

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA)
Commission Meeting Minutes
Indiana Government Center South, Conference Rooms 1 & 2
10/27/05**

Attendance:

Rep. John Aguilera-Commission Chair
Margie Chavez-Commission Vice Chair
Dr. Mary Ilu Altman-Senate Lay member
Reverend Samuel Ruiz-House Lay member
Rita Cano-House Lay member
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes- Commission Treasurer
Mistie Morales-Designee, Dept. of Correction
Lawrence McCormack-Proxy, Senator Vi Simpson
Hilda Vazquez-Designee, Department of Education
Manuel Gonzalez-Senate Lay member
Juana Watson- Senate Lay member
Carmen Quintana-Designee, Department of Health

Staff:

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director
Intern Ryan C. Marques
Intern Laura Barrett

Audience:

Lesa Scott, Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis
Linda Hunt, Indiana University Bloomington

I. Establish Quorum

A quorum was established that consisted of 12 Commissioners.

II. Guest Speaker Introductions & Presentations

Director Amy Mendoza introduced John Clark from the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research.

Dr. John Clark, Sagamore Institute for Policy Research (SIPR)

John Clark explained that the Sagamore Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that provides independent and innovative research to a world in progress. SIPR is headquartered in Indianapolis, enabling the institute to influence the Washington Beltway and beyond, while making a difference in America's Heartland. Dr. Clark stated that Consul Sergio Aguilera, of the Mexican Consul in Indianapolis and member of the Board of Trustees for SIPR, suggested conducting a study on the economic impact between Mexico and Indiana. Dr. Clark proceeded to explain that the study would focus on the economic relationships between Indiana and Mexico and would draw attention to the important contribution that Mexican resources (human, economic, commercial and cultural) make to Indiana's economic vitality and to identify untapped resources and possible partnerships that await Indiana-area businesses in Mexico and Mexican companies in Indiana. Dr. Clark then expressed that in addition to the study, it is important to have an SIPR business roundtable with leaders from the Indiana business community and the Mexican and Latino communities that would convene midway

between the start and completion of the study. Dr. Clark explained that this roundtable meeting would provide the opportunity to identify areas where Indiana leaders can build up and enhance collaboration with Mexican workers and interests here in Indiana; and to explore and, if possible, enhance investment opportunities for Mexican businesses in Indiana and for Indiana businesses in Mexico. In addition, Dr. Clark stated that an SIPR policy conference must be held upon the release of the final document (held seven to eight months after the project begins). Dr. Clark expressed that this event will target a broad spectrum of businesses and state and city policymakers interested in Mexico. Dr. Clark stated that his team of researchers envisions co-sponsoring the policy conference with a wide range of organizations with which Sagamore frequently works (Indiana University's Center for International Business Education and Research; Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Indiana Chamber of Commerce; the National Society of Hispanic MBAs). Dr. Clark also expressed that the policy conference will include Mayor Bart Peterson and representatives from the Governor's staff. Dr. Clark then proceeded to address his team of researchers whom consist of Justin Heet, an Associate Fellow with SIPR who specializes in global trade, international labor, demographics and technology, and Nadine Jeserich, an Associate Fellow with SIPR who holds expertise in the fields of regional and international economics, international manufacturing trends, international labor market developments and global trade.

Commission Chair John Aguilera Aguilera thanked the speaker and opened the discussion for questions.

Commissioner Mary Ilu Altman asked if there were any other related studies done at the beginning of the 20th Century.

Dr. Clark responded by stating that there have been other studies conducted that have shown how communities continually do not take the time to integrate immigrants into their established networks and Dr. Clark expressed the need of better integration of immigrants into well established communities throughout the nation and especially in Indiana. In addition, Dr. Clark acknowledged the fact that there is a new breed of social capital in today's society; the Hispanic community as a whole.

Commissioner Altman asked if there have been any benefits reported from these types of studies that touch upon the integration of immigrants into new communities.

Dr. Clark responded by stating that there have been studies done in Minnesota, but he hopes to find more effective and efficient results in his study.

Commissioner Manuel Gonzalez commented on the importance of the Sagamore Institute's study and how useful this information will be for the economic development of local communities and the state. In addition, he stated that legislators live in homogenous communities and are unaware of the increasing diversity among the state, especially among the Hispanic community. He continued to address the significance of the hard data that this study will provide for the general public and legislators which will allow them to actually see how Indiana has economically improved from immigration. He then discussed the need of a general survey for the Hispanic business community in order to identify and learn how particular Hispanic businesses are performing and have the ability to compare numbers and facts to the Dept. of Commerce's data. Commissioner Gonzalez thanked Dr. John Clark for presenting.

Chairman Aguilera asked Dr. Clark who is sponsoring the study.

Dr. Clark said the Sagamore Institute is currently seeking funding for this study. Dr. Clark expressed that many local businesses have contributed, but a need still exists for more funding from all facets of the community and the state.

Chairman Aguilera commented on Anti-Immigration groups and was insulted that some Anti-Immigration groups, who were not on the list to speak, spoke during the public testimony of the Homeland Security forum. He expressed how it was unjust for these Anti-Immigration groups to speak out when there were no representatives from Pro-Immigration organizations to defend the pro-immigration argument. Chairman Aguilera stated that he wrote letters to Senator Wyss and Representative Ruppel in disgust about the untimely and unjustified remarks from the Anti-Immigration Group during the Homeland Security forum.

Chairman Aguilera then expressed the future need for the results from Dr. Clark's study to inform and show Anti-Immigration groups and others opposed to immigration the positive economic impact that immigration has on the state during any open public forum.

Commissioner Juana Watson stated that Consul Sergio Aguilera, Mexican Consul of Indianapolis, and Governor Mitch Daniels are both promoting this study.

Commissioner Margie Chavez asked if there was going to be another Homeland Security forum.

Chairman Aguilera stated that there will be no more Homeland Security forums this year, but next year he wants representatives from the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs to be present at the Homeland Security forums.

Dr. Clark discussed his article in the *Indy Star* about Homeland Security and its affect upon immigration and Latinos. Dr. Clark then explained that there will be a meeting on October 28, 2005 about Civic Nationalism and the presentation of a new model for Newcomers, which will be presented by Sagamore on IUPUI's campus.

Commissioner Altman discussed the need to notify the Commissioners about upcoming programs sponsored by the Sagamore Institute.

Dr. Clark stated that he has his own webpage, www.indybuzz.blogspot.com, where any one can log on and discuss current events and observe schedules for up and coming presentations. Dr. Clark then discussed an event that featured Jose Molinas.

Chairman Aguilera thanked Dr. Clark for presenting.

Jennifer Kirchhofer, Central Indiana Better Business Bureau – Absent

III. Commission Business

A. Review and accept 9-27-05 Commission meeting minutes

Chairman Aguilera made a motion to review and accept the September 27th, 2005 Commission meeting minutes. A second motion was made and accepted.

B. The 5th Annual Statewide Hispanic/Latino Conference – Wrap up Evaluation

Director Mendoza discussed the need to address a taskforce for the conference evaluations. She pointed out that each Commissioner received a chart and feedback comment sheet in their folder depicting the results of the conference evaluations. She stated that there were many comments directed toward the issue of using a different location for the conference which will enable all workshops to function on the same floor of the next venue. In addition, she mentioned that many comments from the evaluation forms suggested that the workshops were too general and that they should be focused more on specific topics such as immigration and housing. Also, Director Mendoza stated that there should be a better system to register guests for dinner, possibly by using tickets. She concluded that it is important that the Commission invite all races from the community to come to next year's conference (in an effort to think globally) and she then addressed how the Commission will be able to reach out to these diverse communities.

Chairman Aguilera stated that the logistics of the conference could have been better. He then complemented the key-note speakers and pointed out that the long term goal is to invite all races from the community to next year's conference.

Commissioner Altman expressed the need for more advertising of the conference on a statewide basis. Commissioner Altman then commented on how all branches of government should be notified of this conference and then expressed a need for a taskforce to notify government offices and especially the Governor for next year's conference. Commissioner Altman called for the Governor to address next year's conference.

