



STATE OF INDIANA

**INDIANA COMMISSION ON
HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS**
Mitchell E Daniels, Jr., Governor

ICHLA

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 26, 2011
3:00pm – 4:30pm
Conference Center Room 18
Indiana Government Center South
Indianapolis, IN**

Commissioners Present:

Freddie Thon, House Lay Member, South Bend
Richard Espinosa, Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne (Vice-Chair)
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Chair)
Guadalupe 'Herb' Hernandez, Senate Lay member, Fort Wayne (Treasurer)
Alfredo Gonzalez, Governor Appointee
Shanida Sharp-Byrnes, Designee, Dept of Education
Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction
Virginia Hernandez, Indiana Civil Rights Commission
Rep. Rich McClain
Ralph Flores, House Member, Munster
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon
Pedro Ledo

Commissioners Not Present:

Michelle Stein-Ordóñez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration
Pat Rios, House Lay Member, Indianapolis
Senator Greg Walker
Senator Frank Mrvan
Virgil Madden, Designee, Lt. Governor's Office
Andrea Perez, Designee, Department of Health

Visitors:

Vicky Cuenca, IACCR

Staff Present:

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

- I. Vicky Cuenca and Marsha Thompson from the Indiana Association for Childcare Resources and Referrals thanked commissioners for allowing them to address the commission and share information. They said they would bring more materials to June's meeting.

- II. Reports

- A. Chairman Christian Gallo began the meeting by suggesting that previous minutes be approved, dating back to January of 2011. Treasurer Herb Hernandez and Commissioner Freddie Thon suggested that, as all commissioners had received the minutes en mass dating back to January, they all be approved as a group. The minutes were approved without objection.

Financial reports for February, March, and April were approved without objection as well, and Thon pointed out that those had also been previously reviewed. Lopez said that no expenditures outside of commissioner per diem and travel and wages/benefits had been paid out during the month of May. Thon asked the drop-dead date for submittal of expenditure requests. Lopez said that June 23 was the final date.

- B. Executive Director's Report and Budget Discussion

Lopez began by noting that he had coordinated a meeting with the staff from the New Neighbors program at IU-Southeast in an effort to help them expand their reach throughout the state, not with resources but with support. He said that he has also been able to patch them into other non-Latino groups in an effort to form a statewide coalition for parent education and engagement, and that the coalition would be presenting a comprehensive workshop at the 2011 Indiana Black Expo.

Lopez then said that following the commissions support for renaming of the East Chicago Justice Building to the Judge Lorenzo Arredondo Justice Center, he had attended the renaming ceremony and that Commissioner Mara Candelaria-Reardon had served as emcee.

- C. Committee Reports

1. Civil Rights

Gallo said that some Latinos in Lafayette and surrounding areas had complained that they were being detained unfairly by immigration officers. Due to delays in the court system, even if the judge authorizes release they often spend weekends or several days in jail. Commissioner Richard Espinosa asked if this was happening throughout the state, and Gallo said that he has heard reports from counties surrounding Tippecanoe. Thon asked if the Mexican Consulate had been notified, and Gallo said that this had been tried without much success. Commissioner Ralph Flores asked Gallo if those arrested on Fridays could be released over the weekend, and Gallo said that in most instances individuals were detained until Monday.

2. Health

No report

3. Business
No report

4. Education
Commissioner Shanida Sharp-Byrnes said that Lopez had provided handouts with specifics about education legislation that had been passed during the 2011 session. She also said that the Department of Education was seeking liaisons in the Latino community through which to provide information to the general public.

Reardon noted that SB590 was not included in the list despite having impacts on education.

D. Unfinished Business

Lopez said that their key focus for the commission would have to be approval of projects for the remainder of the year. Lopez said that the Key Bank initiative had been removed from the proposal, following concerns expressed by commissioners. Additionally, the American Bankers Association and other groups had been contacted in the hopes that a collaboration for financial literacy could be formed, but no existing programs could be tapped into.

Espinosa said that the commission would need to move on, as it has been discussing potential initiatives for months.

Hernandez went through the list of projects that had been discussed at the April meeting and also suggested that the commission move forward. Thon asked if the projects had to be approved at the current meeting, and Lopez said that because of the June 23 cut-off date, all expenditures for the fiscal year would need to be made immediately. Lopez suggested that commissioners also consider the validity of their partnerships rather than simply spending funds because of the deadline. Hernandez reminded commissioners that funds remaining at year's end would not revert but would need to be allotted for use.

