

**Plano City Council  
Multicultural Outreach Roundtable  
Joint Meeting  
May 9, 2007**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Mayor Pat Evans  
Scott Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem  
Sally Magnuson, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem  
Shep Stahel  
Loretta Ellerbe  
Harry LaRosiliere  
Jean Callison  
Lee Dunlap

The Council and the Multi-Cultural Outreach Roundtable Committee met informally on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 beginning with a reception at 6:33 p.m. at the Plano Independent School District's Sockwell Center, Dallas Room, 6301 Chapel Hill Boulevard, Plano, Texas. All Council Members were present with the exception of Council Members Stahel and Callison. Council Member Ellerbe left the meeting following the reception.

**The Purpose of this meeting is to discuss ideas and concerns regarding Plano's South Asian, African and Middle Eastern communities.**

Following the reception, Basit Siddiqui, MCOR Co-chair of the Government Relations Sub-Committee welcomed those in attendance and Imam Yaseen Shaikh of Plano Mosque led a recitation.

MCOR Co-chair Dr. Chris Parr spoke to bringing together the leaders of the City and the Muslim community, and to encouraging citizens to offer service to the City. He reviewed the history of MCOR as an advisory group to the City, spoke regarding events including the International Festival and noted the location of the web site for information. Mr. Parr spoke to the group primarily representing Plano American Muslims from South Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Mr. Siddiqui spoke regarding minority representation in the United States and reviewed the history of Muslims in America. He spoke to the ethnicity of the estimated 7 million American Muslims including those of Arab, African American and South-Central Asian decent. Mr. Siddiqui spoke to the religious affiliation of Arab Americans and reviewed notable American Muslims and Arab Americans. He spoke to high education levels, occupations and values that correlate with low crime rates. Mr. Siddiqui recognized the Plano Muslim population including the Plano Masjid (IACC) Islamic Association of Collin County, EPIC (East Plano Islamic Center), IILM (Institute of Islamic Learning) and the Ismaili Jamat Khana.

Mr. Siddiqui reviewed facts regarding the City of Plano including its population, low unemployment rate, income/salary information, median age, amount spent on schools and the low crime rate. He advised regarding race and ethnicity in the City and school district, stating that 12% of the students on the honor roll list of April 2007 at Robinson Middle School are Muslim. Mr. Siddiqui spoke to the voting and religious preferences in Plano, stating that the Muslim population is estimated to be between 10,000 and 15,000. He encouraged membership in MCOR, recognized those in attendance, thanked those providing refreshments and introduced guests present. Mr. Siddiqui thanked City officials and Staff as well as Plano Independent School District representatives for attending.

Mayor Evans spoke to the growing diversity in the City which provides enrichment and benefits for all. She spoke to MCOR being created to encourage individuals to contribute and share their experiences in Plano, to see what needs to be done and solve problems to make the City greater. Mayor Evans spoke to this meeting being a sharing of ideas and to continuing the dialogue. She introduced members of MCOR and spoke to the focus being to make all our lives greater in Plano. Mayor Evans introduced Council Members and Staff in attendance.

The Council and Staff responded to a question regarding what citizens can do to contribute to efforts towards Plano being a Green City, stating that individuals can conserve energy, educate themselves and their neighbors regarding recycling including plastics and cardboard, use landscaping techniques including mulching, reduce time in the shower and apply efforts in the workplace. Council Member LaRosiliere spoke regarding the commitment on the part of the City to be environmentally responsible and show leadership.

The Council was asked regarding provisions of a safe house for women who may need short-term assistance and Mayor Evans spoke to Hope's Door in Plano which serves as a shelter.

The Council was asked about the scheduling of recycling collections and those who may violate watering restrictions. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Magnuson responded that residents may obtain an additional recycling container at no charge and Mayor Evans spoke to reporting those who are not following watering restrictions. The Council was asked about recycling of computer equipment and Ms. Magnuson spoke to taking items to Parkway Service Center. Mayor Pro Tem Johnson spoke to information on the City's web site and to the City responding to increases in requests for services. Mayor Evans spoke regarding paint products that may be obtained at the Parkway Service Center.

Police Chief Rushin responded to a question regarding diversity training for police officers, stating that it is provided at the basic academy as well as in the department and that it is required of both civil and civilian employees. He spoke regarding the process for police hiring including examinations and interviews and to the department's efforts towards minority recruitment.

The Council and Staff was asked what American Muslims can do to enhance understanding of the general public and to allay misperceptions and responded that education is a primary tool as well as involvement in the City by members of the Muslim community. The Council spoke to opportunities for participation, using publications/media for introduction to the community and holding festivals and meetings such as this to encourage open communication. Fire Chief Esparza spoke to providing feedback on City services. The Council spoke to City-sponsored events as an opportunity for cultures to display their uniqueness, encouraged participation in homeowners associations, and spoke to developing one-on-one contacts.

Mayor Evans stated in response to a citizen question, that there are no plans for another high school in east Plano.

Mayor Evans responded to a question about media stereotyping, stating that Plano is working towards a more accepting community. Dr. Parr spoke to the need for leadership in the City by the Islamic community. The Council spoke regarding the Leadership Plano Program, Boards and Commissions, the Police, Fire and Citizens Academies and running for elected office. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Magnuson spoke to the Sister City Program as a tool to help educate peoples of the world on different cultures.

Shaheen Salam spoke regarding her service on the Community Relations Commission. Shanali N. Bhagat spoke to citizens coming forward to help and the importance of involvement by the Muslim Community. Mr. Siddiqui thanked everyone for their attendance and encouraged membership in MCOR. MCOR Co-chair Mary Alice Garza spoke to becoming involved in boards and commissions and Dr. Parr spoke regarding Leadership Plano and the Citizen's Academy.

Mayor Evans introduced additional Staff in attendance and advised that the City is ready to work for the community. There being no further discussion, the meeting was closed at 8:46 p.m.

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**Pat Evans, MAYOR**

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**Diane Zucco, City Secretary**