Commissioner Watson responded to Dr. Altman's request and stated that there needs to be an advancement of notice to the Governor and his staff for next year's conference.

Commissioner Chavez stated that agencies and commissions must now notify the Governor and his staff by a written letter that entails the invitation for a particular function. She then expressed that the Commission should follow the Status of the Black Male's conference in terms of renting hotel rooms rather than space for the function. She implied this would decrease the cost of the conference.

Chairman Aguilera expressed that the Commission budget must be discussed during the retreat days and how the Commission must utilize the funds in the budget.

Director Mendoza stated that the updated budget for the Statewide Conference will be distributed during next month's Commission meeting.

Commissioner Chavez asked Commissioners if there were any other suggestions/comments about the Statewide Conference.

Commissioner Altman stated that the exhibitors were very good.

Commissioner Rita Cano expressed that there must be a need to welcome more students who live in different cities throughout the state and to reduce the student charge for registration.

Commissioner Chavez commented that if the Commission decides to hold a two day conference, then it would be effective to have the guests explore the Indianapolis community by going to the zoo or attending museums, which would stimulate economic growth for the city.

C. Public Forum Update

Chairman Aguilera commenced the public forum update.

Director Mendoza pointed out that an article was published in the Chronicle-Tribune which discussed the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs presentation at the Marion forum on October 18th, 2005. She stated that the Marion city government was very welcoming and the State Representative, mayor and city-council all attended the forum.

Director Mendoza mentioned that since only 8 people attended, it would be wise to send advance notices about the next forum in Marion and Amy definitely would like to return back. Amy also pointed out that the Human Rights Commission made t-shirts for the Marion forum.

Director Mendoza explained that subjects concerning health, education, student orientation for schools, language barriers and the need for translators were addressed at the Marion forum.

Director Mendoza called upon state agencies to look into demographic increases in rural communities such as Marion and then address the issues that are presented by the findings.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that workshops would be a very effective way for communities such as Marion to integrate the Hispanic/Latino community into mainstream society. He pointed out that there are now 4,000 new jobs in Marion that have been created in the past year due to economic development. He expressed that a workshop for cultural awareness would be very beneficial for companies that are located in Marion and other rural communities. He mentioned that Mayor Seybold is a very good example of political leadership due to his desire of integrating the Hispanic/Latino community into Marion and his overall commitment to improving life for the residents of Marion.

Commissioner Chavez stated that Mayor Seybold asked Margie if she and her FSSA staff could return back to Marion and address the community with programs that are available for Hispanics/Latinos in Marion. She stated that she has accepted Mayor Seybold's invitation and will return back to Marion in order to tackle the issues that are prevalent in the Hispanic/Latino community. She also mentioned that Marion has a Latino round table and how it is important for this round table to address the issues of integrating Hispanics/Latinos into the community and filling positions for new jobs throughout Marion.

D. Regional & Departmental Updates

Chairman Aguilera called for Regional and & Departmental Updates

Commissioner Samuel Ruiz stated that he works with the Faith-Based State Commission and wanted to know the population of Hispanics/Latinos that are incarcerated throughout the state and what steps the state could take to help Hispanics/Latinos that are currently incarcerated. Commissioner Ruiz called upon the Department of Correction to present at the next commission meeting.

Commissioner Mistie Morales stated that the Commissioner for the Department of Correction has started signage and is now looking for someone to translate the information into Spanish.

Commissioner Watson stated that the "Access Indiana" conference, which was held on October 6th, 2005, was very beneficial in bringing different Latino leaders from all over the state together with County Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police to address gun related issues and problems that occur when dealing with Hispanic/Latinos.

Director Mendoza stated that it is important to make "Access Indiana" more well-known for next year's event.

E. Retreat Discussion

Director Mendoza called upon the commissioners to think about the components for this year's retreat. She then mentioned some components will be board training, an outside neutral facilitator and how much the commission will be spending.

Commissioner Altman mentioned that she met with the Director for the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs at the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs statewide summit. Commissioner Altman then stated that she would like to invite him to this year's retreat.