Reardon noted that ICHLA is not a granting agency. Lopez agreed and said that all partnerships included active roles for commissioners rather than simply passive sponsorship of programs. Reardon also suggested that the Assembly had passed legislation restricting the use of non-English languages, which would complicate funding initiatives. Lopez said that he thought that legislation had not passed but would be sure to double-check. Additionally, he would check with the Attorney General's office in the event that legislation had passed to determine ICHLA's funding parameters.

A motion was made by Thon to approve the projects in the plan for the remainder of the year, and Hernandez seconded. It passed unanimously.

E. New Business

Lopez said that initiatives would need to be decided upon for the coming fiscal year. He presented a list but said that it constituted suggestions only, and that final decisions would need to be made by the commission.

Reardon asked if the commission could leverage dollars from other organizations. Lopez said that ICHLA could not accept monies from other organizations but could certainly play a role in membership in a coalition or as a community partner. Hernandez pointed out that the commission could in fact receive donations so long as provisions were made by the proper management of them, and Lopez suggested the conversation center around topics of focus. Thon asked about budget approval, and Lopez said that while he turns in the actual budget proposal, the commission would need to set the list of priorities to be funded. Thon asked Lopez to send the list to commissioners.

Flores said early childhood development should be a key point of focus moving forward. He said there are several organizations throughout the state that could be leveraged, similar to the partnership with Parents as Teachers. Thon said that childcare provider education could be a point of focus, as well.

Reardon noted the need for interpreters in the healthcare system. Lopez said that groups had been pushing for this to be included in legislation, and Lopez said that past challenges with such legislation related to costs. He then said that the Bloomington City Commission on Hispanic Affairs had provided training for one of their commissioners to receive interpreter training and that she had then begun certification training for others locally. Commissioners agreed that access to interpreters in hospitals was a major challenge facing Latinos throughout the state.

Reardon also said that access to broadband cable and tech literacy should also be major points of focus.

Lopez asked about the second INversión event and said that some consideration should be given to moving from Gary to East Chicago. Thon once again noted that there needed to be follow-up on the first INversión before moving to a second summit event. Lopez asked about making the events smaller and more regional. He said that the commission would be well-suited to getting out into the community through churches and community centers. Reardon agreed and said that such meetings would raise the visibility of the commission.

Hernandez agreed that a university setting would not be ideal for grassroots level meetings. He outlined specifics for boards upon which he had served and that the consistency for the topics covered was important to the process of gathering information.

Reardon said that the commission should consider hosting remote meetings or informational sessions in different parts of the state. Lopez said he would work with commissioners to put together a calendar of meetings.

Reardon made a motion instructing Lopez to utilize the suggestions made by the commissioners to build a proposal with potential projects for 2011-2012. The motion carried unanimously.

Finally, Reardon said she has been working with Purdue University-Calumet and USHLI on a proposal for a Lumina Hispanic Education grant. She is working to include the Latino Student Day concept into their proposal. She said that the commission should consider partnering on future Latino Student Day efforts, as well, and said that the event has been enlightening and informative for participants. Lopez said that he had been contacted by a group at IU-Bloomington, and all agreed that it would not hurt to be involved with as many grants as possible.

F. Guest Presentation

Marsha said that the ICCRR works with both consumers and providers of child care services through an existing partnership with FSSA at the State. Moreover, the group works to educate legislators and local organizations on rights and responsibilities relative to this topic. The services are free, and Marsha said that Vicky had been brought on board to help engage Latino families. This, she said, is just in its early stages and is now gaining some momentum.

In fall of 2011, the group will be hosting a conference for Spanish-speaking child care providers and families for the first time ever. Marsha encouraged the commission to get involved, either financial or through other forms of support. The group will make a formal presentation at the June meeting.

G. Finally, Lopez said that hard copies of documents (other than agendas) will not be provided at meetings, but all materials will be emailed ahead of time for each meeting.

If commissioners need hard copies, they will be printed by Lopez on an individual basis. Moreover, Lopez is working with IOT to set up a shared drive through which materials can be posted and accessed by commissioners at any time.

H. Adjournment

With no quorum to close the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35p.m.