center for Youth Services is one of our community partners that provides GED classes in person, along with English as a Second Language classes (various days/times) at the Sam Garcia Library. Another community partner, Arizona@Work provides job seeker skills and entrepreneurship workshops, and First Things First provides virtual parenting classes. We have many other activities at the libraries that include free internet with hot spots, and chromebooks can be borrowed for 30 days at a time. We also have citizen science checkout kits, dial-a-story and Golden Age Radio, and AviLearning Labs. We offer digital movies with hoopla and digital music with freegal, digital magazines with Overdrive and provide a Kids Café to feed hungry kids as needed. Currently, we are coordinating a library card drive with schools and community organizations. Our goal is for all children in the Avondale School district to have a library card. We continue to visit schools and classrooms for storytime and research training, and attend specially planned events. Mr. Rich inquired how one would volunteer at the library. Ms. Lawler stated that those with interest in volunteering could contact her directly. Ms. Gerundo inquired if GED classes were provided in Spanish and English. Ms. Lawler stated that the classes are bilingual. Ms. McKillip gave kudos to the library programs for her children. Ms. White gave kudos for the library programs and inquired if the cards expire. Ms. Lawler stated that they were extended with COVID and are currently for one year; however they are working towards finding out what makes sense for the patrons. Ms. White would like the cards to be forever active. Ms. Lawler will take the recommendation into consideration.

5. Senior Center Updates

Ms. Lutz presented the Avondale Senior Services Program and its integration into the new building. Ms. Lutz shared the senior services mission statement and discussed the areas and populations we serve. Ms. Lutz discussed our grant from the Area Agency on Aging and its funding. Our Senior Center provides services to residents of Avondale, Goodyear and Litchfield Park. These services include congregate meals, home delivered meals, transportation to and from the center, and daily activities. We provide services to participants aged 60 and above; and also for those with disabilities. Our transportation boundaries are 107th Avenue up to south side of Camelback Road and over to the east side of Sarivel Avenue and down to the north side of Southern Avenue. We also provide St. Mary's Supplemental Food programs to the community-at large. Our home delivered meals include a wellness check on the residents. Often this visit may be the only time that the resident may see or speak to someone in person. This wellness greeting has proved to be beneficial to our participants and their well-being. Ms. Lutz stated that we have almost doubled our numbers for home delivered meals this year. Over 47,000 meals were prepared and delivered to clients this year. This program saw a significant increase of 42% from the 31,700 served last year due to COVID. Over 14,000 participants engaged in virtual and in-person programming this year. Over 4,600 meals were delivered to participants who normally receive transportation to the center. Over 13,800 people received supplemental food through the St. Mary's Programs and over 70% of our participants are Avondale residents. Unique COVID programming included personal phone calls to seniors with information regarding COVID and help and health through personal connections. We put together an outdoor omelet station, exercises in the park for a safe COVID activity, phone and zoom programs, a welcome back tour, veteran's BBQ, and to go crafts. We will work with the libraries and focus heavily this year on efforts to get technology training for our seniors to help them understand zoom and smart phone programming. We are currently offering a limited in-person program for up to 30 people. We are looking to expand our in-person programming slowly to keep our seniors safe and to stay in protocol with safety policies. Ms. McKillip inquired if the school Key Clubs could be a participant for intergenerational programs with the seniors. Ms. Lutz responded that we were working with Key Clubs in the past and they were a lot of fun. We hope to get back with them again this year. Ms. McKillip will contact Ms. Lutz for opportunities. Ms. Lutz shared her contact information. Ms. McMullen stated that she is very proud of the senior center and encouraged Ms. Lutz to continue. Ms. White stated that she and her family are grateful for all of the programming available to the seniors,

including the wellness checkups. Ms. Lutz shared the website address and phone number for any ideas and/or information on the senior programs.

6. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Baltierrez discussed inviting Economic Development to provide an update at the next meeting, scheduled for September 29, if staff are available. The Commission expressed interest in hearing about all of the new development in the city.

7. Announcements

Ms. Baltierrez announced that the Libraries' summer reading program is up and going. If you are interested in participating in this exciting program, please feel free to contact the library for details. The back to school backpack distributions is scheduled for July 1 at Palm Valley Church. This event will supply over 350 children with items for the school year. The heat relief station at the Resource Center and Libraries is up and going. To date, we have distributed over 1,800 water bottles. The heat relief stations opened on May 1 and are scheduled to continue until September 30.

8. Call to the Public

No members of the public were on the call.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Jeffrey Rich made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Ms. Dawn Gerundo. The motion passed unanimously with an Aye by Members present. The meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Signature of approval:


Jerome B Brownlee, Jr (Oct 2, 2021 11:17 PDT)

Chairperson

Next meeting, 6:00 p.m. – Avondale City Hall – September 29, 2021