Director Mendoza stated that she also met with the Director for the Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs and mentioned that there will be a national Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs meeting in Kansas City during the month of December for all directors.

Commissioner Ruiz mentioned the need to unite the Hispanic/Latino community throughout the state. He also stated that it is important to bridge together the divisions between the Hispanics/Latinos from other countries.

Commissioner Watson stated that she is going to start a retreat for all Latinos and address the division between Hispanics/Latinos who hail from different countries and cultures. She also called for uniting and working together to tackle this problem and wishes to create programs and unite personal. She expressed that she would like to have a cultural awareness program in every city with a mediator to unite the Hispanic/Latino Community.

Chairman Aguilera stated that the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs' retreat should focus on the commission itself. Chairman Aguilera mentioned that after last year's retreat, everything went very well for the Commission. He also pointed out that the structure of last year's retreat was effective and the commission should follow the same schedule.

Commissioner Altman expressed that she enjoyed last year's format and how it is important to keep the commissioners informed about the retreat.

Commissioner Morales stated that cultural sensitivity should be addressed at the retreat.

Director Mendoza questioned how much the commission is going to spend for this year's retreat.

Commissioner Claudia Fuentes stated that \$1,500 would be the total for the retreat. She touched upon items such as hotel rooms, speaker fees and food as items in the retreat budget.

Chairman Aguilera asked who would be willing to help plan for the retreat.

Commissioners Gonzalez, Altman and Chavez volunteered to assist with the Commission retreat

IV. Subcommittee Reports

A. Education: Director Mendoza stated that there were 4 people from the East Chicago community that attended the Education Sub-Committee along with the Sub-Committee members. She posed the question of how does the Commission create a good recommendation for the Governor concerning education. She then answered this question by the idea of creating community building programs that would incorporate teachers, parents and corporate America. Director Mendoza mentioned that the overall goal of this plan is to decrease drop out rates and increase graduation rates.

B. Economic Development: Commissioner Gonzalez presented his first proposed program which is to create a State Bonding fund to assist small business and minority owned businesses that are involved in public work projects. He pointed out that the stadium project is a prime example of how small businesses, who are qualified and certified, are unable to receive contracts from the Primes due to the inability to receive bonding. He mentioned that the bonding market is crumbling and shrinking due to the past actions of Enron and others. Commissioner Gonzalez stated that he is working with the Indiana Business Development Corporation to draft language which would entail creating a bonding pool utilizing state funds through pension funds which would enable small and minority owned businesses to dip into this pool. He expressed that this pool would create leverage between larger companies and smaller ones. He pointed out that the State of Indiana has already created a similar piece of legislation. He also mentioned that Cambridge Capital and Lilly were two players in this piece of legislation and both companies did not experience any losses. Leveraging state investment dollars will not affect tax payers. He expressed that the overall goal for this program is to create a bond bank which will allow small business to participate in gaining bond contracts.

Chairman Aguilera asked if there was model for this piece of proposed legislation.

Commissioner Gonzalez responded by stating that North or South Carolina has created a similar type of program, but is different in a way that their legislation

calls for small businesses to put up a \$50,000 minimum bid. He stated that Indiana's program would also differ from North or South Carolina's legislation because Indiana's would be geared toward public works projects.

Commissioner Altman asked what obstructs small businesses from gaining bond contracts.

Commissioner Gonzalez responded by stating that bond companies have shrunk and have cut out a majority of money. Manuel also expressed that there are a limited amount of contracts.

Chairman Aguilera asked if this program would help small businesses or minority owned small businesses.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that at the program's inception it would help small businesses, but the program's overall goal would be to match minority owned businesses to bonding contracts.

Chairman Aguilera stated that if this language is not specific then the overall idea or goal will not hit the point. He also mentioned that there should be a round table discussion on this proposed program and that only two months remain for legislation to be turned in.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Indiana Business Coalition and State Representatives Crawford and Ford are interested in this proposed program.

Chairman Aguilera stated that Commissioner Gonzalez should keep working with his networks and to bring back more information and recommendation of support.

