

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs**  
**Meeting minutes**  
**4-28-05**

**Attendance:**

Rep. John Aguilera, House Democrat-**Chair**  
Mara Candelaria-Reardon, House Laymember  
Myrna Maldonado, House Laymember  
Gregorio Chavez, Jr., House Laymember  
Juana Watson, Senate Laymember  
Manuel Gonzalez, Senate Laymember  
Salvador Soto, Senate Laymember  
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes, Indiana Economic Development Corp. designee  
Gloria Thode, Dept. of Correction designee  
Carmen Quintana, Dept. of Health designee  
Karen Martinez, former Dept. of Education designee  
Hilda Vazquez, new Dept. of Education designee  
Margie Chavez, Family and Social Services designee-**Vice Chair**  
Judge Gregory Kellam Scott, Indiana Civil Rights Commission-Executive Director  
Kip Chase, Dept. of Workforce Development Proxy  
Pat Rios, House laymember -**Secretary**

**Staff:**

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director  
Lawrence McCormack

**Audience:**

Gary Lukovich, State Farm Insurance (Guest Speaker)  
Lorraine Guillen-Wentz, Workforce Development, Hammond (Guest Speaker)  
Lisette Guillen, Workforce Development, Hammond (Guest Speaker)  
Frank Rivera, Workforce Development, Hammond (Guest Speaker)  
Ed Perez, State Farm  
Carlos Velez, Advantage Healthcare  
Irene Bublik, Marion County Public Defender Agency  
Jennifer Kirchhofer, Central IN Better Business Bureau  
Nora Willman, Indianapolis Public Schools  
Alberto Hernández

**I. Guest Speakers**

Chairman Aguilera invited guest speaker Gary Lukovich of State Farm to begin his presentation.

*Gary Lukovich, State Farm Insurance*

Mr. Lukovich informed the Commission that State Farm Insurance, which is a mutual company, was founded in 1922. He mentioned that today, 1 out of 5 automobiles is insured by state farm. He informed everyone that State Farm is committed to having a diverse workforce, and has launched new Hispanic recruiting efforts, including the establishment of a special task force for Hispanic recruitment and retention. Research shows that Hispanics prefer services in their native language. He also said that State Farm emphasizes leadership development and education. State Farm has partnerships with

national organizations like the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute and the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute. State Farm began a partnership with the National Hispanic Leadership Institute in 1994, by supporting programs offered. State Farm has also partnered with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for over 12 years and NCLR for over a decade. State Farm also contributes money to the Hispanic Scholarship fund. He mentioned that State Farm has many more initiatives in the Hispanic/Latino community, including being involved with many Hispanic/Latino events in Indiana.

Chairman Aguilera thanked Mr. Lukovich for the presentation and credited State Farm for its involvement on a national level. He mentioned that the Commission is taking over the Hispanic Summit, and looks forward to support from State Farm. He asked if the Commissioners have any questions and thanked Mr. Lukovich for his interest and participation; State Farm has been very active at the national level.

Commissioner Sal Soto mentioned that State Farm is highly involved in Hispanic events in Fort Wayne and thanked State Farm for its participation.

Chairman Aguilera introduced Lorraine Guillen-Wentz of Work One in Hammond and invited her to bring her presentation.

Mrs. Wentz thanked the Commission and informed everyone that the Work One Hammond Office offers a variety services, including a bilingual radio show. She also introduced Lisette Guillen and Frank Rivera, the Executive Director.

Mr. Rivera explained that WorkOne is a non-for-profit agency that works in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Development. WorkOne is an administrative agency which provides employment training services. The purpose is to reach out to the community and help job seekers secure good-paying jobs in an ever-changing global work market in Northwest Indiana. WorkOne also creates assessment skills tests, including Work Keys, which is a program which identifies skill sets in workers. He mentioned that partnerships are also important, since WorkOne is a government agency. He reported that the federal government spends \$100 billion more annually on contracts that it does for employees' salaries.

He mentioned that the bilingual radio show is a part of the office's strategic plan. He informed the Commission that, according to the 2000 census, 1.3 % of households in the U.S. did not speak English at home. From the same data, 2.4 % of lake county households did not speak English. Also, according to a market survey, only 4% of Indiana's Spanish-speaking community speaks English, while 74% do not speak English.

