

## **MINUTES – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **IRVING CONVENTION CENTER**

**Tuesday, July 9, 2024**

Those in attendance were Committee Chair Colvin Gibson, Board Chair Richard Stewart, Jr., Yasir Arafat, David Cole, and Cambria Jones, – Committee members; Carol Boyer, Anabel Espinoza, Maura Gast, Diana Pfaff, and Susan Rose – ICVB staff.

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. There were no citizen comments.

Gibson asked for a motion to approve the Community Engagement Committee meeting minutes of April 16, 2024. On a motion from Board Chair Richard Stewart, Jr., and a second from Board member David Cole, the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN – COMMITTEE UPDATES**

##### **HIGH SPIRITED CITIZEN PROGRAM**

##### **Nominations and Recommendations**

Gibson noted there were additional nominations submitted after the packet was posted on the Board portal. A complete packet of nomination forms and information was distributed to the Committee.

- Dixie Morton Caraway – The nomination form submitted by Phyllis Franklin was reviewed by the Committee. It was noted Dixie is part of the original Bear Creek Sam Morton family, who are phenomenal contributors to the community. On a motion from Board Committee member David Cole and a second from Board Chair Richard Stewart, Jr., this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Karen Cooperstein – The nomination form submitted by Debbi Haacke was reviewed. On a motion from Cole, and a second from Committee Vice Chair Yasir Arafat, this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Chuck Cooperstein – This nomination form submitted by Diana Pfaff was reviewed. On a motion from Cole, and a second from Committee Vice Chair Yasir Arafat, this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Michael Corty – The nomination form submitted by Sgt. Harvey Rubealcaba and David Cole was reviewed. His dedication with students, especially during COVID was discussed and the extra efforts were considered volunteerism. On a motion from Cole, and a second from Stewart, this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Juan Carlos Gonzalez – The nomination form submitted by Sam Reed was reviewed. Gast added Gonzalez received the Townsell Award given at an ICVB Annual Meeting for bringing the National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Conference to Irving. On a motion from Cole, and a second from Arafat, this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Nancy Payne – The nomination form submitted by Debbi Haacke was reviewed. Discussion was held on her passion for the environment in the community and it was noted she is an unsung hero. On a motion from Cole and a second from Stewart, this nomination was unanimously accepted.
- Delia Watley – The nomination form submitted by Annette French was reviewed. On a motion from Cole, and a second from Arafat, this nomination was unanimously accepted.

Previous and Pending Nominations:

- Saeed Purcell – The nomination form submitted by Yasir Arafat was reviewed again by the Committee. Additional information was previously requested to be able to review his volunteer work versus his employment responsibilities. Assistant Executive Director Marketing and Communications Diana Pfaff gave the Committee additional information on Purcell's volunteer activities. Gast also noted that Purcell has presented to the City's Diversity Inclusion Committee program. Arafat added he has worked with Purcell with a Food Bank program. Purcell organizes the volunteers and places the food order for distribution. The Committee agreed anything that goes above and beyond serving the community outside his occupation, i.e., the food bank program is 100% a volunteer activity. The Committee further discussed relevance of the length of time a nominee has been an Irving resident and noted there is nothing that references time in Irving and/or age as a qualifier for the High Spirited Citizen award.

On a motion from Cole, and a second from Stewart, the Purcell nomination was unanimously accepted.

- Pastor Robert D. Robinson – This nomination was previously presented to the Committee. Pfaff reviewed additional volunteer information that was collected. The nomination was submitted by Pontress Tousant. It was agreed to table this nomination for further information.

ACTION ITEM: Pfaff to verify if Robinson is presently residing in Irving and when his church moved to Arlington, Texas.

The Committee agreed to close the nomination process for 2024 and will note on the website nominations are closed and will reopen in January 2025.

Discussion was held on the sensitivity of candidate nominations who are not well known in the community and unsung heroes that can present sensitive situations. Cole noted it is a celebration of the diversity in Irving and the great volunteers that serve the community. Stewart stated nominations are processed at the Committee level, and suggested if there is still a concern, he should be the person to address that conversation. Gibson suggested once the Board takes action for approval, the forms and additional data can be presented with all the data received and sent to City Council for their weekly packets. The High Spirited Luncheon is scheduled for October 25 at the Irving Convention Center.

ACTION ITEM: Gast to poll the Committee for an agreeable date in August (before the August Executive Committee and Board meeting) to review the pending nomination and gather any feedback or additional questions on individual nominations.

IRVING SCHOOLS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

- This year's ICVB scholarship recipient, Elizabeth Philips is going to Colorado State in the Hospitality program. Gast received a handwritten Thank You note from Philips and shared with the Committee.
- The *Breakfast of the Stars* event is an excellent program and a tremendous and valued partner.

#### COMMITTEE ACTIVATION

- Heritage Society Fish Fry – May 10 was a good first effort for ICVB presence at the event. Cole added the event coordinator, Gary Westerman, was very appreciative of the ICVB support. Gibson noted it was a good crowd and ticket sales were high this year, and it will be a good event to continue to support for the Board.
- City Holiday Parade – The Committee discussed if the ICVB presence with the horse-drawn carriage is enough and if the audience is aware. It was suggested to have a walking banner before the horse-drawn carriage for a more pronounced ICVB awareness. An LED sign was also suggested. Thoughts were shared on the possibility of doing more in the parade; i.e, giving out candy or small toys. .It was noted there were candy zones and non-candy zones during the July 4 parade. The Committee will discuss this possibility further.

#### CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

There is no City Council update at this time.

#### COMMITTEE CHAIR AND STAFF COMMENTS

- In reference to the item of expanding the Committee to volunteers and non-ICVB Board members, Gibson noted the item has been tabled several times. After the City's new guidelines for new Board members in terms of Conflict of Interest and Training, it was concluded not pursue this item any further.
- Gast reported she and City of Irving Economic Development Manager Brian Hayward will host the Irving 360 Academy group on October 15 as part of the Economic Development night for the program.

The next regular Community Engagement Committee meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2024. Gibson adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME  
Executive Director