

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
Commission Meeting Minutes
Indiana Department of Workforce Development
Indiana Government Center South
Conference Room 301-A
11/29/2006**

Commissioners Present:

Manuel Gonzalez, Senate Lay Member, Commission Chair
Carolin Requiz - Designee, Indiana Department of Health
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes - Designee, Indiana Economic Development Corporation,
Commission Treasurer
Adolfo Solis, House Lay Member
Christine Cde Baca - Indiana Civil Rights Commission
Angel Velez-Designee, Indiana Department of Correction
Pastor Samuel Ruiz – House Lay Member
Lawrence McCormack - Proxy

Staff:

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

I. Call to Order

Chair Gonzalez brought the Commission meeting to order.

Establish Quorum

A quorum was not established at this time.
Chair Gonzalez decided to change the order of the agenda until more
Commissioners were present.

II. Commission Business

A. Adoption of Minutes

Chair Gonzalez acknowledged that the adoption of the minutes could not be made until a quorum was established. He moved to discussion on the 2007 State-wide Conference on Hispanic/Latino Issues Update.

B. 2007 State-wide Conference on Hispanic/Latino Issues Update

Chair Gonzalez asked Director Mendoza to report on the latest Conference Update.

Director Mendoza stated that the Conference Steering Committee is planning a 3 day Conference with (welcome session on Wednesday, Conference and

workshops on Thursday and Friday). The Committee would like to double the attendance and information presented at the 2005 Conference. There were approximately 250 people in attendance for the 2005 Conference. The Steering Committee would like to include a Latino Business Expo that will have exhibitors present. The Committee has already established a partnership with the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (ISHCC). There are plans for three main themes for the Conference that include: Focus on model programs from other states, looking at what Indiana is lacking, inviting others to learn from them, inviting federal agency members and sponsors to be speakers. The Commission has learned a lot of useful methodology from attending larger conferences. The Conference will include workshops that are developed into the following tracks: Economic development, immigration, civic participation, how to run for office, understanding the migrant issues, mental health, cultural competency, domestic violence and the legislative process. The Steering Committee would like to emphasize on details by including workshops that might discuss voting, voter registration, the flu epidemic, lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and various other topics of interest. The Conference will focus on 6 different workshops, with none being repeated. The Steering Committee would like to provide new information to the public, include town hall meetings, bring young leaders to a Latino leadership workshop/forum and discuss race relations and diversity. The Steering Committee also discussed details of the Conference's preliminary format that includes the welcome reception and the Latino Expo. Director Mendoza said that the Steering Committee would like to bring in the Governor, Legislators and Speaker Bauer to attend. She explained that last year, Commissioners decided to bring in other ethnic groups. The Committee would like to use these plans to include all communities.

Chair Gonzalez said that we as a Commission voted a year ago to send Commissioners to National Conferences. He personally attended two of those conferences. He explained that those experiences helped him to understand a different perspective for a statewide conference that should include new and meaningful content. The Commission has found valuable models from other parts of the country. He discussed the importance of reaching out to the grass roots community, elected officials and representatives and the business community. Chair Gonzalez said that he recently visited the Fort Wayne area, where many Hispanic/Latino businesses out there that are not certified. Chair Gonzalez was disappointed in this specific situation because this community and many others are missing out on valuable opportunities. Chair Gonzalez said that the outreach needs to be a part of the Conference. He suggests that the Commission encourage businesses to be more dynamic. He also suggested that the BMV could actively participate with the Conference.

BMV Deputy Commissioner, Steven Leak (audience member) suggested that dealer associations would be another group to be included in the conference.

He confirmed that the issue is not just about someone who doesn't know how to speak English.

Director Mendoza pointed out the review summary and workshop topics/tracks. She asked for any corrections at this time.

Commissioner Velez asked how the Department of Corrections would participate with the conference.