Spanish is the second most spoken language in English. Of Indiana's Hispanic/Latino community, Marion and Lake counties are the top two counties that speak Spanish. O Work One is also working with local advocates and business leaders to provide translation services for agencies. Work One hopes to be a valuable resource to the Governor and community.

Chairman Aguilera thanked Mr. Rivera for his presentation and asked Commissioners if there were any questions.

Commissioner Gregorio Chavez asked if veterans' training was available at Work One. Mr. Rivera answered that WorkOne received a few grants towards this effort.

Commissioner Manuel Gonzalez mentioned that the Commissioner Miguel Rivera of the Department of Labor is in the process of doing training about the language barrier in the workforce. He asked is there any type of visual aid for training models (especially construction)? He mentioned that Indiana University and Purdue University have 3-dimensional training models, not necessarily for every industry.

Mr. Rivera agreed that visual training models would be more effective. He said that WorkOne adheres to standards and is open to the idea because the office identifies the changing needs of the community and tries to fulfill them.

Secretary Pat Rios asked Mr. Rivera if he could make copies of the statistics he presented at today's meeting.

Mr. Rivera answered that he would provide copies. He distributed copies of the Annual Report for Work One.

Chairman Aguilera thanked the Commissioners who participated in the Public forum in East Chicago. He mentioned the importance of the public forums in all laymembers' areas.

He discussed Senate bill 607, regarding medical translators and interpreters. He mentioned that he was on a committee to review and debate the bill this year. He mentioned that he wouldn't sign the bill because it took out the language for the medical translators and interpreters. He said representatives of the medical field had objected to the bill, saying that it would increase costs. He also spoke to the importance of having professionally licensed medical translators/interpreters. He mentioned a health care disparities conference he attended where a presentation was given on the same topic, and that he is working with the health subcommittee to come up with a similar presentation as was given at the conference.

House resolution 93 deals with the drivers license issue and the formation of a summer study committee. He mentioned that he testified against it and the committee has given him permission to rewrite it. This session, there have been many bills not friendly to the Hispanic/Latino community. He mentioned that, in writing the resolution, he required that 4 hispanic laymembers serve on the interim study committee, selected by Purdue University, by Indiana University, the House and Senate. He encouraged Commissioners to submit letters if they are interested in serving on the study committee. He mentioned that an understanding and perspective is needed, and that the resolution would go forward today, and that himself and Representative Noe are the sponsors.

Secretary Rios asked what will the resolution do to the bill that was passed that required an interim study committee?

Chairman Aguilera answered that the language was pulled out of the bill, which was very general. He also informed the Commission of the 2 main projects that came out of session this year, one is with the RCA Dome and Convention Center and another with the Regional Development Initiative in Northwest Indiana. He said there have been efforts to

bring the 2 projects together, which are currently in negotiations. He said that it seems the projects will go forward and asked everyone to inform the Hispanic/Latino community about the projects, so there is an opportunity for equal opportunity.

## **II. Commission Business**

Chairman Aguilera excused himself for a meeting and turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Margie Chavez.

### *Review and accept 3-24-05 minutes*

Vice Chair Chavez asked Commissioners to review the minutes of the 3-24-05 Commission meeting. She asked for corrections and/or additions to the minutes. A motion was made by Commissioner Chavez and seconded by Commissioner Sal Soto to accept the minutes of the 3-24-05 Commission meeting. Motion carried by all in attendance.

### *Update on Hispanic Summit*

Commissioner Soto mentioned that the task force met this morning and had changed the Summit to a Conference. The theme is Healthy Indiana, and the purpose of the conference is to educate, and promote. The admission is a half-day conference which has an admission costs of \$25.00 for the conference and \$50.00 for both the conference and dinner. He mentioned that the task force is checking on hotels and is asking the Commission for volunteers. The event will also have workshops and will be a chance to introduce the Commission's Annual Report.

Vice Chair Chavez mentioned that the conference would have places for displays for social service agencies and others at \$25.00 for non-for-profit agencies and \$50.00 for for-profit agencies. She pointed out that it would be a networking event.

### *Update on Public Forums*

Vice Chair Chavez informed everyone that approximately 150 people attended the forum. She mentioned that updates on the public forums would be on the webpage. She mentioned that in East Chicago, there were a lot of questions, but not a lot of answers.

