



STATE OF INDIANA

INDIANA COMMISSION ON
HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS
MITCHELL E. DANIELS, JR., GOVERNOR

ICHLA

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Commission Meeting minutes 1-27-05

Attendance:

Rep. John Aguilera, House Democrat - **Chair**
Sal Soto, Senate Laymember
Carmen Quintana, Designee, Dept. of Health
Bruce Jefferson, Deputy Director, Civil Rights Commission
Manuel Gonzalez, Senate Laymember
Karen Martinez, Designee, Dept. of Education
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes, Designee, Dept. of Commerce
Pat Rios, House Laymember - **Secretary**
Margie Chavez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration – **Vice Chair**
Gregorio Chavez, Jr., House Laymember
Myrna Maldonado, House Laymember
Ronnie Cantu, Governor Appointee
Juana Watson, Senate Laymember

Staff:

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director
Lawrence McCormack, Legislative Assistant, Rep. Aguilera

Audience:

Arnuldo Gonzalez, Eleazar Aguilar, Miguel Martinez, Maribel Martinez, Alejandro Rociles, Elvin Lopez, Rigoberta Herrera, Ricardo Rucella, Ricardo Perez, Bernardo Vazquez, Veronica Guerrero, Jenny Sarabia, Ernesto Herrera, Celina Arauz.

Commission Business

Voting

A quorum was established which consisted of 13 Commissioners.

Chair Aguilera opened the meeting with voting for new officers, per I.C. 4-23-28. Verbal nominations were taken for the following:

Rep. Aguilera, Chair
Margie Chavez, Vice Chair
Pat Rios, Secretary.

Assuming that present officers wanted to keep their positions, voting took place by a show of hands. The following are the Commission's new officers for 2005 (and thus make up the Executive Committee):

Rep. John Aguilera, Chair
Margie Chavez, Vice Chair
Pat Rios, Secretary

Review of Commission code and Mission Statement

Executive Director Amy Mendoza read the Commission's mission statement to all new members and reviewed the Commission's code, I.C. 4-23-28, which was attached. Asked Commissioners if there were questions, none.

Review of Subcommittees and open suggestions

Amy Mendoza pointed out the attached Subcommittee List attached. Current Subcommittees are: Executive, Budget, Driver's License/Immigration, Business, Media/Historian, Education, and Health. Chair Aguilera made the suggestion that all chairs of the subcommittees remain the same. A motion was made by Commissioner Cantu and seconded by Commissioner Chavez, Jr. that all Subcommittee chairs remain the same. Motion carried by all those in attendance.

Approval of Commission minutes 12-16-04

Chair Aguilera requested changes and corrections to the Commission minutes from 12-16-04. A motion was made by Commissioner Ronnie Cantu and seconded by Margie Chavez to accept the minutes of the 12-16-04 meeting. Motion carried by all in attendance.

Review of Annual Report

Amy Mendoza presented a rough draft of the Annual Report for 2004. Chair Aguilera and Vice Chair Chavez made the point that the report needs to be more detailed with more information and it should be in Spanish. Chair Aguilera suggested continuing working on the report and bringing it back for the Commission's approval at a later date. Commissioner Manuel Gonzalez pointed out that the Annual Report could be used to argue the Commission's existence.

ESL Funding in Indiana

Chair Aguilera mentioned that there is currently ESL funding in Indiana that does not correspond the population that needs it. The Hispanic/Latino population has grown three fold, and the amount of ESL funding hasn't changed in 10 years. Chair Aguilera mentioned that he would like to leave the meeting with a motion for a letter from the Commission for more ESL funding. There have been efforts from the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to target Hispanic/Latino students in Indiana. The AFT has published research and suggestions for the "Closing the Achievement Gap" programs; legislators from different states are working with the AFT to get new legislation passed.

Commissioner Gonzalez pointed out that this was brought up at a previous meeting. There was a possibility of cuts for program funding which included ESL programs in Indiana Public Schools (IPS).

Chair Aguilera mentioned that was a different issue.

