



**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, July 26, 2012  
3:00pm – 4:30pm  
Conference Center Room 2  
Indiana Government Center South  
Indianapolis, IN**

**Commissioners Present:**

Richard Espinosa, Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne (Vice-Chair)  
Guadalupe ‘Herb’ Hernandez, Senate Lay member, Fort Wayne (Treasurer)  
Teresa Velez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration  
Virginia Hernandez, Designee, Civil Rights Commission  
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Chair)  
Rep. Rebecca Kubacki  
Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction  
Andrea Perez, Designee, Department of Health  
Senator Frank Mrvan  
Diego Morales, House Lay Member, Indianapolis  
Lenee Reedus, Designee, Dept of Education

**Commissioners Not Present:**

Jesusa Rivera, House Lay Member, South Bend  
Alfredo Gonzalez, Governor Appointee, Indianapolis  
Charlie Garcia, House Lay Member, Indianapolis  
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon  
Senator Greg Walker  
Andrea Bueno, Designee, Lt. Governor’s Office

**Visitors:**

**Staff Present:**

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

## **Opening**

Chairman Christian Gallo noted that the commission lacked one member for quorum but that two commissioners were on their way. Minutes and financials would be approved at that point.

## **Chairman's Report**

Gallo said that he was asked to provide information on changes on immigration law dealing with the deferment initiative. He said that no new news had been released by the administration but that several communications had been published in Spanish warning of scams. Executive Director Danny Lopez asked Commissioner Rebecca Kubacki and Commissioner Herb Hernandez to talk about the Latino information session at Ivy Tech in Fort Wayne. They said great information was provided and that the event was very family-friendly and well-attended. Hernandez also noted that, relative to the deferment plan itself, more information and details would be available in August.

## **Approval of Minutes**

With quorum established, minutes from the May and June meetings were approved with two corrections offered by Hernandez.

## **Approval of Financials**

Lopez explained that just more than \$9,700 remained unobligated for the year, a figure that tied back to a project with Bienvenido Mental Health program that never materialized. The funds do not revert but would need to be petitioned for release. Hernandez asked how easy it would be to petition funds. Lopez said that while the State is always cautious about releasing these types of funds, ICHLA is now under Civil Rights and has never before petitioned them for the release of funds.

The financials were approved unanimously.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Lopez began by discussing his partnership meeting with the DEEP evaluators from IUPUI. This partnership has been ongoing for two years, but the research team has run into roadblocks due to confidentiality agreements restricting DEEP implementers across the state from providing more information. Lopez said he convened the researchers with the officials from the State Department of Health to discuss how to get passed the roadblocks, and after some discussion the curriculum data will be provided to IUPUI to be used for research.

Hernandez asked about the annual CHEP seminar, and Lopez said that this meeting is always held in March.

## **Business Subcommittee report**

No report.

### **Civil Rights Subcommittee report**

Gallo said that in several states, claims have been made that public safety officers have been targeting Latinos unfairly. He said that in his experience in Indiana and in his legal work, he has not seen many instances.

Commissioner Diego Morales said that in southern Indiana a number of families had noted that people had been detained and were set for deportation after being pulled over without a driver's license. He asked Gallo about the process, and Gallo outlined the collaboration and process worked about between local law enforcement and Immigration enforcement agencies. Morales asked what the commission could do to educate Latinos who are living in fear of deportation. Gallo said that there are many stipulations that determine whether or not someone who is arrested can apply for legal status and that there are organizations in every community that inform local Latinos. He also said that we should be communicating to families that, if they lack a valid driver's license, they should avoid driving at all costs.

### **Unfinished Business**

Commissioner Jesusa Rivera was absent so no direct Education Subcommittee report was given, but Lopez said that the discussion about the 2012-2013 Strategic Plan was directly tied to the work of the Ed Subcommittee.

Lopez reiterated that ICHLA partnerships as part of the Strategic Plan must be, and have been for the past 3 years, active collaborations rather than simply sponsorship agreements. He said, however, that an additional focus this year should be policy recommendations, something that would require some comprehensive research into identifying trends in communities and sentiments prevalent at the grassroots level. By partnering with the IU Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, ICHLA this year would be able to make some solid recommendations coming out of focus groups.

Commissioner Frank Mrvan asked about timing – as session is set to begin in January – and Lopez said that ideally this process would run through the middle of 2013 and recommendations would be made for the 2014 legislative session. Kubacki asked about duplication of services, since some groups statewide are in fact doing surveys already. Lopez pointed to sentiments expressed by Commission Gerardo Gonzalez in the previous meeting, as he expressed concerns that surveys are a difficult tool through which to obtain sound data from the Latino community. Focus groups conducted by professionals would be a good and low-cost way to obtain this data. Lopez said that ICHLA hosting meetings would be an option, as well, but that these meetings tend to bring together “community leaders” rather than families at the grassroots level.

Several commissioners asked how much direction ICHLA would be able to provide to CEEP, and Lopez said that the focus groups would focus on communities and issues as directed by the various ICHLA subcommittees. Lopez also said CEEP has done extensive work for the State Department of Education.

Hernandez made a motion that the Strategic Plan be approved while noting that it is a fluid document and will continuously be reevaluated and, if needed, changed and adapted throughout the year. The motion carried unanimously and the document was approved. Lopez said he would now begin the process of connecting with ICHLA partners to develop initiatives in line with the adopted strategic plan.

### **New Business**

Commissioners were asked to submit names of young individuals who can serve on a youth advisory council. Lopez said only three names from two commissioners were nominated. Morales has agreed to lead the group, Lopez reiterated that more participants must be nominated.

Hernandez asked what age group was sought. Lopez said that ideally participants would be high school seniors to college seniors. He then asked when calls would be held and what time of day. Lopez said that the meetings would be conducted via conference call between ICHLA meetings and that the exact details would need to be hammered out. Mrvan said that college Latino groups should also be tapped, and Lopez said he would begin reaching out to engage them as well.

Finally, Lopez said that the group needed to determine what areas would be the focal points for an upcoming strategy summit. Kubacki suggested that early education and parental engagement in early education would be critical. Lopez said other ideas were necessary and nothing could move forward without more ideas.

### **Adjournment**

At 4:19pm, the meeting was adjourned by Gallo.