Commissioner Mara Reardon pointed out that the purpose of the forum is to gather concerns and not really answer questions. She pointed out that in the future, that should be made clear at other forums.

Secretary Rios asked what types of questions were asked at the forum.

Vice Chair Chavez answered that most of the questions were targeted at this year's Session. She said that one of the most popular needs was for a directory in English and Spanish about services available in the area.

Secretary Rios pointed out that the community has been asking for a directory resource for a long time, and that it would be a labor-intensive task to keep it updated.

Director Mendoza pointed out the list of the most important issues list from the East Chicago forum.

Vice Chair Chavez informed everyone that the forum was very informative and announced the next forum in Evansville on May 12, 2005, and the South Bend forum would be on May 24, 2005.

Commissioner Soto mentioned that the forums give the Commission the chance to clarify across the state who the Commission is.

Hilda Vazquez introduced herself as the new designee of the Department of Education. Karen Martinez, the previous designee, announced that this was her last meeting.

Commissioner Gonzalez suggested that on the power point information be included on the contacts in the minority certification office. He also suggested inviting Debbie Bishop, the state director of the Small Business Development Corporation to come speak at one of the Commission meetings. Half of her budget is federal and half is from the state. They offer free consulting and a state-wide data base system. The only district office that has a latino program is in Indianapolis. He said the Commission can suggest to Mrs. Bishop to establish other similar offices around the state. They have services, but they are not reaching out to the Hispanic/Latino population.

Director Mendoza thanked Commissioner Gonzalez for his suggestions and said that all the points that were brought up in East Chicago are important, and the Commission can get active on them. While the Commission is a reporting agency, it can also do statewide programs. She encouraged Commissioners to bring forward their suggestions for partnerships with other statewide organizations. She mentioned that a representative of the Department of Administration would attend in the future a Business Subcommittee meeting to inform how to do business with the state. The Commission can help to facilitate awareness. She pointed out that the Minority Certification Application is currently in English; she recommended that the Commission make the recommendation to translate it into Spanish and asked for comments.

Commissioner Gonzalez mentioned the Governor Daniels talked about the Lake County Regional Economic Development initiatives and spoke on the importance of the community taking advantage of these opportunities.

Regarding the translation of the Minority Business Certification Application, Secretary Rios made a suggestion that the Commission draft a letter to the Department of Administration stating the importance of having the application translated into Spanish. She also recommended contacting the Department of commerce and workforce development also be copied on the letter.

A motion was made by Secretary Rios and seconded by Commissioner Reardon to draft a letter of support for the Spanish translation of the Minority Business Certification Application. Motion carried by all in attendance.

#### *Regional Issues Update*

Vice Chair Chavez spoke on the importance for laymembers giving monthly updates from their regions. She asked if laymembers had anything to update.

Director Mendoza mentioned that State agencies can update the Commission on what's needed.

Commissioner Reardon mentioned that there would be a government efficiency study about education. She mentioned that the Hammond and East Chicago school districts have agreed to participate. She mentioned that the Commission should monitor this issue.

Secretary Rios mentioned that issues with budget, education and etc. have come before the Commission, and there were no updates provided. She recommended that it would be efficient to send email updates to all Commissioners.

Commissioner Gloria Thode mentioned that she would also like to host a forum in LaPorte, IN. She mentioned that in the community in LaPorte, there has been a lot of change, misconceptions and ignorance. She mentioned that this change is all new to LaPorte. She suggested having the Commission making suggestions or doing presentations to the local police departments and other offices.

Secretary Rios suggested starting with community leaders: Mayors, clergy, health care system, etc.

Commissioner Juana Watson mentioned that she has designed a presentation called the Face of the Latino immigrant and she has made her presentation to many communities in Indiana. She said that Evansville is the last frontier. She said she would be happy to share the information with other communities. She suggested that the Commission come up with programs to share.

Commissioner Chavez encouraged all Commissioners to turn in their subcommittee reports as soon as possible.

### **III. Subcommittee Reports**

#### *Budget*

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes pointed out the budget report in the folders. This is dated July 2003 to date; the Commission has spent \$83,000 on salaries and benefits for Director Mendoza and previous Director Sarabia. Currently, the total remaining from the 2003 allocation is roughly \$41,000. The Commission has \$118,000 from 2004 allocation, and the 2005-2006 allocation will be decided after this budget. She said the Commission should be prepared because it could be a very tight budget, there is a possibility of getting no money at all, getting less or the same amount.

