

# MAYOR'S HISPANIC AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD (MHAAB)



## MHAAB MEETING MINUTES (amended)

**Tuesday, May 20, 2025, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM**

Main Library/First Floor Lounge/303 N Laura Street

**Mission:** *“The main purpose of the Board is to advocate on behalf of the Hispanic American Community and to provide a means by which the City may obtain information, guidance and advice on the issues facing the Hispanic American Community”*

**Members Present:** Pablo Diaz De Sandi, Nicole Landa, Sabrina Marcos Smith, Anamaria Contreras, Aida Seeraj & Carmen Martinez

**Staff Present and Outreach Coordinator:** Kara Tucker. Tamika Gloston & Tereese Goodloe

**Guest Present:** Arlene Ortiz (Outreach Advocate), Maribel Hernandez (COJ & Toast Masters), Jose Alvaro (JSO), Dustin Arceneaux (Tabacco Free Jacksonville)

### **I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance:**

Approximately at 11:56 am by Pablo Diaz De Sandi

### **II. Board Updates/Chair opening statement:**

- Zergihno resigned at the last meeting
- Election held, Pablo appointed as Chair
- Will nominate a vice-chair
- The board is going to have a lot of work to do
- Subcommittees need to get going
  - Board purpose to support the Hispanic community
  - Ask that we do a couple of more subcommittees
  - Welcome anyone who is willing to put effort forward
  - Escalating to the mayor's office to give us a full board
  - Need the rest of the Board Members to help

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- Would like to have an Outreach Committee

*Pledge of Allegiance & Introductions done after opening statements*

- III. **Motion to approve Agenda/Change to Agenda:** by Pablo Diaz de Sandi, states *few additions to the agenda, after minutes, brief 10 presentation from Maribel Hernandez about Toast Masters. Before New Business/Old Business, guest speaker from the office of the Florida Guardian Ad Litem moved the motion to **approve the agenda with changes**, motion moved by: Carmen Martinez, seconded by: Anamaria Contreras, all agreed.*

- IV. **Guest Presentation:** Maribel Hernandez, COJ Grants & contract Compliance, and Toast Masters

**City Grants:**

- Public Service Grants – up to \$125k for larger non-profits, in business for 3years
- Smaller non-profits, \$20k, in business for 1 year
- Meet with your local council person
  - Ken Amario
  - Raul Arias

Question from Anamaria Contreras: *Are the grants only for non-profits?*

Answer: *for the most part they are for non-profit however when you meet with your city council person they get like a million dollars each and they decide who they want to give that to*

**Toast Masters:** An international organization that helps you improve your speaking and communication skills and Leadership skills

- In Latino community if you do not articulate well, sometimes it's disrespected, and it comes across as if you lack intelligence
- Social Stereotype if you don't speak English very well, you must not be very intelligent
- About 200 clubs in the Jacksonville area

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- A safe environment that allows people to practice, improve and build confidence where when you own your own business it'll give the credibility you need
- Toast Masters over 100yrs old, 5013c, headquartered in CA, recently moved to Colorado has over 270k members worldwide
- Once you're Toast Masters, you're a family, it is an organization that helps each other
- Southside Multicultural Club (Maribel's Club), we focus on people who where English is not their first language, but we also have members where English is their first language
- Meet twice a month, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 6:30pm – 8:30pm at <sup>1</sup>Holy Rosery Catholic Church on Baymeadows & Southside Blvd
- Membership funds (\$10/month) go directly into Toast Masters
- 3 main parts to meetings:
  - Prepared speeches
  - Feedback (on the prepared speeches)
  - Table Topics – where you have 1-2 minutes to answer a question (you don't know what question they are going to ask)
- Encouraging people to look for a club to join or visit and see if it works for you

Pablo Diaz De Sandi gave recognition to Maribel Hernandez for everything she does in the Public Service Grants area, states she is a huge advocate in the Hispanic community

## V. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- Moved by: Sabrina Marcos Smith to approve minutes from: May 20, 2025. Second by: Anamaria Contreras.  
Discussion:

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<sup>1</sup> Correction: Holy Family Catholic Church

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- Change before approving minutes by Pablo states previously discussed having the meetings broadcast over zoom and having equipment available for presentations
  - Kara states we have equipment but need zoom link from Pablo and need to update bylaws
  - No other changes: all are in favor of approving minutes with changes.
- Guest Presentation:** Samari Franco, Florida Guardian Ad Litem Office –  
A state agency that represents children from within court and the communities
- Recruiting for volunteers, mentors, and Pro Bono Attorney's
  - Join our multi-disciplinary team which includes:
    - A child welfare professional
    - A volunteer from within the community
      - visit the child once a month at their foster home
      - find out the child's needs
      - Every 2-3 months, advocate for those needs in court
    - An attorney in the Florida Guardian office
  - Everyone will be collaborating to represent the child
  - Mentorship initiative -
    - No court
    - Paired with a youth over the age of 15
    - Help that youth transition over into adulthood
  - Information sessions via zoom – monthly,
  - Interested – contact Samari Franco for registration link
  - Over 14,000 children (over 49% are males) that belong to the agency, approximately 500 active volunteers
  - Currently partnering with law enforcement and fire rescue
- Question by Carmen Martinez: *what kind of screening do you do for the volunteers and mentors*

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*Answer: we do level 2 background checks and face to face interview, vetting process*

## **VI. Old Business:**

- Financial Workshop – initiative from the previous

## **VII. Staff Updates:** Kara Tucker, Board Liaison.

- Unidos Jax 2025 - September 25<sup>th</sup>
  - at the Main Library - multiple levels of Library:
    - Multipurpose Room, Auditorium, & the Roof
  - The first meeting was held on the 18th
  - Representation from the board
- New Membership applications:
  - Sent to the Mayor's office
  - 2 still under review, 1 appointed
  - Still have 1 seat
- End of Year Report – will send out “as is”
  - Sabrina will review before we send
  - If you have things you want to feature in the 2025 report, send it in

## **VIII. Outreach Coordinator updates:** Yanira “YaYa” Cardona

- Hispanic JSEB update
- Community Resource Guide update
- Know Your Rights Seminar update

## **IX. Subcommittee Update(s):**

Did not have any meetings, Discussion Started:

On Education Healthcare & Wellness Subcommittee – schedule for next week?