Chair Gonzalez expressed the importance of state jobs and other issues. He commented on a remark made by the Department of Correction Commissioner, J. David Donahue, in regards to immigrant families that do not understand the ability to visit family members while incarcerated. Chair Gonzalez reiterated the message to get this knowledge out to the public.

Commissioner Velez also mentioned the absence of a photo ID. He said that he has seen this problem occur many times over the years. He was the first Hispanic in the Department over twelve years ago. Commissioner Velez explained that this ID problem is more prevalent for family members to get in now, as there is a lot of information available to assist those individuals.

Chair Gonzalez explained that the Commission is reaching out for Conference help from representatives from specific agencies. He also suggested announcing the Statewide Conference at a public forum. Chair Gonzalez said that the Commission is giving everyone plenty of time to plan this Conference, as the Commission has learned from other state conferences. Chair Gonzalez expressed the importance of showing the Commission's leadership and small budget and then leverage to another agency. He felt that the Commission has done a great job to provide attendance outreach to government officials and state agencies.

Audience member Sgt. Carlos Santos from the Marion County Sheriff's Department asked when and where the Statewide Conference would be held.

Chair Gonzalez confirmed that the State-wide Conference is tentatively scheduled for October 10-12, 2007, beginning Wednesday and concluding on Friday after lunch. He said that the Commission would like to make commitments and send out contracts/sponsors. He asked that Carlos Santos is included on the Commission mailing list. Chair Gonzalez said that the Steering Committee is selecting a hotel, probably the Marriott to host the event. Local law enforcement are also invited to participate. Chair Gonzalez reflected back on the first conference meeting where approximately 40 individuals were in attendance. Unfortunately, the attendance has decreased to 4 individuals as of the last Steering Committee meeting. Chair Gonzalez would like to see more organizations participate early on. He mentioned that the steering committee has already secured one corporate sponsor that plans to

underwrite the event. The Steering Committee is currently seeking the content for the Conference. Chair Gonzalez reiterated the importance to have new faces involved, as the idea is to bring in new ideas and new ways of thinking and asked for additional ideas.

Chair Gonzalez moved the discussion to the 2006 Retreat Update.

C. 2006 Retreat

Director Mendoza informed the Commission that the staff has been making plans to hold the 2006 Retreat on December 8th, 2006. However, since there will be a new Speaker of the House and President of the Senate, there is an increased likelihood of new commissioners being appointed, and so the retreat date has been moved to January.

Director Mendoza said that the Executive Committee has since changed the 2006 Retreat to be held on Friday, January 19th and Saturday, January 20th of 2007 instead. A welcome dinner is scheduled for the Commissioners on January 19th, followed by the Retreat on Saturday of the 20th. The purpose of Friday's dinner is to create an informal discussion/mood for the Commissioners. The dinner is still tentative. The actual Retreat will begin at approximately 8:30am-9:00am on Saturday. Director Mendoza said that Tim Roberts will be the moderator for the Retreat discussion. He is available to speak for 1-2 hours and will actively encourage participation amongst Commissioners and inspire new ways of thinking. Director Mendoza said that the Retreat will start with a review of the day and then the real work will take place, mapping out the Commission goals for the years 2007-2008. She said that the Commission will review progress of 2006 and items for research in 2007. Attendance from the Commissioners will also be discussed. She confirmed the location for the retreat at the Governor's Residence. She also mentioned that the Commission has had a quorum at every meeting for awhile until very recent. Director Mendoza said that everyone present at today's meeting have participated, however, some that are not present today have not.

Chair Gonzalez moved the discussion to the Executive Director's Report.

