



**STATE OF INDIANA**

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

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**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, October 28, 2010  
3:00pm – 4:30pm  
Conference Center Room A  
Indiana Government Center South  
Indianapolis, IN**

**Commissioners Present:**

Richard Espinosa, Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne  
Guadalupe ‘Herb’ Hernandez, Senate Lay member, Fort Wayne (Chair)  
Alfredo Gonzalez, Governor Appointee, Indianapolis  
Freddie Thon, House Lay Member, South Bend (Treasurer)  
Josie Williams, Designee, Civil Rights Commission  
Shanida Sharp-Byrnes, Designee, Dept of Education  
Ralph Flores, House Lay Member, Munster

**Commissioners Not Present:**

Michelle Stein-Ordóñez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration  
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Secretary)  
Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction  
Andrea Perez, Designee, Department of Health  
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon  
Pat Rios, House Lay Member, Indianapolis  
Rep. Rich McClain  
Senator Greg Walker  
Pedro Ledo, Senate Lay Member, Ft. Wayne  
Lisa Kusiak, House Lay Member, Munster  
Senator Frank Mrvan

**Visitors:**

**Staff Present:**

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

## **Opening**

Chairman Hernandez called the meeting to order at 3:10p.m.

Hernandez reminded the commissioners to sign in.

He noted the lack of quorum, with seven members in attendance. He then asked all commissioners to introduce themselves for the benefit of Commissioner Ralph Flores, attending his second meeting since being named to the commission in August. Commissioners introduced themselves.

Hernandez then asked if any commissioners had any changes they wanted made to the September minutes, despite the lack of quorum. No commissioners offered any changes.

Commissioner Freddie Thon asked if a record would be kept as to which commissioners had excused themselves from attendance prior to the meeting. Hernandez reminded Thon that no such motion was offered or approved at the September meeting. Executive Director Lopez added that no motion had been made to differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. He said that attendance is tracked at all meetings. Lopez went on to clarify that no commissioner has the authority to remove another commissioner for lack of attendance. A recommendation could be made by the executive board to the appointing authority, but that recommendation would be non-binding. Thon asked that a spreadsheet be kept to track attendance and that it was unfair to those traveling longer distances that some commissioners consistently miss meetings.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Due to lack of quorum, no motion of approval was entertained.

## **Approval of Financials**

Financials for the month of September were submitted. Lopez added that the commission has done an excellent job of following through with projects while staying consistently under budget. He said that the message to the rest of the State is clear, that enough resources exist by exploring partnerships in the community to accomplish many things while still being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. He said the Statewide Virtual Strategy Summit is a perfect example of this. Espinosa added that the commission was certainly moving in the right direction and said he was pleased that the commissioners were finding new ways to be creative and innovative. Thon pointed out that for the quarter the commission is under budget and asked for a breakdown, quarter by quarter, of how the budget is being spent.

The financials were approved unanimously.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Lopez said that the response for the year from the community has been positive. In building the Statewide Strategy Guide, Lopez said that while he had initially tried to break it down by region,

the recommendations and strategies had been echoed throughout the state and it became an exhaustive process.

Additionally, Lopez said that some regions did a better job of providing specifics that could be pinpointed as examples. Still, he said that, while lengthy, people with whom he has spoken have been excited about the Guide itself.

Lopez said that the key question now is the practical impact of the Guide. He said he wanted to hear from commissioners about suggestions, such as breaking down the state into twelve regions to hold twelve separate meetings throughout the 2011 year to follow up on what was discussed during the Summit.

Flores asked if ICHLA has representation from each of the twelve regions in discussion. Lopez said that while contacts exist, representation does not. Flores said that it would still be possible to reach out and engage locals, regardless of whether there is a commission from the area. Lopez then asked whether the follow-ups should be done with the groups that participated or on an individual basis and Flores said that group meetings would be ideal.

Lopez then asked what the perception is in northwest Indiana about the event, and Flores said that feedback was all extremely positive about the event itself. Flores also said that a good group of advocates exist in northwest Indiana exists to overcome any skepticism that might exist about the commission. Then asked if there was a way to get people from different regions together to share information. Lopez said that the Guide should help identify other resources around the state and that individuals and groups around the community should be pushed to engage the commission as a follow up.

Then said the best thing to come out of the Summit was the spirit of collaboration. Lopez urged commissioners to go back to their contacts, share the information the commission is discussing, and figure out ways to begin implementing some of the strategies discussed in the Guide as a starting point for further statewide discussion. Then asked how many individuals had received the Guide, and Lopez said that upwards of four hundred people – both participants and non-participants of the Summit – had received the Guide. Lopez then asked each commissioner to ask their contacts about two of the strategies discussed in the Guide that might be collaborative projects for the commission. Ultimately, he said, that should be the main role of the commission.

