



**STERLING HEIGHTS CommUNITY Alliance**  
**Minutes of Wednesday, May 18, 2022 Meeting**  
**Location: City Hall**

Members Present: Stacy Bahri, Cindy Bjornson, Ricardo Harris, Sarah Itoh, Nakia Powell-Thomas and Rich Rubba

Members Absent: Tim Doppel

Representing the City: Melanie Davis

**Meeting called to order at 6 :06 p.m.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES :**

**Motion** to approve the meeting minutes of the April 20, 2022 CommUNITY Alliance made by R. Rubba; Seconded by: S. Bahri and voted all in favor.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- A. Pride Flag Raising Ceremony** - M. Davis thanked C. Bjornson for coming to the May 17 council meeting to speak in support of the resolution to designate June 2022 as Pride Month in the city of Sterling Heights. Council approved the resolution, and as part of this recognition, M. Davis noted the City will be hosting a Pride Flag Raising Ceremony on June 7 at 6 p.m. with the mayor and city council at the City Hall flagpole. C. Bjornson confirmed she will attend on behalf of the Alliance and make brief remarks. M. Davis noted that representatives from Macomb County Pride may also be in attendance.
- B. Memorial Day Parade** - M. Davis asked Alliance members if they would like to march in the City's 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Memorial Day Parade on May 30 and provided specifics about the commitment. C. Bjornson said she was participate and look into purchasing candy to hand out. R. Rubba said he would attend and possibly bring his wife. N. Powell-Thomas said she would attend with her two daughters. R. Harris said he would attend.
- C. Strategic Plan Updates**
  - a. Resolution and Social Media Calendars - M. Davis noted that the Pride Month and National Gun Violence Awareness resolutions were approved at the May 17 council meeting, and the Juneteenth resolution is on the June 7 council meeting agenda (she will work

with our African American Coalition to find someone to come and speak in support of it at the meeting). She will work to get the Immigrant Heritage Month and national Men's Health Month on the agenda for the June 21 council meeting. We will plan social media posts on June 21 for National Indigenous Peoples Day and June 28 Pride Day. M. Davis said she believes T. Doppel was working on bullets we could use for each post.

- b. Disability Awareness Workshops - C. Bjornson noted that she will reach out about renting the disability workshop stations. The group's goal is to host a couple stations at the Feb. 24 Cultural Exchange and then do a full blown workshop for the community the following week for March's National Disability Awareness Month. R. Harris recommended we work within well-established events in the future, and the group agreed. M. Davis will ask Parks and Recreation Director if we can have some space at a "summer Thursday" in Dodge Park in summer 2023 to host one of these workshops.
- c. Human Library - C. Bjornson noted that she and M. Davis met with SH Public Library Director Tammy Turgeon and the library's PR / Programming staff Amanda Itria. They loved the idea of hosting a Human Library through the SHPL and agreed to apply to receive approval to utilize the copyright and program with the International Human Library organization. The goal would be to host a table to promote it at the Cultural Exchange and then host a full event on April 13, 2023. Incentives for attending (like a book on diversity) were discussed. More to come.

**OLD BUSINESS:** R. Harris reminded the group to take another look at the checklist / audit for events he had drafted. Per the group's strategic plan, we had hoped to have this complete by the end of June. M. Davis will re-circulate to the group and add it to the June meeting agenda.

**NEW BUSINESS :**

- A. M. Davis updated the Alliance on a new Juneteenth event on June 17 from 5-9 pm in the Dodge Park Farmers Market Pavilion that is being hosted by the City's African American Coalition. This is a first of its kind event in Sterling Heights, and the next closest Juneteenth celebration is in Madison Heights, so this will be a welcome addition to resident offerings.
- B. C. Bjornson noted that Macomb Pride is hosting a Pride Picnic on Sunday, June 26 from noon - 4 p.m. in Dodge Park Pavilion #2. It is "bring your own food" and is intended for LGBTQ+ community members and allies.
- C. M. Davis reminded the group that next month will be S. Itoh's last meeting, and a recommendation has been made to City Council for a resident to fill her position. The group thanked S. Itoh for the work she had put in to helping get the Alliance of the ground.
- D. N. Powell-Thomas recommended that we spend a few minutes at the beginning of each meeting doing some exercises to help us get to know

each other better aside from just the work we come together to do. She will put together a few exercises, and the group agreed to begin doing them at the June meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT** :

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m. on a motion from N. Powell-Thomas seconded by R. Rubba and voted all in favor.