II. Reports

A. Executive Director Report / Annual Report Update

Director Mendoza was pleased to announce that two committee reports are complete but are still under review. Both the Education and Civil Rights Committee reports are in progress. Director Mendoza said that there are plans to release the report findings at the legislative dinner. Director Mendoza also discussed her summary of presentations given at the National Association of Human Rights Workers held in Indianapolis and the Peace and Social Justice Symposium held at Valparaiso University. Director Mendoza stated that the dinner preparations and committee reports have taken up much of the staff's

time. She acknowledged that the dinner invitations have already been sent out. The Lt. Governor will present the keynote speech. The staff has already confirmed attendance from two legislators. The purpose of the dinner is to release committee findings, recognize committee members, build and increase partners, and recognize two legislators that have contributed to the formation of the commission. The Lt. Governor also plans to speak about her upcoming initiatives and will present a special award to the two authors of the legislation that created the Commission and verbally recognize those that wrote the code. Director Mendoza emphasized that the attendance is extremely important, as the staff has already sent out 300-400 invitations. She also plans to have the each Committee Chair speak on behalf of their committee progress.

Chair Gonzalez asked for any questions at this time.

Chair Gonzalez gave his insight as a part of the Executive Committee. He mentioned the importance of the upcoming legislative session. He referred to the needed increase of the Commission's budget. Chair Gonzalez stated that the Commission is unable to have sufficient staff support because of the budgetary needs. He also spoke about an incident that occurred in Harrisburg Pennsylvania in regards to anti-immigration-related laws. He reiterated the importance of maintaining close relationships with knowledgeable Latinos so nothing as extreme as what happened in Pennsylvania will occur in Indiana. He said that the Commission has already been talking to policy directors and currently has a meeting with Speaker Bauer and Senator Long. Chair Gonzalez reiterated that the Commission is not a lobbying group. He explained that the Annual Report is an extremely important document and needs to be used when drafting legislation, and he encouraged commissioners to promote this. Chair Gonzalez said that legislators are receiving phone calls about subjects covered in the report. He suggests that they use the State Commission's reports to get those important details to the public.

Commissioner Cde Baca said, "As members of the Commission, it is our responsibility to go out and spread the word." She explained how many people are not aware that the Commission exists. Commissioner Cde Baca suggested that more communication from within the Commission develop. She stated how many areas from within Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and Indiana University have never even heard of the Commission. Commissioner Cde Baca said, "We are here and here to help." She asked for all Commissioners to think about how the Commission can make a difference as far as getting the information out. She asked for everyone to pass along the report.

Director Mendoza explained how this discussion comes all the time. She said that herself, and the two staff members, Ryan Marques and Laura Barrett, do a lot of communication. She also emphasized that representing the Commission should be taken as a serious appointment from Commissioners. Director

Mendoza explained how she has received various phone calls from individuals stating that there are Commissioners present at certain events who never speak up on behalf of the Commission's work/progress. She asked that those Commissioners at least mention the fact that the Commission is doing a lot of good work. Director Mendoza explained how everything falls back on the Commissioners, as their appointment is a serious matter. She said that it is each Commissioner's responsibility to support the Commission's work and correct misunderstandings. Director Mendoza assured all Commissioners to direct any uncertainties or questions about the Commission's stance to her via email or telephone, as misunderstandings might increase otherwise.

Commissioner Requiz referred to herself as being a new commissioner. She said that the Commission needs to make clear the message and what media protocol entails. She asked for the proper ways that the commissioners could speak on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Requiz said, "We need to make this clear so we don't give the wrong message."

Chair Gonzalez agreed with Commissioner Requiz and thanked her for her comment.

Audience member, Juan Gonzalez agreed that the Commission represents all Indiana Hispanics/Latinos and has a lot of power for all immigrants. He personally reaches out to the community and shares his support of the Commission.

Chair Gonzalez thanked Juan Gonzalez and commented on the aforementioned Commission Retreat details. He explained how Commissioners will experience many changes at the January Retreat. He said that the Retreat was rescheduled for January so that new Commissioners might be included. He also mentioned that his very own appointment is questionable at this time. Chair Gonzalez expressed his concern for changes within the Commission. He would like to see the Retreat well-attended and include a training session. Chair Gonzalez reminded everyone that commissioners also represent agencies. He understands that commissioners must be extra careful when speaking on behalf of the Commission or someone from their agency. Chair Gonzalez briefly mentioned an incident involving Commissioners' misunderstandings in the past. He also mentioned that there are always volunteers and lobbying groups available to emphasize support. Chair Gonzalez explained that there is a firm definition between a lobbying group and the Commission's duties/limitations. He asked all Commissioners to attend the Retreat in January so that all questions will be answered. He hopes that all representatives will then agree to what the Commission's policy entails. He also emphasized the importance of communicating the commission's message clearly. He also mentioned the importance of established parameters for agency appointees/designees serving on the commission.