Secretary Pat Rios mentioned the formula for ESL funding, and that the Commission needs to have more specific information. We should be careful not to complicate the issue. The appropriation per student has dropped given the flat lining of school funding.

Vice Chair Chavez pointed out that Hispanics may be “cataloged.” They may be put into a classification that their first language is Spanish when it’s not.

Chair Aguilera requested a motion that the Commission draft a letter of support for more ESL funding in Indiana. A motion was made by Secretary Rios and seconded by Vice Chair Chavez to draft and send the letter. Motion carried by all in attendance.

Commissioner Gonzalez pointed out that Nora Willman from Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) made a presentation about this at a previous meeting. There were recommendations in the Governor’s Efficiency Report that suggests funding cuts in programs, including ESL programs. Mrs. Willman informed that IPS has a grass roots system already. No one is laying claim to the efficiency report.

Secretary Rios mentioned that the ESL issue is parallel to the process of the Driver’s License issue: State’s preference.

Driver’s License Issue

Various members in the audience, who were primarily Spanish-speaking, held side conversations and one audience member requested that the Commission discuss the Driver’s License issue. Chair Aguilera mentioned that the discussion would come later in the meeting, as detailed in the agenda. Amy Mendoza interpreted what was said into Spanish. An audience member mentioned in Spanish that many people had come to the meeting to discuss about the Driver’s License issue and had to go back to work. Requested that the Commission discuss it first. Commissioner Watson gave a brief description of the history of actions being taken by the subcommittee, in English and Spanish for those in attendance.

Driver’s License and Immigration Subcommittee

Secretary Rios gave an update on the Subcommittee’s work in drafting the document and research efforts. In the Subcommittee’s work, it was found that most states were actually increasing efforts to remedy the problem, and that a majority of the states that were doing so used the substitution of the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) for a Social Security Number (SSN). The subcommittee looked at New Mexico in particular.

Secretary Rios mentioned that the report will also include information from the National Conference of State Legislatures, National Council of La Raza and the Mexican American Legal and Educational Fund. The report, which is still in drafted form also points out the fact that the driver’s license issue is a public safety issue.

Amy Mendoza and Commissioner Juana Watson interpreted what was said in Spanish to the audience. Commissioner Watson also clarified the Subcommittee’s purpose to the audience.

An audience member asked in Spanish what would happen if people have to renew their licenses. Another audience member, Jenny Sarabia, informed that people would lose their license if they tried to renew it and presented her report, *Restrictions Placed on Foreign Nationals: The Indiana Driver’s License*, from the Black and Latino Policy Institute.

Amy Mendoza informed members of the audience in Spanish that she would send a summary of the meeting to those in the audience in Spanish and collected the names, addresses and phone numbers of those who wanted to be informed. She also pointed out that, in the past, representatives had attended Commission meetings but no one was present from BMV at today’s meeting. She informed everyone in Spanish and English that she would research the renewing of licenses with the BMV and answer the audience with her findings.

Commissioner Watson informed the audience (in Spanish) that the Commission is working with the Governor's Office to solve the driver's license issue, and introduced Vice Chair Margie Chavez. Commissioner Watson also mentioned that the Subcommittee is working with the Mexican Consulate on the driver's license problem, and pointed out that we need to work together on this and other issues, since there already exists division in the community.

Chair Aguilera mentioned the need for Commission Public Forums and proceeded to move onto the next item on the agenda.

A majority of the audience left the meeting after the Driver's License discussion.

Hispanic Summit Update

Commissioner Sal Soto mentioned that a meeting was held a few weeks ago with the Hispanic Summit Task Force and members of the Indiana Association for Community and Economic Development and Purdue Cooperative Extension. The task force was provided with a lot of information. Commissioner Soto pointed out that participation is needed from Commissioners to help in the task force.

Hispanic Business Summit

Commissioner Sal Soto presented a short video about the Indiana Hispanic Business Summit, which is formally hosted by the Indiana Humanities Council. The video displayed Governor Daniels as well as other leaders speaking on the importance of the summit. Commissioner Soto mentioned that at last year's summit, there were only 3 Hispanics in attendance.