Commissioner Soto asked when the Commission will know about the 2005-2006 allocation.

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes answered that the Commission would know before July 1, 2005, and that the Commission has \$160,000 to go through July 2007.

Commissioner Soto pointed out that the Commission has never allocated a certain budget for all those things for all spendings.

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes mentioned that the Commission might not want to write a specific budget, because all money set aside must then be used for those specific purposes. She said thus far, the Commission has spent \$4000 on office supplies, \$6,000 on DWD services, i.e. processing paperwork, budget reports, etc. She also mentioned

that she met with Director Mendoza to discuss past expenditures and possibly create a budget outline for the next allocation.

#### *Health*

Vice Chair Chavez suggested that the Commission take a position on the issue of having legislation for professionally licensed healthcare translators and interpreters. She mentioned that the language was pulled out of Senate Bill 607 previously, and that the issue is too important to forget.

Commissioner Soto mentioned that the main question is, “Who will pay?”

Vice Chair Chavez mentioned that the Health subcommittee has been collecting statistics and other data. She also informed the Commission that Rx for Indiana will have another launch on May 4, 2005.

#### **IV. Executive Director Report**

Director Mendoza pointed out a program proposal titled, “A Historical Look at Hispanic/Latinos in Indiana History.” She mentioned that she has discussed this with Commissioner Myrna Maldonado and Vice Chair Chavez. She pointed out the program would be poster display with pictures and diagrams and would include information on Hispanics/Latinos in Indiana history, including special events, parades, achievements and “firsts” for Hispanics/Latinos in Indiana.

Commissioner Soto mentioned that the program would be a good educational piece, and that the Commission should look for a sponsor to split the costs because the costs of the program may be more than reported on the proposal (\$500- \$750).

Director Mendoza also mentioned that the Commission could do a book later next year to profile Indiana’s Hispanic/Latino leaders. She asked Commissioners to keep that project in mind for next year.

Commissioner Chavez mentioned that he has a historical book on Hispanics/Latinos in South Bend.

Director Mendoza encouraged help from all Commissioners on this project.

Commissioner Reardon said that this project has the potential to evolve into something much bigger in the future. The Commission can use this information.

Commissioner Kip Chase also mentioned the importance of putting the project on the webpage and making it interactive. He said that the project can always be shared with libraries and schools. He said that latino leaders in communities should also be profiled.

A motion was made by Commissioner Soto and seconded by Commissioner Reardon to accept the historical program, “A Historical Look at Hispanics/Latinos in Indiana History.” Motion carried by all in attendance.

Director Mendoza updated Commissioners on other programs. The Ivy Tech program will be in September, the Women’s History Trail is seeking more Hispanic/Latina

leaders, and the educational program with the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males will be later this year.

Director Mendoza encouraged Commissioners to bring ideas. She also suggested having a subcommittee to study Civil Rights and Housing issues. She mentioned that she had previously spoken with Commissioner Kellam Scott of the Civil Rights Commission and he had expressed interest in the Subcommittee. She also expressed concern that the Commission should not ignore civil rights and housing issues. She clarified that the Chair has the authority to appoint subcommittees.

Chairman Aguilera appointed a Civil Rights and Housing Subcommittee. No chair has been appointed.

Director Mendoza reported that she has been asked about having a religious initiatives subcommittee.

Commissioner Reardon suggested that the Commission instead make efforts to better incorporate the religious community in the Commission's activities.

General discussion followed and Commissioners agreed that more incorporation of the religious community is a better option.

#### **V. Unfinished Business**

*National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) Conference*

Vice Chavez mentioned that last month the Commission voted to send Director Mendoza and possibly another person.

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes asked if the Commission would cover conference fees, travel and other costs.

Director Mendoza mentioned that those details were not discussed at the last meeting.

General discussion followed and the Commission decided to create rules in the Commission's bylaws about criteria for using Commission funds for Commissioner travel and checking with DWD Legal Counsel about establishing a standard used in the future. The Commission decided to send only Director Mendoza to the NALEO Conference which will be held June 22-25, 2005.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15pm.