

Indiana Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs
Meeting January 22, 2004
10:40 am

MINUTES

Members Present:

Ms. Jenny Sarabia – Executive Director
Rep. John Aguilera
Mrs. Myrna Maldonado
Dr. Mary Llu Altman
Mr. Manuel Gonzalez
Mr. Salvador Soto
Ms. Juana Watson
Mr. Ronnie Cantu
Mrs. Claudia Fuentes
Commissioner Evelyn Ridley-Turner
Mrs. Karen Martinez
Commissioner Alan Degner
Secretary Cheryl Sullivan
Mrs. Carmen Quintana

Staff Present:

Mr. Lawrence McCormack
Mr. Frederick Shull, Jr.
Mrs. Marna Walthall

Absent:

Rep. Richard McClain
Senator Vi Simpson
Senator Tom Wyss
Ms. Mara Candelaria Reardon
Mr. Gregorio Chavez, Jr.
Mr. Dan Gavito

I. INTRODUCTIONS

- Ms. Sarabia - Announced that there was a quorum for the conducting of business. She stated that the voting for offices would take place today and does not see any conflicts for the positions. Looks forward to working with the people that the Commission elects. Asked the members to introduce themselves.
- Rep. John Aguilera – Stated that he was honored to be a part of Commission, and looks forward to the Commission setting the agenda. The present Indiana Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs began as the Governor’s Commission, then the Legislative Commission before becoming the organization that is before us today. Talked about the legislation that is currently before the General Assembly and expressed interest in being voted Chair of the Commission. He spoke to his background and his work as an Information Technologies professional, but now works for IUPUI in the Workforce Department in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Development to help employers and employees communicate more efficiently in the workplace. Stated that he had to return to the Statehouse for session and suggested that the Commission meetings be scheduled around the legislative schedule, and the schedules of those members from different parts of the state.
 - Ms. Sarabia - Asked the Commission members to mark the calendar that was provided for dates they would be available to meet and then mail the information to her.
 - Dr. Altman - Asked for clarification on calendars.
 - Ms. Sarabia - Told the Commission to mark the dates they would not be available.
- Dr. Mary Llu Altman – Stated that she served on the first and second Commissions and is honored to serve on this one. She described her work for Ivy Tech State College in Lafayette dealing with economic development and human direction. She also talked about the course she teaches dealing with cultural awareness in order to bring different cultures together. She stated that she would be interested in a leadership position on the Commission where she is needed.
- Mr. Ronnie Cantu – Noted that he is from the Evansville area but is originally from South Texas. Talked about being a Board Member of Junior Achievement, a member of the Rotary Club and is the Governor’s appointee to the Commission. He stated that he was not interested in a leadership position because of the distance he would have to travel to Indianapolis.
- Commissioner Alan Degner – He stated that he is the Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development and that it has been a pleasure to work with Ms. Sarabia to create the Commission. He talked about his

economic development background and the fact that he was Chief of Staff for then Lt. Governor Kernan.

- Mrs. Claudia Fuentes – Noted that she works for the Department of Commerce, which is under the Lt. Governor’s office. Stated that she was unsure about running for a leadership position.
 - Ms. Sarabia suggested that she head the Subcommittee on Budget and Fundraising
- Mr. Manuel Gonzalez – Stated that he was with the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and that he has noticed a great deal of change since the original Commission. He noted that his area of expertise is business and business development, and wants to focus on how Hispanic businesses are served. Displayed an interest in heading the Subcommittee on Hispanic/Latino Business.
- Mrs. Myrna Maldonado – Stated that she is the Director of Public Information for the City of East Chicago, which has given her an opportunity to get to know the community and inform them of programs. She noted that she also teaches at Purdue University – Calumet, has two children, and is very excited to remain on Commission and bridge gaps between Indianapolis and the “Region” area. Expressed interest in chair of Subcommittee on Media and Historian.
- Ms. Jenny Sarabia – Talked about her tenure as Executive Director, with the meager supplies that she was originally provided with. Discussed the need for volunteers and the fact that she has been traveling around the state to form alliances and recruit volunteers.
- Mr. Frederick Shull – Stated that he is a first year law student at IUPUI and has been volunteering with the Commission for a few months.
- Mrs. Marna Walthall – Noted that she is the Coordinator for the Center for International and Comparative Law at the IUPUI law school and recently finished Master’s degree in Latin American studies.
- Mr. Lawrence McCormack – Stated that he works for Rep. Aguilera and is also the Hispanic Outreach Coordinator for the House of Representatives.
- Mrs. Karen Martinez – Stated that she is the designee for the Department of Education and works with the Division of Language Minority and Migrant Programs out of the Kokomo field office. Talked about the duties of her office including recruitment of migrant families, determining eligibility for the program and getting them access to education programs and facilities.
- Mrs. Carmen Quintana – Stated that she is the designee for the Indiana State Department of Health and served on the Legislative Commission. Noted that she lives in Johnson County, but her family is originally from Mexico. Described her work with migrant programs and her educational background.
- Commissioner Ridley-Turner – Stated that she works for the Department of Correction and has served on the Commission before. Noted that they have seen an increase in the Hispanic prison population, and wants to

curve that trend through education. She also described the need for cultural competence.

