



MEETING MINUTES
IOWA COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS MEETING
Thursday, April 12 2012
Lucas Building, Room #418
321 E. 12th Street, Des Moines, IA
2:30 to 4:30 P.M.

I Call to Order and Introductions Chair, Sal Alaniz.

The meeting was called to order at 2:44 p.m. by Chair, Sal Alaniz

Present: Sal Alaniz Ramon Cantu
Rebecca Jackson Joan Jaimes (via phone)
Sandra Sanchez
Absent: Paula A. Martinez Alejandro Pino

Public:

Guest Elida Cantu
Fianna Cheng DHR Trainee

= Motions

= action item(s)

II Director's Report Director, San Wong

- Budget for the Department of Human Rights in final stages of the process. This will include some increases in services that are passed on to us and salary rises negotiated by the union.
- Given that some vacancies were not filled this past fiscal year there is a surplus that can be used prior to the end of the fiscal year (June 30th, 2012) and a meeting with Executive Officers will be held to determine what the best use of that surplus is. We can do some small, short term projects. Please provide ideas in how to use the. Alaniz – Do you know what the surplus is? I know what it is now but I will not know the exact amount until next week with better projections. After the Executive Officers have the meeting on the surplus they can share that information with their commissions. Sanchez – So the EO's will then be in the best position to inform what that project can be? Can it be a project in collaboration? Wong – If there is one thing an EO can do, what would that be?
- During the previous meeting (Feb. 2012) information was about reconfiguration of CAS and that the EO of Latino Affairs and of Status of African Americans will support each other.
- Alba Perez was part of a selection committee for the hiring of the new Deputy Director for CAS-DHR. We are hopeful that we can introduce the new Deputy Director at the next Latino Affairs meeting. Sanchez- please share with the Governor's staff or congress that at this time the department has been able to manage it can cause for the department to lose staff due to burn out. In the long run it is more expensive to continue to replace staff. Wong – I have a meeting with the Governor on Tuesday to talk about the budget so I will have an opportunity

to share this input. End of session is near and if commissioners may contact representatives if they wish. Jackson – Do you have any talking points for us to contact our representatives? Wong – I will have Plogmann something together so any one that has that inclination can do that (*a message was sent out to commissioners on 4/24/12*).

- CAS and Executive team (Division administrators for the other two divisions) spent two days at Tero International in team building training.

III Executive Officer's Report Alba Perez

Perez indicated she has developed a report based on the job description of the Executive Officer.

- Participated in the selection committee for the hiring of the new Division Deputy Director position (4/6 & 4/9).
- Programs. In collaboration with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and in benefit of other offices in CAS we are planning a series of presentations during June 26 & 28. Perez reached out to Sanchez to host Maria Flores from EEOC as a guest speaker in the 515 Thursday morning show on 6/28 from 10-11 a.m. The program will be in Spanish and will include a questions portion at the end of the show.

The second programmatic project is the Greater Des Moines Latina Leadership Initiative, a program with two primary purposes: *1- To support young Latina Leaders by providing them with the necessary skills, training, and mentors for personal, professional and community advancement; and 2- To promote heightened awareness of social responsibility and stronger attention to the needs of the broader Hispanic community. The Latina Leadership Initiative provides a unique curriculum and networking opportunities that addresses self-empowerment, teamwork and community building, public speaking, as well as career advancement. The Latina Leadership Initiative is based on the principle that, in addition to fostering personal and professional growth, the development of young Latina leaders will contribute to the Greater Des Moines community.*

- Working on a mailing to employers who send their vacancy notifications to us (either for recruitment or as an EEO compliance letter). The letter in this mailing will refer the employers to the State agency charged with employment, Iowa Workforce Development.
- DHR – Youth Initiatives. To evaluate the impact of our youth programs and to find connections within them to increase their impact. Wong – Shared the purpose drafted by staff that morning: *The Iowa Department of Human Rights positive youth development initiatives will remove barriers to leadership for historically underrepresented youth by empowering youth to realize their leadership capabilities and challenging adults to recognize and engage youth leaders. The department will equip youth with the tools to communicate their vision, inspire collaboration and make significant contributions that result in positive change. DHR has unique state wide responsibility to give youth a voice in government and in promoting the inclusion of diverse prospective in decision making.*
- Website – Streamlined our website but the main piece with Links and Resources is not up yet. Updates will depend who will be charged with it. Currently it is expected EO will learn to use Dreamweaver software.
- Perez is working with community partners (private, nonprofit and education sectors) to create a document that can serve as employer guidelines in the hiring, compensation and usage of bilingual employees. This initiative is a result of service calls and a constant theme in many service related inquiries. Sanchez encourages the commission that after providing those guidelines to our constituents or inquiring employers that for a year or to make a legislative proposal to make it a law. Sanchez will provide Perez with the AFSC's guidelines for bilingual employees. Jackson shared that many more products are being offered to the Spanish speaking public and companies then hire bilingual employees to serve those customers but without guidelines. This initiative can address many issues in creating such guidelines.