Chair Aguilera mentioned that the Summit is a highly profiled event and suggested the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce also endorse the event.

Commissioner Gonzalez said the Summit has good timing and that it is valuable for the state.

Commissioner Soto asked the Commission to compose an endorsement letter for the Summit.

Commissioner Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes asked how much it would cost to have the Commission endorse the event.

Commissioner Soto pointed out that it would not cost anything, the Commission would just have to compose a letter of endorsement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cantu and seconded by Commissioner Gregorio Chavez, Jr. for a Commission letter to endorse the Hispanic Business Summit. Motion carried by all in attendance.

Subcommittee Reports

Driver's License and Immigration- Commissioner Juana Watson, Chair

The Subcommittee report was given at beginning of the meeting.

Business- Commissioner Manuel Gonzalez, Chair

Access to Capital

Amy Mendoza distributed the handout titled, "Economic Development Sub-committee," to Commissioners and audience. Commissioner Gonzalez asked the question, "How are Latinos on the radar screen?" He mentioned that a lot of Hispanic/Latino businesses are not getting the appropriate market share because they are not aware of what's available. This goes back to Commissioner Soto's suggestion of endorsing the Hispanic Business Summit. Access to capital exists; the Small Business Administration offers micro lending programs to business owners, and there are various tools available

for business training, i.e. business plans, financial statement preparation training, etc. Small Business Development Investment Corporations like the Cambridge Capital and Indiana State Fund offer resources. As a Commission, we can help implement education of the programs and others in the community. Commissioner Gonzalez mentioned that he previously met with the President of the Cambridge Capital Council, and he mentioned there were no Hispanics taking advantage of the resources. Also, there are funding organizations that are looking for demographically full areas.

Bonding Capacity

In terms of bonding capacity, the Business Subcommittee recommends supporting legislation along with the Black Caucus and Indiana State Chamber of Commerce for establishing a Bonding Fund similar to the Investing in Small business fund with Cambridge Capital.

Community Development Corporations (CDC's)

Commissioner Gonzalez mentioned that he had a meeting with Tom Espinoza, Director of La Raza Community Development Fund. Currently the fund has about \$4 million for Indiana, and no one is asking for it. National resources *are* available, the Commission can help assimilate this information and make sure people are aware. JP Morgan Chase Bank has an \$800 Billion community development investment fund for mortgages and small business development. JP Morgan is looking for Latino CDC's to apply for it, but no one is asking. There's also many housing and commercial real estate development resources uniquely for the Hispanic Market.

Minority Business Certification & Networking

Minority Enterprise is mostly African American dominated. A problem is that some Latino businesses are not certified. The Indiana Regional Minority Supplier Development Council (IRMSDC) educates and promotes minority enterprises in Indiana and advocates for the growth of Minority Business Entrepreneurs, if they are certified through IRMSDC.

Skill Trades

The Associated Builders Contractor Association offers an apprenticeship program for Hispanics. They have all the resources, but they're not connecting with the community. The program is in need of students. The program is offered in Spanish. Suggestion: the Commission assists in informing the community of these programs.

Budget- Commissioner Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes, Chair

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes informed the Commission that the report contains a budget ledger from 2003 and 2004. A travel reimbursement page is also included. To date the Commission has \$58,000 left from 2003 and \$125,000 from 2004.

Chair Aguilera thanked Commission Ontiveros-Fuentes for the update and mentioned, that since the Commission will be hosting the Hispanic Summit in 2006, a portion of the budget will go towards that. Chair Aguilera also mentioned to Commissioner that if they would like to collect their reimbursement they are entitled to, and if they would like to donate it, they are entitled to that also.