Director Mendoza agreed that Commissioner Requiz made a good point. She said that it is imperative that the commissioners meet, create reports and establish a structure. In terms of media protocol, she agreed that something specific is needed. Director Mendoza informed commissioners that she would undertake the task of producing a drafted media protocol sheet. She also mentioned the difficult and delicate establishment process of boards and commissions that are new. In addition, she referred to the commission's progress since 2004.

III. Guest Speaker Presentation

Chair Gonzalez acknowledged that the meeting still lacked a quorum, however, invited guest speaker, Virgil Madden, to carry on with the discussion.

A. *Virgil Madden, Special Assistant/Minority Affairs, Office of Lt. Governor Rebecca S. Skillman*

Virgil Madden introduced himself as the Lt. Governor's Special Assistant of Minority Affairs. He stressed that he represents the Lt. Governor, who is already an elected official. He asked for nothing to be taken out of content, as he simply stated, "I am here to serve you." He explained that the Lt. Governor's Office has five families of business which include: tourism, housing, agriculture, energy and defense. He explained that his position is very new. His counterpart is also Tony Kirkland. Virgil Madden mentioned his attendance at the Latino Health Summit that was held last week. He said that he has already been asked many questions in regards to housing, rental assistance and training for homeownership. Virgil Madden was proud to announce that he has already shared the needed information and literature to the designated people so they might have the information available. He explained that he is representing the people of the State on behalf of the Lt. Governor, as his role is to inform on "what is happening" and how to assist. Virgil Madden agreed that communication is the key. He said that he recently met with the Lt. Governor and asked her how they could work on her schedule so that she might be present for the Commission's upcoming dinner celebration. Virgil said that he proudly encouraged the Lt. Governor to attend. He also thanked Director Mendoza for her great job with keeping him informed on various happenings/events. Virgil Madden was pleased to say that he can academically speak on behalf of the Commission because of Amy Mendoza's communication. Virgil Madden explained how the Lt. Governor made a sound decision to attend the dinner celebration. He concluded by saying, "In any way, we can assist you and we are welcome to do so."

Director Mendoza informed the Commission that she has established a regular meeting schedule with Virgil Madden from the Lt. Governor's Office.

Commissioner Cde Baca asked Virgil Madden to send individuals with discriminatory questions to the Civil Rights Commission.

Virgil Madden explained how he tends to be more direct. He uses email, but not very often, as he feels that more is accomplished in person. Virgil Madden said that he will direct questions to specific agencies and does follow-up to make sure it happens. He said that the Commission has been quite successful and agreed that everyone must effectively communicate and represent.

Chair Gonzalez thanked Virgil Madden for his presentation and welcomed the next guest speaker, Martin Schap, from the Office of the Indiana Secretary of State.

B. *Martin Schap, Secretary of State's Office*

Martin Schap provided a brief publication that read “5 Things you need to know on Election Day.” Martin Schap explained how the “Help America Vote Act” became federal legislation of 2002 to urge states to clean up the voting process with an effort to make it easier for the people and etc. He discussed the voter helpline and provided the number which is 1-866-IN-1-VOTE (866-461-8683). This number helps outreach to the public. Martin Schap explained that he does a lot of traveling and never turns down a request for a speaker. He also has mailings available for different groups, including many elderly groups. Martin Schap also assists with various groups such as the Indiana Muslim Association, etc. religious groups, and various age groups. He said that every time he meets wit new groups, he asks what the Commission’s needs entailed. Martin Schap said that he recently learned that Mexico provides a voter ID card that is separate from a license. He stressed the importance to clarify this idea. Martin Schap stated that their office is always looking for information. He explained that the last election did not have any systematic problems. They did not run into any voter where they could not resolve the problem. Martin Schap said that the concerns that were out there were largely unjustified. He asked for questions from the Commission/audience.

