

CITY OF COMMERCE
SPECIAL NEEDS COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD JULY 18, 2018, 6:30 P. M.
City Council Chambers

Call to Order

Chairperson Bojorquez called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Flag Salute and Invocation

Commissioner Cisneros

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bojorquez; Cisneros; Madrigal; Lozano-Gonzalez;

Commissioners Not Present: Villa

Staff Present: Liaison Moyra Garcia, Senior Office Specialist, Liz Chavez

Staff Not Present: None

Public Comment

Ulysses Gonzalez, resident of Commerce, CA, stated that the Color Run Event held on June 15th, was a great event. He thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for doing a good job. He recommended that next year they have more obstacle courses; provide interpreters; subtitles for the movie. The Commissioners thanked him for his comments.

SCHEDULED MATTERS

1. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Bojorquez motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting held June 20, 2018. Chairperson Madrigal seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. MELA Counseling Services Center, Inc.

Alexander Delgado, Registered Counselor, gave a presentation on the services they provide. MELA is a non-profit organization that started in 1993. They are located in East Los Angeles off of Gerhart. The program works with individuals who have an addiction to drug and alcohol abuse. Counseling services are offered from age 12 to adulthood. Counselors provide advice on how they can control their need to use drugs and/or alcohol, by teaching them self-esteem, life skills, health education etc. They are also encouraged to join support groups. All Counselors are credited by CCAPS and RC.

MELA works with Probation Officers; DPSS; Gain/Cal-Works, etc. MELA provides tokens to their clients, but will be looking into tap cards which allows them to use other means of transportation besides the bus; Metro Train.

Programs offered:

- The 12 Step Program
- Youth Program – 13-17
- Adult Program - 18 and older
- Narcotics Anonymous Support Groups
- Alumni Support Team
- Substance Abuse
- Anger Management/Parenting
- Anger Management for youth.

Other services MELA will provide in the near future: LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender; Support Groups for Autism.

Commissioners asked the following questions: What does LGBT stand for? How do youth (13-17) programs work? Does the agency go to the schools? What types of Insurance do they accept? Is there a fee for the classes? What type of services are offered for walk-ins? Can this Agency be added to the Special Needs Commission website?

The Presenter answered all the Commissioners questions and the Commissioners thanked him for the presentation.

3. Staff Reports

Liaison Garcia reported the following:

- Liaison Garcia informed the Commissioners on the two letters they requested.

- **1. Thank you letter to Parks and Recreation.**

A sample thank you letter to Parks and Recreation was handed out to all Commissioners for their review and approval. Commissioner Bojorquez made a motion to approve the letter. All Commissioners were in favor. Motion passed.

Liaison Garcia mentioned to the Commissioners that she would address the Pros and Cons and concerns of the Abilities Walk to Parks and Recreation staff and get back to the Commissioners on the outcome.

Commissioner Cisneros made a comment that she would like for the Commission to pick two important items that they could concentrate on and complete as a group. Liaison Garcia asked the Commissioners to look over the minutes of the second meeting, to see which goals they would like to work on

and present them at the next Commission meeting in August. All Commissioners were in favor.

2. Letter to Council: Adding sub-titles to all movies.

After speaking to the City Clerk: In order to get approval from Council it would have to be addressed as an item on the Agenda. Commissioner Bojorquez made a motion to further discuss the matter at next month's meeting in August. All Commissioners were in favor. Motion passed.

Liaison Garcia mentioned to the Commissioners that Robin Sullivan, from the Stuttering Foundation is willing to come and make a presentation in August, and California Mentors had also expressed an interest as well. Liaison Garcia asked the Commissioners which agency they would prefer and all the Commissioners suggested to having both presenters come in August. Commissioner Bojorquez made a motion to approve two presenters at next month's meeting. All Commissioners were in favor. Motion passed.

4. Commission Reports

Commissioner Mai Madrigal reported the following:

- Commissioner Madrigal stated that she took her boys to the Studio Movie Grill Theatre in Downey. She mentioned that once a month on Saturday's at 11:00 a.m., they show movies for children that have autism. It wasn't as loud as other theatres usually get and her sons enjoyed the movie. She asked to have the link put on the Special Needs Commission Website.

Commissioner Erika Bojorquez reported the following:

- Commissioner Bojorquez stated that she was online and saw a statement that was said by Councilman Leonard Mendoza, which she found to be extremely offensive. It was in regards to name calling and using the "R" word. Commissioner Bojorquez said that she could not believe that a Councilmember could use such language, when knowing that there is a Special Needs Commission that is here to address concerns and help children with Special Needs. Commissioner Bojorquez wanted to let the rest of the Commissioners know, to see what they can do in addressing the issue. Liaison Garcia mentioned that they could contact the City Clerk's Office or they could contact the City Administrator. Liaison Garcia also suggested that as a Commission we could bring awareness to the community by joining the "R" campaign in the month of April.

Commissioner Susana Cisneros reported the following:

- Commission Cisneros stated that she, her husband and son went up to Camp Commerce and was a wonderful experience for them. It was a much needed mini get away. She stated that she was very appreciative that her son participated in activities with other children. By the second day the children and their families were interested in learning more about her son's diagnosis to make them more aware of how to address themselves to other children of his capacity. She stated that it was a good opportunity to raise more awareness to the community. She was very thankful and grateful for the opportunity to have her son participate with other children in various activities.
- **Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez reported the following:**
Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez stated that she was also going up to Camp Commerce with her family as well. She mentioned that she would like to see how they can promote to have Sign Language classes held. She would like to present this on the Agenda for further discussion. Liaison Garcia mentioned that she should put a proposal together with information as to who would teach the classes; what would the classes entail; what the cost would be; how long would the classes last, etc. Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez also mentioned that the Abilities Walk was focused more on "Beginning of Summer" theme rather than on Special Needs. Liaison Garcia mentioned that she had spoken with Park staff about that as well.

Adjournment

Chairperson Bojorquez adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.