Executive Director Report, Amy Mendoza

State Bill Briefing- Amy presented a state bill chart and gave a briefing to Commissioners on legislation that may possibly affect the Hispanic/Latino community and the Commission. Amy pointed out the following bills in the chart: HB 1188, Moratorium for Boards and Commissions, HB 1457, State use of foreign consular I.D., HB 1220 Assistance in federal immigration investigations, HB 1842, Drivers Licenses and Documentation, HB 1433, Arrest for driver's license violations, HB 1815, Diversity Commissions at State Universities, SB 625, Sunset of Boards and Commissions, SB 514, Redevelopment commission housing programs, and SB 184, State information technology. Amy informed the Commission that she will keep everyone updated on the status of the bills and asked Commissioners if they would like to vote a position and actions on the bills.

Chair Aguilera mentioned that HB 1457 has had a hearing already and he testified against the bill. The Indiana Catholic Conference and the State police also testified against it. Chair Aguilera also mentioned HB 1188, which would place a 1 year moratorium on all Commissions, this bill is obviously not in the best interest of the Commission.

Amy announced that she will be sending an update on federal bills to Commissioners that may have impact on the Hispanic/Latino community.

Attached Correspondence

Amy reviewed the attached letter and information sheet for the Badges without Borders Fundraiser on February 3, 2005. Commissioner Watson explained the program is a fundraiser for the Indianapolis Police and Firefighters to travel to Mexico for a Spanish language program. Amy mentioned that Governor Daniels and the president of Hidalgo, Mexico is expected to be present, and that this would be a good event to have some exposure for the Commission in the local community. Amy also explained the different level of sponsorships and mentioned it would come with banner space, tickets (which could be donated back to the event), a chance to distribute literature about the Commission.

Commissioner Ontiveros-Fuentes pointed out that sponsoring such an event may have a conflict with the Indiana Ethics laws and once the Commission sponsors these types of events, other organizations will want the Commission to sponsor more.

Chair Aguilera suggested to put it on next month's agenda. Amy and Commissioner Watson pointed out that the event will be held before the next meeting.

Chair Aguilera suggested instead promoting the event on the Commission's webpage.

Community Outreach Discussion

Amy explained that the webpage is up and running as of today, and the address is <http://www.in.gov/ichla> Amy mentioned that she is putting more information on the webpage and eventually it will be in Spanish.

Amy presented a draft of the Commission newsletter and informed Commission that she will be working with Media/Historian Subcommittee Chair Myrna Maldonado on the newsletter and translating it into Spanish. Chair Aguilera suggested bringing the newsletter back at the next meeting to vote on distribution.

Amy asked for recommendations for the Commission's brochure. Amy recommended a higher quality of the brochure since it will be a once time informational piece from the Commission, which may include updated inserts on issues. Chair Aguilera suggested that the final brochure be brought back to the Commission before distribution.

Amy informed Commissioners that she would be traveling around the state in an effort to form alliances and educate about the Commission. Chair Aguilera

Amy asked for Commissioners to have public forums in their communities in 2005, and asked Commission to vote to work with Amy on the details and arrange the forums. Chair Aguilera suggested putting it on the agenda for the next meeting and have something in writing.

Amy asked Commissioners if they would like to have a press conference on the goals of the Commission and plans for 2005. Commissioners did not vote and Chair Aguilera suggested putting something in writing instead.

Commission Partnership Discussion

Amy informed Commissioners that she had been approached by different State organizations and agencies regarding partnership opportunities for events and programs. Amy emphasized that such partnerships would increase the Commission's productivity and exposure, as well as help to accomplish Commission duties, as outlined in I.C. 4-23-28. She encouraged Commissioners to consider

partnerships and informed everyone that she would bring all programs before the Commission for a vote.

Public Question/Answer

Celina Arauz of the Office of Senator Richard Lugar informed Commissioners that she had correspondence with U.S. Senator Orin Hatch's Office, and he plans to reintroduce the DREAM Act this session. Ms. Arauz also presented information to the Commission on Cultural Connections - Culture, Diversity & Unity "The Soul of the South Shore" This is an exhibit program that runs from March 14-April 24 at the Indiana Welcome Center in Northwest Indiana. The goals are to display cultures in Lake County, or anywhere along the South Shore. Chair Aguilera suggested presenting the event at the next Commission meeting for a vote.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:45pm