



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to A.R.S. 38.431.02, notice was given on November 18, 2024, to the officers of the Metropolitan Education Commission and to the public, that **the Metropolitan Education Commission Board of Directors would hold a Zoom meeting on Monday, November 25, 2024, convening at 4:30 p.m.**

1. Call to Order

Hanna

Meeting called to order by Mark Hanna at 4:38 p.m.

2. Chair Report

Hanna

2.1. Welcome and chair report

2.1.1. Success of Teen Town Hall

Chair Hanna and Comm. Perez expressed sentiments regarding the high turnout of students, educators, elected officials, and supporting volunteers and agencies, on the occasion. Comm. Perez will go into more detail regarding the Teen Town Hall in the anticipated Commission Meeting on December 3, 2024.

2.1.2. Anticipated evaluation of Executive Director

Chair Hanna expressed his intention to distribute feedback of the Board regarding an evaluation and an official collection of feedback through the evaluation, on the performance of the Executive Director.

Perez

2.2. Consent Agenda

2.2.1. Approve October (10.1.2024) Board Meeting Minutes.

2.2.2. Approve amendment to University of Arizona Federal Work Study Allocation of \$15,300.00 in wages and \$1,178.10 in payroll taxes to \$13,600.00 in wages and \$1,047.20 in payroll taxes for the (1) Community Engagement Associate.

2.2.3. Approve acceptance of (2) forthcoming University of Arizona Federal Work Study Allocations of \$13,600.00 in wages and \$1,047.20 in payroll taxes for (1) Marketing & Communications Associate and (1) College Readiness Associate.

Perez

2.2.4. Review of October Pima County Outside Agency Expenditure Report and Invoice.

Clarification regarding the origin of Federal Work Study funds and the process of reimbursement was sought by Mark Hanna. Rocque Perez explained that the University of Arizona has afforded MEC the opportunity to hire 3 federal work study eligible students, wherein MEC fronts the cost of gross wages and is reimbursed 100% at the conclusion of each month. Treya Allen is asked where MEC would station these students to which Rocque Perez confirmed they would work in a hybrid format, working remote and in-office at the Santa Rosa Center.

Approval of Consent Agenda motioned by Comm. Hanna and seconded by Comm. Blumenthal. All Board Members of the Commission voted in favor.

3. Budget Review

3.1. Review and Amend Budget

- 3.1.1. Approve amendment to Misc. Mental Health & Wellness Programming allocation of \$2750.00 to \$0.00 to increase Insurance allocation of \$2,200.00 to \$4,950.00, to cover renewed coverages of Philadelphia Insurance Company, per 2024-2025 contract renewal with Pima County.

Comm. Perez explained that insurance coverages required per the MEC's 2024-2025 contract with Pima County, in addition those for workers compensation, were automatically renewed, however were unanticipated costs at that point in time. As such, they were not reflected in MEC's budget for the current fiscal year. Comm. Perez recommended to the board to divert funds from unrestricted allocations to Arts & Literacy, and Mental and Physical Health. Comm. Allen objected to the diversion of any funds from existing Mental and Physical Health allocations and urged Comm. Perez to consider looking elsewhere. Comm. Hanna also recommended the exploration of other alternatives. Comm. Perez explained due to scarce unrestricted funds not earmarked for other priorities per its agreement with Pima County and sponsorships by Vantage West, marketing and advertising funds must be pulled from areas without a dedicated purpose. Comm. Hanna suggested the MEC formulate a plan to ensure all allocated funds have a dedicated purpose. Comm. Perez noted all funds have an area of anticipated use as outlined in the budget, but there is additional time for cultivating sponsorships to supplement the need of these funds until the Spring.

Comm. Hanna motioned to approve a review of all allocations and to reduce as needed to compensate for the unanticipated insurance expense. Motion seconded by Comm. Ferre. Comm. Allen was the only opposing vote.

***On Nov 26, 2024, City of Tucson Council Member Richard Fimbres afforded the MEC \$5,000 in ARPA funds, which would help retain funds in the area of Mental and Physical Health at a share of \$1,200, equal to the like item in Arts & Literacy.*

4. Resolution No. 2024-004

- 4.1. Discuss and approve Resolution No. 2024-004 for consideration by the Commission.

Comm. Perez introduced a singular resolution calling on the City of Tucson and Pima County to migrate personnel costs of the Commission under either municipality, continue its investment and increase its investment in the Commission, and amend the governance of MEC as a singular body and name as the Board of Educational and Civic Empowerment, presiding over the Center for Educational and Civic Empowerment. The proposed action was that the board approve the resolution for final consideration by the Commission.

Comm. Perez explained that according to its authorizing documents, it is customary that MEC make a formal request of the City and County regarding funding. However, this year presents the unique addition of a long-term consideration on a sustained investment by either party undertaking the role of the executive director within a new title under local government. Chair Hanna expressed concerns regarding the share of the City's investment, with fear of a continued unequal undertaking by the County. Chair Hanna also expressed concern over whether the Pima County Board of Supervisors will consider an increase in its footprint during what he perceives as a period of reducing government. Comm. Allen expressed confusion regarding the first reduction in Commission members, and another anticipated reduction, in addition to the proposed name change. Comm. Allen expressed that though the name includes civic empowerment, the substance of the resolution also includes civic engagement, which she felt would align with a push of

patriotism on youth that she feels is non-desirable. Comm. Allen also expressed a concern in the Board considering the resolution over the Commission.

Comm. Perez explained the agenda item was introduced with the intention of discussing and arriving at a final iteration in the form of a Board recommendation to be forwarded for consideration by the Commission. However, the focal points of the resolution remain open for discussion among the Commission, regardless of the presence or absence of a formal recommendation.

The resolution does not directly request either municipality to undertake the integrated role of the Executive Director. Instead, it asks both to consider a joint approach. Regardless of whether such a request is made, the resolution suggests that new funding sources from the City of Tucson's Housing and Community Development and Economic Initiatives departments could address concerns regarding funding.

The proposal for an additional reduction in membership—from 39 Commission members to 29, and subsequently from 29—was an intentional step noted during the initial reduction and represents a direct request to both the City of Tucson and Pima County.

In light of a streamlined brand identity and concerns expressed by funding organizations—whose support is closely tied to Pima County's request for the MEC to diversify its funding sources—the Commission has an opportunity to redefine its purpose. This redefinition reflects an evolved educational and political landscape, focusing on fulfilling needs in areas such as post-secondary navigational support and civic empowerment. Furthermore, it emphasizes the stipulated investment by the City of Tucson and Pima County in these critical areas.

All Board members present, aside from Comm. Perez, expressed an interest in continued review of the specific asks of the City and County. Comm. Comm. Perez confirmed the focal points of the resolution would be discussed amongst the greater Commission on Dec. 3, 2024. No action was taken by the Board on this item.

5. Adjournment

Hanna

Motion to adjourn by Jake Blumenthal and seconded by Leslie Ferre. All voted in favor. Meeting was adjourned by 5:32 p.m.

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02, notice was given that a meeting will be conducted at the time and date set forth above. Questions, requests for reasonable accommodations or a copy of the agenda could have been directed to Rocque Perez, Executive Director, by calling (520) 462-3806 or emailing rocque@mectucson.org.