

City of Hyattsville Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2023
6:30 PM – 8 :00 PM

This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call: Committee members

Mai Abdul Rahman (Ward 1)

Melinda Baldwin (Ward 2)

Nicholas Misukanis (Ward 2)

Cynthia Totten (Ward 4)

Deshundria Fortson (Ward 1)

Lisvette Garcia (Ward 1)

Quorum – quorum was reached at 6:41 pm

Attending Council Liaisons?

Emily Strab (Ward 2)

City of Hyattsville Representative:

Colleen Aistis, Community Services Manager

Mai called the meeting to order at 6:41 pm

Approval: September, 25th 2023 meetings minutes. Nicholas moved to approved the minutes, Melinda seconded the motion.

Approval: October 23, 2023 Agenda. Melinda Baldwin moved to approved, Nicholas Misukanis seconded it. The agenda was approved.

1. Approve letter to council: Funding EAC's Back to School event

Mai went through the draft letter and will follow up with additional data. She will send it out when she incorporates the suggestions from the EAC.

2. Status report: Educational Committee Grant Program?

In February we will receive grant applications. We talked last month about reaching out to the school principals about their applications.

Mai: Council has approved an increase in grant amounts and the numbers of applications that can be awarded. This year \$750 can be awarded. We want to award the funding in February. Today is the beginning of the second quarter of the school semester. We want the schools to have an opportunity to implement their projects before the end of the school year.

3. Preparing for meeting with Hyattsville School principals

Colleen will send out a “hello” letter to the school principals and the parent liaisons about scheduling a meeting with the school principals.

Mai: She remembers meeting with the school principals in December. The schools have not reported back on the outcomes of the grants. We would like to meet with the principals again about the outcomes of the grants later in the school year. The reporting requirements are very simple and not onerous. We hope to receive reports.

4. Discussion: Middle school teacher recruitment status update

Cynthia: Did not have information about the middle school but heard that Hyattsville Elementary School was going to close today because of a shortage of substitute teachers.

Mai: What can our committee do to help in the recruitment of teachers?

Deshundria: Why are teachers are leaving? We need to better understand about the process of recruitment and retention in the Middle School. She requested that we think about how we can be of assistance.

Nicholas: Would it be helpful to reach out to the principals to find out more information about the process?

Cynthia: Talking to the principals would be very helpful.

5. Update: Youth center?

Colleen: There were permitting agency with the County. They have been talking about issues with youth about the interior and exterior.

Emily: Conservative estimates indicate the Center should be ready at the beginning of next calendar year.

6. Discussion: Free lunch/Title I School Designation

If you have 17% of your population, the entire school is designated as eligible for free breakfast and lunch. In the City of Hyattsville, the school of Ridge Crest has 97% of its students are below the poverty line. The entire school receives free breakfast and lunch and are designated as a community school.

Colleen: We do food distributions in the Hyattsville. “Perly” has connections to obtain and distribute food. She requested to discuss this topic more in depth with Mai before moving forward.

7. Update: Youth fall program

Colleen: We offer tutoring two days a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are three early dismissals. The teen center is planning a miniature golf and pizza event. The City is reaching out to the youth advisory committee to have the youth more involved in service activities. They may start with the student government organizations as a beginning. She would like to have something together in the service area by January 2024.

Mai: She would like to know more about the youth advisory committee. What are the expectations of the participants?

Colleen: The youth advisory group isn't up and running well enough to participate in the EAC in the near future although it may happen in the near future. She reported that there have been trust exercises and the youth talk about their concerns about Hyattsville, for example, the levels of crime in the schools, the lateness of the school bus service, and seeing themselves as residents of the city. They are coalescing as a group and the plan is to advise the City Council.

8. Public comment

The intern that has been working the EAC is leaving last month. She has helped us coordinate data collection. We will really miss her. She has done amazing work and has been so very helpful in all of the activities. She hopes to be involved in legislative policy when she returns to Korea.

Nicholas motioned to adjourn, Cynthia seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.