Director Mendoza acknowledged that the Commission met with the Secretary of State earlier this past year. She asked if there were any translations into Spanish developed yet.

Martin Schap agreed that translated material is very important.

Director Mendoza informed Martin Schap that the Commission had the Annual Report successfully translated by a service offered by IUPUI.

Audience member, Sal Soto explained how his translations company has been working with the Secretary of State's Office for many years.

Director Mendoza asked Martin Schap about having reports available.

Martin Schap agreed to pass along the reports. He said that he would be happy to discuss percentages, as it is more effective to provide statistics.

Director Mendoza said that it was Commissioner Scott's recommendation to have someone from Secretary Rokita's office to attend a Commission meeting, as this is an important message to bring back to the communities.

Chair Gonzalez asked Martin Schap to reserve the Conference's dates for October 10-12 to present as a workshop speaker.

Audience member, Juan Gonzalez agreed that an Indiana ID is very important for everyone.

IV. Additional Commission Business / Audience Commentary

Chair Gonzalez asked for additional comments about the budget issue. He agreed to conclude if there was no new business to discuss.

Director Mendoza explained how both herself, and Commission Treasurer, Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes, met with two members of the State Budget Agency, because the Commission was in need of a spending plan for its budget. Director Mendoza explained that apparently a miscommunication had occurred between the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the State Budget Agency. However, the budget has finally been approved. She also informed the Commissioners that the travel payments are in the process of being paid. Director Mendoza reviewed over the last Commission meetings discussion of the PROBE Assessment. She said that the Executive Committee recently met with Commissioner Juana Watson as an advisor, so that she might provide her input on how ineffective the PROBE results were and how they didn't display the accuracies of the Commission. The Executive Committee also asked that she provide the Governor with the correct information that properly reflects what the Commission does and has completed. Director Mendoza said that the request to meet with the Governor was made in February and then postponed to August. It was also mentioned that the Governor planned to attend the next Commission meeting or meet with the Commission at a later date. She recently had a discussion with Sharlene Daniels from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development in regards to the PROBE results. It was determined that many agencies/commissions were rated ineffective as well.

Commissioner Ruiz asked to speak about his recent meeting with the Latino Resource Round Table. He also mentioned that this was his third term serving on the Commission. Commissioner Ruiz asked if the Governor has been receiving the work completed by the Commission. He also asked how the Commission would receive the feedback on how Governor felt about the Commission's work.

Director Mendoza explained that the Commission has sent reports directly to the Governor and his advisors. Director Mendoza has also met with the former Governor's Intergovernmental Affairs advisor and Juana Watson in the past to discuss the Commission's work. Director Mendoza said that she is aware that the Governor's advisors have read our reports.

Chair Gonzalez said, "We as commissioners must take the opportunity to talk about what we are doing"... "Otherwise, shame on us." Chair Gonzalez said that the Commission would like to see more measurable results with Juana Watson since she serves as a Commissioner and as an Advisor to the Governor. He said that the Commission has already addressed why there has not been a meeting with the Governor. Chair Gonzalez acknowledged that Director Mendoza has had easy access to meet with the Lt. Governor. He reiterated that the commission should continue to pursue a meeting with the Governor.

Director Mendoza asked commissioners for their assistance with distributing sponsorship letters for door prizes at the December 14, 2006 dinner event. These letters are addressed to any business, asking for donations of all kinds in exchange for exposure. Director Mendoza asked the commissioners to distribute these letters to their communities.

Commissioner Cde Baca said that the Civil Rights Commission has plenty of available give-away gifts.