Commissioner Gonzalez presented his second proposed program which calls for modeling a piece of legislation similar to the State of Wisconsin's Immigrant Lending Program for mortgages using ITIN numbers. He stated that Wisconsin is a model state that created liquidity and legislation primarily for the Hispanic/Latino population.

Commissioner Gonzalez then presented an idea to benchmark different laws and procurement by collaborating with the diversity program directors from universities throughout the state. He stated that it is important to make the Hispanic/Latino presence known through the university system in order to gain procurement. He expressed that the commission should invite the directors of the diversity programs from each university in the state to present before the commissioners what their program has done for the Hispanic/Latino community.

Commissioner Altman stated that it is difficult for Hispanic/Latino businesses to address university procurements due to how there are many African-American directors who are already well established at the universities.

Chairman Aguilera stated that it would help to retrieve data on this program before making any decisions.

C. Budget: Commissioner Fuentes stated that the commission has exhausted the funds from year 2003 and used the funds that were allocated. Claudia pointed out that the commission received a portion of funds from 2004 and 2005 and stated that there is \$150,000 in funds at this point in the commission's budget.

Lawrence McCormack, proxy for Senator Vi Simpson, asked if the 5th Annual Statewide Summit would cut into this year's fund.

Commissioner Fuentes stated that the Summit would indeed cut into this year's fund.

Chairman Aguilera motioned for the acceptance of the budget. A second motion was announced, motion accepted.

D. Driver's License/Immigration: Director Mendoza mentioned that she received a letter and other information concerning the application for BMV interpreters from the Human Rights Commission. She pointed out that the letter and the enclosed information stated that a potential interpreter did not need any type of educational degree and that there was no date or signature on the letter.

Commissioner Altman stated that the Driver's license manual has many mistakes.

Chairman Aguilera pointed out that the Medical Association is against interpreters due to the extra costs. Chairman Aguilera also stated that he would be calling on commissioners to testify and call their local legislators about the driver's license issue concerning the Hispanic/Latino community.

Director Mendoza asked who is going to be the Chair of the Driver's License/Immigration Sub-Committee.

Chairman Aguilera mentioned that there are now better options than the REAL ID and that the commission was looking at all kinds of options that were too short term, therefore, the commission held off. He stated that the REAL ID act will not allow undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver's license without a social security number, but Rep. Aguilera mentioned that some states have found ways to get around this.

Director Mendoza mentioned that the Chair of the Driver's License/Immigration Sub-Committee must look at the old driver's license document and then develop a new document.

Chairman Aguilera stated that anyone can help with the driver's license document and does not have to be on the commission.

Director Mendoza stated that this year's driver's license document will not be as lengthy as the other.

Commissioner Ruiz stated that he would love to help in the development of this document.

Chairman Aguilera stated that someone must be willing to write the driver's license document for the Commission. He expressed that an academic would be the best candidate to write the driver's license document.

Commissioner Morales stated that possibly someone from the Sagamore Institute could help out with the driver's license document.

Director Mendoza discussed the recent changes to the Indiana BMV identification document list and instructions that was presented at the public hearing. Amy stated that the BMV added more language to the report and list, especially Item 9.

Commissioner Chavez mentioned that she attended the BMV meeting, representing the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. Margie stated that there were 12 people who testified and that many people were opposed to the recent changes.

Chairman Aguilera called for public testimony from the BMV public hearing.

Commissioner Chavez stated that she is still taking written testimony from the BMV public hearing.

Director Mendoza mentioned that the reason for the BMV's public hearing was due to a suit against the BMV for not holding a public hearing when the BMV made changes to their rules for the first time. Director Mendoza mentioned that public testimony and information would be distributed the second week of November.

Chairman Aguilera mentioned that he would like to review the changes the BMV has made concerning the new identification rules and during the next commission meeting he would like to address the changes and have a task force meeting.

Commissioner Ruiz stated that the commission must raise concern about these recent changes made by the BMV.

V. Announcements/Audience Question & Answer

Director Mendoza announced the calendar of events.

Commissioner Chavez mentioned her email calling for any information about Latino community leaders' biographies and head shots for the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs History Project.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Rep. Aguilera at approximately 12:30 P.M.