- Service calls: Perez is setting up appointments with State agency leaders to re introduce CAS and to nurture relationships for long term collaboration.
- Attending meetings: Latinos Unidos, GDMP Diversity Council, Latino Forum and Latina Leadership Initiative and working on a program for Interns. Attended the Status of African American's commission. Perez wishes to initially attend meetings relevant to the mission of the office and CAS. Jackson thanked Perez for all the work she is doing.

Alaniz asked Sanchez inquired about bilingual policy for AFSC. Does it alter compensation? Sanchez indicated that there are employees, for instance in the judicial system where an employee will say they are bilingual but no one is testing proficiency and sometimes bilingual employees are not being compensated appropriately. Many bilingual employees are overworked and underpaid. Jackson, many times if one indicates one is bilingual many will pile additional duties to that employee. Wong, English Only law is an issue. It was important to test proficiency for the EO Latino Affairs position. Perez also shared that service inquiries to do interpretation and she is to clarify that the realistic expectations of the office. Perez also indicated and clarify to the commission that the office does not do case management and in addition Perez is trying to make use of technology by asking for email addresses, which is working with many constituents. The Partnerships document becomes very helpful in referring callers to the right person. Sanchez indicated that keeping track is important to identify issues. Sanchez also inquired about the interpreters and translators list. Perez indicated that she consulted with the Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association (IITA) to refer inquiries to their directory. Jaimes also inquired about the law that requires a company to hire interpreters. Sanchez, it has to do with the meatpacking workers, Sanchez will find the information and send it to the commission. In addition Sanchez indicated AFSC has a policy and she can share some information.

IV Committee Reports. Committee Chairs

Communications Alba Perez

Perez presented the website on the projector. Perez would like for commissioners to provide a Bio and a headshot to add to the website. Sandra indicated at some point they had thought of Asking graphic designers for help. Wong shared that the all state agencies are going through standardization very soon. Jackson asked if committees be listed with purpose statements and reports? Perez, yes and showed commissioners where this information will be located in the website and the criteria she has set up. Perez also indicated she wishes to help Latinos to develop trust with other State agencies. Wong, our ultimate goal is to get our underrepresented as close as possible to all the resources that is available to everybody. Alaniz, can Iowa Workforce post jobs in Spanish. Wong, probably not. Alaniz, maybe it is our job to develop a relationship with another organization(s) that would provide the information in Spanish. Perez will also host an events page that will be updated once a month and will provide criteria for those requesting events to be added as courtesy of the office of Latino Affairs. Setting criteria will hopefully helps raise the consciousness that in order for their information to be posted they must at least demonstrate to be Latino friendly. Sanchez asked about the links Esquivel had, Perez indicated she harvested what the existing information and checked for links that were no longer "live". In addition Perez categorized by committee for consistency purposes. Alaniz asked if this could be the work of the new communications committee chair, Perez indicated that she had spoken to Juan Rodriguez and he has agreed to chair this committee. Perez is planning to have a Latino Pride in the future. Jackson wondered if it would be helpful to include in the webpage what Perez can help with, general basic things the office can do for them not to discourage them from contacting the office but to help them focused. Sanchez indicated that it is helpful to take the calls and capture the issues. Perez, I can add the duties of the Office of Latino Affairs to the webpage.

Perez, we want to direct Latinos to other agencies. Sanchez, Latinos trust Latino Affairs. Perez, we do want Latinos to develop trust with State of Iowa agencies.

Add duties of EO from code to website.

Per Jackson, please add committees to website. Perez indicated she will add, via DHR's IT department. See updates: <http://www.latinoaffairs.iowa.gov/>

Disproportionate Confinement Paula A. Martinez

Neither report nor a co chair. Perez shared information on her meeting with CJJP. Sanchez indicated in her work that disparity in sentencing of persons of color vs. Caucasian. Wong, Iowa is number one in the country for disproportional in African American man in the justice system? Wong we house information in CJJP. Sanchez, is there an identifier on immigration. Wong, we have on ethnicity.

Education/Gangs/Dropout Ramon Cantu

Cantu, indicated he has an extensive report but will be brief. Cantu indicated he has gathered statistics where an increase in juvenile crime that is group initiated and a trend of gang activity not Iowa grown but also from other states. Many gangs are nationalistic (nationally based gangs, i.e.: México, El Salvador). Law enforcement has been passive. The "wannabes" are the ones causing most of the problems. We need to look at gun laws and access to guns. Department of Justice website about Iowa and a newsfeed that is gang related. The biggest gangs are "Sureño 13" and Sureño 14" with ties to the Mexican drug trade.