Chair Gonzalez asked for commentary from the audience members present.

Guadalupe Lewis introduced herself as a part of the Urban League.

Morella Dominguez asked for more information about the Latino Expo.

Chair Gonzalez informed the Commission that Commissioner Juana Watson is forming the Latino Expo non profit. He mentioned that this will be similar to Black Expo and plans are underway to partner with them at the same time. He also mentioned that the Latino Expo will run concurrent sessions on subjects such as the health arena and etc. areas of concern. Chair Gonzalez agreed with the idea of partnering and including the Latino community for those sessions where state funding is present.

Commissioner Requiz said that it has nothing to do with the Statewide Latino Health Conference.

Director Mendoza explained how the Latino Business Expos is really just for exhibitors.

Chair Gonzalez suggested that, to avoid confusion, the Commission drop the name "Latino Business Expo," from business exhibitor session at the 2007 Statewide conference.

Audience member, Irene Bublik from the Marion County's Public Defender's Office introduced herself as the Hispanic Services Coordinator for Marion County. She discussed how they promote article 36 and how many Hispanics/Latinos need to be informed of their rights to contact their home country's Consulate. She spoke about the proper ethical procedures. Irene Bublik said that many of these concerns are not being taken care of throughout Marion County, including many smaller counties. She suggested that the Commission look into this matter and involve the Consulate in order to better provide outreach to families of those incarcerated.

Chair Gonzalez agreed that Irene Bublik had a good point.

Director Mendoza mentioned that she would be in contact with Irene Bublik for a better understanding about the situation.

Irene Bublik said that many Hispanics/Latinos were arrested for public indecency and various other issues. She explained that in some instances, medical records for individuals with mental illnesses could have been retrieved from their place of origin like Mexico. Irene Bublik explained how the US should practice the same principles in regards to this issue like many countries currently do.

Audience member, Sgt. Carlos Santos said that he has been working at the same level for five years at the Marion County Sheriff's Department. He explained that the grassroots organizations helped with many efforts early on. Sgt. Carlos Santos said that he works with Irene Bublik as well. He mentioned that he instructs individuals on what they need to do. Sgt. Carlos Santos informed the Commission that as of next week, he will report to the academy due to the recent merger which will be experiencing a lot of restructuring. Sgt. Carlos Santos said that he requested to be in the academy because of the huge issues. He also announced his new promotion to Lieutenant. Sgt. Carlos Santos said that he recently visited Monroe County, where they share many concerns involving domestic violence and various other major issues. He also mentioned that it is very likely possible that the majority of those individuals from Monroe County have never heard of the Commission. Sgt. Carlos Santos explained how it is very important for the

Commission to make their presence and abilities known in order to reach out to the general population. He was pleased to offer his support with the Commission and asked to work more closely next year. Sgt. Carlos Santos said that he plans to leave for Washington D.C. tomorrow to attend a Missing and Exploited Children event that is a part of a huge Hispanic/Latino unit. He would like to bring information back to the State of Indiana.

Chair Gonzalez acknowledged that Sgt. Carlos Santos' information would be a perfect venue for the Statewide Conference. He invited him to actively participate.

Audience member, Sal Soto, acknowledged his duty as a former Commissioner and stated that he had returned from Raleigh North Carolina, which has the second fastest growing Hispanic/Latino population in the nation. Sal Soto explained that his business deals with translations. He reminded the new commission members that the Commission has gone through so many transitions. Sal Soto stated that this was only the second year that the Commission has had a business plan, as it struggled earlier. The Commission continued to follow through and complete what was necessary to be completed.

Audience member, Steven Leak introduced himself as a BMV representative and offered to send someone in his place if he was unable to attend future Commission meetings.

Director Mendoza thanked Treasurer Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes again for her work with the Tax Committee. She acknowledged that both the Health and Tax Committee reports were complete.

IV. Adjournment

Chair Gonzalez adjourned the Commission meeting at approximately 11:40am.