- Aida asked if they could meet via zoom
  - Per bylaws must have quorum in room
  - Must be at a city location
  - If meeting before MHAAB must be at least an hour before

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- Must be notified and staff present
  - Pablo requests a full report by the next meeting
- Sabrina would like to assist with rewriting the bylaws
- Pablo nominated Sabrina Marcos as Vice Chair
  - Sabrina requests a recap of the vice chair role before accepting
  - A briefing on the roles was given by Pablo & Kara
  - Nomination accepted by Sabrina, no other nominations
  - Motioned by Aida, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anamaria, all accepted

*Social Media & Business – Pablo Diaz de Sandi, Chair*

*Education Healthcare & Wellness – Aida Seeraj, Chair*

*Public Safety & Faith – Need a Chair & members*

## **X. Events:**

- Unidos Jax – Pablo states would really like the Board to be very involved
  - Would like a committee that does fund raisers for this event and others, not just for Board stuff but for things like Jax Community Fair
  - Need tablecloth and business cards to represent in the right way
- Achieving the Dream Scholarship Award
  - Last Friday, May 16, 2025
  - Representation from a lot of Hispanic organizations
- Excellence in Business Gala
  - During Hispanic Heritage Month
- Jax Community Fair Part II - Arlene
  - Have a list of people who commit to be there again

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- October 4<sup>th</sup> – Hispanic Heritage Month
- Need more businesses to help with sponsorships
- Will have car clubs & motorcycles
- Need volunteers
- Inspire to Rise Block Party – Aida
  - Lots of vendors & family friendly activities:
    - Bounce Houses, Rock Wall, Water Slides, face painting, food, music (DJ), etc.
    - About 200 people attended, about 60% Hispanic
    - Great coverage from All That News
    - Distributed a lot of Narcan & diapers
  - UF Health Event hosted by Inspire to Rise
    - Hispanic Focus – maternal child health
    - Focus on toxic stress
    - Postpartum depression
    - Only about 20 people, completely in Spanish
  - House of Representatives reached out to Inspire to Rise for us to host a Baby Shower/Block Party Event, so in the planning process for that, coming soon
  - Annual Back to School Event coming
    - 600 people last year
    - Lots of vendors
    - Rock Walk this year and Dunk Tank
    - August 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - Miller Electric reached out to sponsor
    - Expecting 6-700 this year
    - Need volunteers

*Before closing the Events section of agenda/looking over bylaws – Pablo Diaz de Sandi*

# MAYOR'S HISPANIC AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD (MHAAB)



- 3 main purposes as a Board for the Mayor & Hispanic Community
  - Act as a liaison between the city government and the mayor
  - Report to the mayor anytime with necessary findings or accommodations
  - encourage & solicit corporation in entities to develop and assist the Hispanic community
- will have a draft letter to the mayor by next meeting of what we as a Board are hearing from the Hispanic community:
  - Temporary protected status is being eliminated for some people
  - People are scared whether they're here illegally or not of the authorities and ICE coming to their door and knocking it down and dragging them out
  - Being discriminated against by how they look or where they're standing outside of Home Depot or Lowes and being targeted by how they speak and whether they (we) have an accent
    - \* There's a lot of things being moved in government and laws that are progressing through the state legislators and locally
    - \* We will review and vote on letter before sending it to the mayor

Comment by Arlene: states very sad who is reporting, sometimes it's the same Hispanic people, if you have a business, sometimes the competition will call and accuse the other person

## **XI. Public Comment: *No speaker card however will give 2mins:***

- Miguel Garcia – membership consultant for Arch well Health



## MAYOR'S HISPANIC AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD (MHAAB)



- New primary care in doctors' offices for seniors 60yrs plus who have Medicare Advantage
- Grand opening for the Arlington location
- May 28<sup>th</sup> from 11am – 1pm
- 6 offices in Jacksonville
- Same day appointments
- 24/7 appointment line
- Focus more on personalized care, labs in office
- Christian – Loan Officer with First Federal Bank & Ordained Minister
  - Cater to the community through the programs at First Federal
  - A community Advocate, does a lot for the community
  - Started as a loan officer, now a Community Loan Officer

**XII. Adjourn** – at 1:19pm, motioned by Sabrina, seconded by Nicole

# MAYOR'S HISPANIC AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD (MHAAB)



**Chair:** Pablo Diaz de Sandi | **Vice-Chair:** Sabrina Marcos Smith

**Members:** Anamaria Contreras | *Jose Cueto* | *Jorge Hernandez*  
Nicole Landa | Jorge Lopez | *Adam Madrid* | Dr. Carmen Martinez  
*Diana Sandoval* | Aida Seeraj

**City of Jacksonville, DSD (904) 255-5466**