- Mr. Salvador Soto – Noted that he is from Ft. Wayne and President of a marketing and translation business. Also he talked about being President of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Ft. Wayne and his interest in serving as Vice-Chair of the Commission.
- Ms. Juana Watson – Stated that she is a founding member of Mi Casa, an Hispanic center in Columbus and also teaches a Spanish business class at IUPUI. Noted that she interacts considerably with the Mexican Consulate and is very excited to be a member of the Commission

II. Voting

- Rep. Aguilera - Asked that the voting take place.
- Ms. Sarabia - Told the Commission that since there are not any contested races, she would like the members to volunteer for Subcommittees.
 - Chair – Rep. Aguilera
 - Vice Chair – Mr. Soto
 - Secretary – Mrs. Quintana
 - Subcommittees:
 - Education – open
 - Hispanic/Latino Business – Mr. Gonzalez
 - Health and Housing – open
 - Driver’s License and Immigration – Ms. Watson
 - Media and Historian – Mrs. Maldonado
 - Culture and Arts – Mr. Chavez (will confirm)
 - Budget and Fundraising – Mrs. Fuentes
 - Webpage and Newsletter – open
- Rep. Aguilera - Thanked the Commission for voting him president and reminded them that the Commission needs to produce so funding can be renewed. Stated that the Commission has an appropriation of \$125,000/year under the biennial budget, and the members need to get out into the state to educate the public about the Commission and the available services.
- Mr. Soto – Asked what rules govern the Commission.
- Ms. Sarabia – Responded that the Commission is not under any rules but recommended that Robert’s rules be utilized.
- Ms. Ridley-Turner – Asked for a recap of the leadership positions.
- Mrs. Walthall – Read the list of current leadership members.

III. History

- **Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs 2000-2002**
 - Ms. Sarabia – She recalled that Pat Rios in Governor O’Bannon’s office was vital to beginning of Commission. Ms. Rios used census figures to create the initial report, however the census data was out of date and will no longer be used.
- **Legislative Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs 2002-2003**

- Ms. Sarabia – Stated that the Commission realized that if there was a change in administration, they would lose the Commission. Protected the Commission by using statute to back its purpose.

IV. Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs

- Ms. Sarabia – PowerPoint presentation
- Ms. Sarabia – She discussed the need for funding and philanthropy to fund the goals and programs of the Commission. There is also a special fund to accept donations. Ms. Sarabia noted that she has donated \$25 to special fund and asked the Commission members to donate money, supplies.
- Ms. Sarabia – Stated that the Commission will have its own office in the Indiana Government Center – South outside of the Department of Workforce Development.

V. Question and Answer Session

- Mr. Soto – Asked whether the Commission is a tax-exempt organization.
- Ms. Sarabia – Answered that the donations have to be given to the special fund, but the State controls funding.
- Dr. Altman – Requested a copy of the letter that was sent to the General Assembly.
- Ms. Sarabia - Responded that she will send copies of the letter that went through 9 revisions before being delivered.
- Mr. Gonzalez – Asked the role of the Subcommittees.
- Ms. Sarabia – Stated that the laymembers need to hold forums in their area. The first role of the Subcommittee is to find volunteers and report needs to the Commission.
- Mr. Soto – Said that he spoke with Rep. Aguilera and they decided that at each Commission meeting, each Subcommittee should set three goals for themselves.
- Mr. Gonzalez – Asked if Mr. Soto and Rep. Aguilera would be setting the goals for the Subcommittees.
- Ms. Sarabia – Stated that everything will be voted upon.
- Ms. Sarabia – Discussed a program of education that should be the focus of the Commission, “Sobresalir con el poder de leer.” Will be a reading program to encourage Hispanics to read and dispel the fear of higher education. Also wants to create a partnership with 21st Century Scholars program: If a student signs a promise with his/her parents to stay out of trouble and keep up their grades, the program will pay for 4 years of college. However there is a lack of participation. Another important program is the Big Brothers/Big Sisters, which also has a lack of Latino participants. Asked the Commission to vote on the adoption of these programs.
- Mr. Soto – Asked to hold off vote until next meeting to explore other initiatives that have not been explored yet.
- Ms. Sarabia – Responded that the Commission has not had a meeting in over one year, and she does not want to wait.

- Dr. Altman – Seconded Mr. Soto’s motion to wait. She stated that more information is needed before the Commission can make a decision.
- Ms. Sarabia – Responded that she would have to wait two months in actuality.
- Dr. Altman – Said that it can be included on the next month’s agenda.
- Ms. Sarabia – Stated that she will follow the Commission’s decision even though she feels the organization is already in place.
- Dr. Altman – Responded that it would be hard to move ahead without more information.
- Ms. Sarabia – Said the proposal includes 2 to 3 mentors visiting an elementary school to motivate children.
- Mr. Gonzalez – Stated that there is a need to form the basis of the organization before bringing new ideas to the table.
- Ms. Sarabia – Responded that it was a good suggestion. Said she will follow through with the idea before bringing it back to the Commission.

VI. Input From the Audience

- Morela Dominguez, Indiana Minority Health Coalition – Asked if the Commission will be dealing with health issues.
- Elizabeth Gonzalez, Marion – Declared that there is a great need for civil rights for Latinos. There will be a fundraiser for Latino scholarships on February 28, 2004 at 6pm, and she invited the Commission to participate.
- Unidentified Woman – Asked if donations from corporations to the Commission would be tax deductible.

VII. Adjournment 11:50am