Dropout Rate. High school students have no reason to stay in school because they can't pursue higher education. YWCA "Las Chicas" program is very good and prevents dropouts.

Jaimes, shared the success of the USHLI in Marshalltown and will continue the relationship and collaboration. Wong, we may not be able to take this on as a programmatic initiative but there are many existing programs that are not connecting to vulnerable populations? What can we do? about that lack of connection? Sanchez, we can try to connect an organizational level.

Perez asked Cantu to send the report. Cantu indicated he has a binder to send to her.

Alaniz, how do we make a difference? Cantu, community activism and outreach.

For additional information and reports you may go to the CJJP's website:

<http://www.humanrights.iowa.gov/cjpp/index.html>

Sanchez, we need to substantiate the proposal that has been presented in the Iowa congress in regards to the Dream Act. Parents are working too much and are not encouraging their children to go to school, I truly believe in prevention. The office of Latino Affairs to consider as future programming, gang prevention, keep children in school, which is already in the Governor's agenda, so I would like for us to pay more attention to that, thank you Cantu for the Wong, our involvement would have to be more at the policy level vs. programmatic.

We could not take it on but we can pull people together at the policy level to address that. There are a lot of efforts in the after school programs in many communities around the state. The resources are there but somehow they are not targeting/reaching our communities. Where do we need to be at the table, is getting together program providers to help them shape their programs to reach our communities? I don't think it is not wanting to reach out is not knowing how to. Programs are there to help the most vulnerable. How can we help them? Wong, we can try to connect at the organizational level to help them in recruitment, policy and procedure level. Perez, let's think of technology, such as webinars and post training webinars online for service providers. Perez also asked for Cantu to send his report to post it online. Cantu, services are out in the community but need to do better outreach. Alaniz, we need to grow our diverse leadership. Alaniz, with partnerships can facilitate for instance in leadership development, we can facilitate this and be a voice. Wong, is about empowering other communities to address their issues. Wong, we need to go out and meet with communities around the state.

Cantu, I created a program that I mimic from Jaimes program with the community college and high school in that area (Marshalltown) to provide leadership skills and provide a pathway to education. The program Jaimes has is a perfect model. Partnerships with schools and communities. Perez, is that leadership model you wrote available to anyone, can it be used by anyone, and is it patented? The program is registered to Cantu but all we need to do is say: Ramon Cantu has given us permission to use it. This program can be used not only locally but regionally and I am not selling it and can be tailor it to each community and Cantu will provide the binder.

Jaimes, Dream Act has not passed, there are scholarships available that students can apply for and can be added to the website. Some scholarships do not require social security number or status. Jaimes will send the list of the scholarships. Jaimes, we partnered with the US The presenter provided a huge box of CD's about scholarships and he spoke to approximately 2200 students in our area. Sanchez, thank you for your wonderful work.

Health Joan Jaimes

No health report at this time.

Cantu, the people's clinic in Waterloo and Clarksville, they have seen an increase in Latino families/clients. They have a slighting fee. Clients are able to receive full medical. Perez, would you please send the information about the clinic and any other partnerships on writing to add to the list of resources.

Immigration Sandra Sanchez

Jobs/Economic Development (Workforce) Sal Alaniz

Alaniz provided a comprehensive packet in reference to economic development. These is a compilation of my experience and I encourage you to go through it and use it.

Leadership/Civic Engagement Sal Alaniz

Legislation Sandra Sanchez

Sanchez, E-Verify the committee wrote and forwarded a position document drafted and reviewed by the committee. In addition the committee sent a position document from the Immigration Policy Forum. Since the bill died there was no need to further follow up. Wong, we received feedback that the bill was not going anywhere but we don't know or expect that they pass or not.

Jackson, the issue will not be going away either, we can build on what you have.

Sanchez, there is a national proposal Ending Racial Profiling Act and The Working Rights Group is asking for some statements of support for the legislative by April 17 and I know this is short notice but even after the hearing it would be wonderful to send a letter of support for that proposal. Sanchez will send link, I make a proposal to consider to support it and to be added for the next meeting agenda so it can be an item of discussion. Sanchez, I will continue to be of support for the legislative committee.

Cantu read his resignation given that he is moving to the east coast to continue his education.

Wong, asked Cantu suggestions for a replacement for him in the Waterloo area. Cantu, I have two or three contacts that are interested, Cantu can forward the information to these individuals. Wong, you can connect them to Alba or me to reach out to them.

Perez, Maria Lara and Juan Rodriguez are the new commissioners and Perez has reached out to them to give them an overview of DHR.

Sanchez, is Paula A. Martinez in the commission? Wong, no she is not returning.