Hernandez said that commissioners needed to become more engaged in the business of the commission in order for the strategies to truly take root in their communities. He asked who had printed the Guide. Three commissioners raised their hands, and Flores said that while he had not printed it, he had, in fact, read it. He mentioned that several programs already exist in places like Ft. Wayne but that greater collaboration is needed to make them work on a broader scale in the Latino community.

Hernandez then thanked Lopez for his work on the Summit and said that he has heard nothing but great feedback from participants.

### **Chairman's Report**

Hernandez provided an update on the Micro-lending project with the Community Action of Northeast Indiana. He described the aims of the initiative and discussed the specifics of the program as well as the responsibilities of all parties. The MOU was agreed to in August.

Hernandez said he is sitting on the loan approval committee and said that the significance of the program is that it is sparking economic development in the Fort Wayne community, and he said that funds had already been allocated to replicate the program in another part of the state. Commissioner Richard Espinosa asked if women-owned businesses would also be eligible. Lopez said that the program itself, a partnership between CANI and the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, is open to all applicants but that funds set aside by ICHLA for lending through the program would be catering specifically to Latino and Latina owned businesses.

Finally, Hernandez reminded commissioners about the November 4 retreat, saying that the agenda would be similar to the one last year. A SWOT analysis will be completed and the facilitator, Michael Russo, will be trying to help commissioners find way to grow as a group in 2011. Hernandez also said that we as a commission must be careful about not taking on too many projects, instead focused on a small number of accomplishable ones.

#### **Business Subcommittee report**

Lopez reminded commissioners that while on M/WBE certification workshop had been held in August in South Bend, it was important to get a few others scheduled. Terry Daniel in the Department of Administration, who oversaw the program, has left the State, so new relationships would need to be created in order to carry out the project.

On the administrative side, the Business subcommittee does not have a chairman. Restructuring the subcommittee should be a priority for the beginning of the coming year, Lopez said.

#### **Civil Rights Subcommittee report**

Lopez said that the micro-lending program, which falls under this subcommittee, had already been discussed.

#### **Education Subcommittee report**

Lopez said that he and Commissioner Sharp-Byrnes, who chairs the Education subcommittee, need to coordinate their efforts to get some momentum for the group. Lopez also said he would like to get some professional diversity on that subcommittee, a better mix of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

Sharp-Byrnes also discussed the Department of Education Parent Pledge, which is available for parents on the DOE website in Spanish. Lopez said that because many Latino families “get lost in shuffle,” it is important to have a set of resources in Spanish available to Spanish-speaking parents. One of the recommendations made in the Strategy Guide is that school districts find

alternative funding, such as private sector partners, to fund intake centers to be able to ensure that these parents are receiving what they need.

### **Health Subcommittee report**

Lopez said that Commissioner Michelle Stein-Ordoñez had asked him to share the subcommittee report with the group. He said that at the outset of the year, the subcommittee had wanted to create a formal evaluation of the DEEP diabetes education program. In beginning that process, it became clear that a complete scan of all diabetes education programs aimed at Latinos all over the state would be need and a logical first step.

As a result, Dr. David Marrero of IU's School of Medicine is now utilizing his grant resources to provide this scan. Lopez said that this process was currently underway, with surveys being distributed throughout Indiana in attempt to gather the necessary data. Thon said that the group is an impressive one, and Lopez said that this makes an incredible difference in helping the subcommittee accomplish things.

### **Unfinished Business**

Lopez said that all letters of appreciation had been completed and sent out.

Hernandez asked Lopez to send commissioners a reminder email about the upcoming retreat. He also said that if there is quorum at the retreat, minutes and financials would be brought up for approval.

With respect to ICHLA involvement in local Latino issues in Goshen, Thon said that he had no new information on Mayor Kaufman's group. He said that considering the reaction of ICHLA commissioners initially, he is not pushing the issue but will gladly help the mayor if asked.

### **New Business**

Thon said that St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend recently hired a Hispanic CEO, a piece of good news that he wanted to share with commissioners.

Lopez said that from November 17-20, the American Federation of Teachers would be holding an education conference in Washington, DC. Lopez said that while he could not attend, if the Chairman would want to attend, all expenses, including travel, would be covered by the organization. Hernandez asked that Lopez send him the information.

Thon said that the Latina Women's Business conference at St. Mary's College in South Bend was a success, with more than 300 attending.

### **Adjournment**

At 4:33pm, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn.