



STATE OF INDIANA

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

ICHLA

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 29, 2010
3:00pm – 4:30pm
Conference Center Room C
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
Michelle Stein-Ordóñez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration
Freddie Thon, House Lay Member, South Bend (Treasurer)
Josie Williams, Designee, Civil Rights Commission
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Secretary)

Commissioners Not Present:

Pat Rios, House Lay Member, Indianapolis
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon
Lisa Kusiak, House Lay Member, Munster
Rep. Rich McClain
Senator Greg Walker
Senator Frank Mrvan
Andrea Perez, Designee, Department of Health
Andrea Bueno, Designee, Lt. Governor's Office
Shanida Sharp-Byrnes, Designee, Dept of Education
Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction

Visitors:

Staff Present:

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

Opening

Chairman Hernandez noted the absence of quorum and called the meeting to order at 3:15p.m.

Hernandez counted 6 commissioners present and introduced the two newly appointed commissioners, Ralph Flores of Michigan City and Pedro Ledo from Ft. Wayne. Flores was appointed by Speaker Bauer, and Ledo was appointed by President Long.

Hernandez noted ICHLA's attendance policy and said that an email would be sent to all commissioners. Hernandez said that per the policy, commissioners must attend 6 meetings during the span of one calendar year, and that commissioners should submit their resignations if they are not willing or able to attend that number of meetings. He suggested that the commission spend five minutes discussing the policy, as well as guidelines for establishing excused versus unexcused absences.

Hernandez said that it was his understanding that in most places, illness, hospitalization, vacation, injury, and work-related demands are commonly known as excused absences. He asked if other commissioners had opinions.

Commissioner Espinosa suggested that death in the immediate family should qualify, as well. Executive Director Lopez said it is often difficult to distinguish or police absences and that in order for an absence to be excused, there must be notification given and that the basis for establishing absences should rest more heavily on that notification. Commissioner Thon said he would trust commissioners to be truthful but that criteria for notification should be established.

Hernandez said that he was in absolute agreement but simply wanted to establish a list of criteria for what constitutes excused versus unexcused. He also said that it should be clear that these are not inflexible categories but rather flexible guidelines and a starting point.

Thon reiterated that while this could serve as a list of examples for excused absences, the logistical required aspect would be the notification. Hernandez said this could be done by phone, email, or letter. Hernandez suggested that commissioners should directly and formally contact Lopez in the event that they will not attending to avoid misunderstandings.

Thon said that the constant absences were an affront to commissioners who consistently attend meetings because it makes it challenging to conduct commission business.

Approval of Minutes

As there was no quorum, no vote was held to approve the minutes.

Thon questioned the notion that there were no expenditures in May and June and asked for further explanation. Lopez explained that the commission had gone over budget for the year due to excessive expenditures of several sponsorship items as well as the payment for ICHLA's marketing plan. The State had agreed to accommodate the over-runs by allowing ICHLA to use the 15% reduction required of all other state agencies, provided no further expenditures except

commissioner travel reimbursements, commissioner per diems, and salaries/wages would be paid out through the end of the budget cycle in June. Therefore, no other expenditures were made.

Approval of Financials

As there was no quorum, no vote was held to approve the minutes.

Lopez said that the only items paid out were salaries/benefits and commissioner expenses tied to travel and per diems. Lopez said he wanted to note for the record that the State had allowed ICHLA to complete the budget cycle without having to reduce the commission budget by the 15% required by other agencies. Additionally, monies were pulled from existing roll-over funds to help off-set costs.

Commissioner Espinosa asked why the State had chosen to be flexible on these budgetary issues. Thon said it is because ICHLA's budget is small. Lopez said that through his conversations with the Budget Office, State officials understand the significance of ICHLA's projects and know that commissioners have spent a great deal of time building a budget for the coming budget cycle that is both responsible and avoids future over-runs.

Lopez said that the commission had made it through the end of the cycle and had moved on to a new budget cycle. Thon asked that in the future Lopez would write a short narrative about the budget for commissioners to refer to. Lopez said he would and noted that the budget for the coming fiscal year is \$105,600.

Election of Officers

Hernandez noted that because of the absence of quorum, this would not be possible. However he pointed out that former Commissioner Rivera, who had resigned to focus on other responsibilities, had served as vice-chairman and would need to be replaced.

Executive Director's Report

Lopez said that much of what was done for the month focused on the projects outlined in the Strategic Plan. He said he would allow Commissioner Stein-Ordoñez speak to the health subcommittee but would cover the rest himself.

Lopez said that community leaders in Bloomington were in the process of trying to lock down a date in September to carry out informational seminars/meetings for Latino parents of elementary school-aged children. He said that this was, in his mind, the perfect role for ICHLA because it involved allowing communities to do what they do best, with ICHLA serving to bring leaders to the table and spark conversations about next steps.

He also said that on August 4, ICHLA was partnering with IDOA and La Casa de Amistad in South Bend to carry out a MWBE training workshop and noted that turnout should be significant. He promised to take pictures and get the information online.

Lopez went on to discuss the 2010 Strategy Summit that was being planned and said that more would be discussed later in the meeting.

He also said that the Education Subcommittee had been extremely helpful in ensuring that, in fulfillment of another ICHLA project, the opportunities throughout the state for Latino youth had begun to be compiled online.

Lopez then asked once again that commissioners reach out to leaders of churches, community organizations, municipalities, schools, and other organizations in their regions to make contact and be conduits to the communities. The names and contact information for commissioners in each region has been emailed out twice, but it is still important for commissioners to attend meetings and discuss with community leaders the projects currently underway by ICHLA. Thon suggested that business cards would be an effective and important way to get information to people and raise awareness.

Chairman's Report

Hernandez said that his priority at this time is that the commission remain focused on the goals and strategies laid out in the Strategic Plan. He reiterated that the dates are flexible and that all commissioners should be helping with all projects and that the tasks are not solely the responsibility of the subcommittees.

Lopez said that in actuality, aside from the OJT program for Latino youth listed under the Education Subcommittee, the projects were well underway and each had seen some movement. He said that the OJT project would be difficult to complete because of outside issues that make it exceedingly difficult to bring to fruition.

Hernandez also said that he had nothing to discuss about the Marketing Plan, which is now online. He asked Lopez to communicate with the company that created the report to get references, since the document itself does not have any reference or citation list.

Hernandez said there are not currently concerns with the website, that it is as current as possible. Lopez said that as the commission's projects develop, progress would be noted on the website.

Business Subcommittee report

Lopez said that the August 4 workshop would be taking place in South Bend but that two more were in the works. He also noted that Commissioner Reardon is holding additional trainings in Northwest Indiana.

Thon said that this was an extremely important project because Latino businesses have not taken advantage of the resources made available to them through the State.

Civil Rights Subcommittee report

Lopez said that the Building Communities program currently in development with the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority is moving along. He provided a draft MOU to be completed formalized because ICHLA and Community Action of Northeast Indiana (CANI) to be voted upon, but due to lack of quorum the vote would have to be postponed. Lopez said that during the ICHLA budget process, the commission had agreed to provide \$6,000 in assistance to two organizations, one being CANI to formalize a pilot project in Fort Wayne, to offer credit building loans through a micro-lending program.

The program, a partnership between IHCD and 11 community action programs around the state, seeks to infuse capital into communities by providing soft skill training and small loans to micro-businesses. ICHLA agreed to partner with two of the community agencies to also include loans set aside specifically for Latino-owned businesses. Because these are revolving loans, it would be a one-time grant process.

Lopez said Ft. Wayne was chosen because they submitted the most sophisticated business plan to IHCD and would be best suited to serve as lender for this type of project, but this was only a pilot and another city in the state would be chosen as well. Further, Lopez said that he and CANI officials had agreed that one ICHLA representative would be involved on the small loan committee to ensure that these loans were in fact being provided to qualified Latino businesses. Half of the funds (\$3000) is being set aside for 6 credit builder loans of \$500 each, while the other half of the funds (\$3000) will be used for soft skill training programs and other support services to business-owners. A similar formula will be used when ICHLA identifies another partner in another part of the state.

Thon suggested that another part of the state be chosen and clarified that this was only a pilot project. He noted that this program should be expanded to other parts of the state. Lopez reiterated that this was indeed the case.

Hernandez noted that Commissioner Rios had asked that the MOU be amended to say "Latino" rather than "minority." That change was made. He also suggested that the MOU be sent to commissioners prior to the August meeting, and final vote would be taken then.

Stein-Ordoñez suggested that a meeting wizard reminder be sent out to all commissioners reminding them of the meeting date for August. Lopez said he would take care of sending that out.

Commissioner Gallo said that he has noted that in Tippecanoe County, a greater amount of profiling has been taking place for some time by law enforcement. He said that he has received several reports from contacts in the area concerning this issue. Thon noted that elements of the Arizona SB1070 law had been struck down and were undergoing the appeal process.

Gallo said that at a recent town hall meeting on immigration in Lafayette, a great deal of misinformation was being disseminated by elected officials and candidates in the area. One notable piece of misinformation Gallo says was being provided in writing to attendees was that President Eisenhower had ordered massive deportations.

Health Subcommittee report

Stein-Ordoñez said that the subcommittee will be having a conference call on August 4, looking at completing a side-by-side comparison of existing DEEP program models in different communities with the help of Dr. Mikels-Carrasco at Notre Dame.

She also noted that through a state interagency coordination, public schools would be in the near future set up to be Hoosier Healthwise Registration Centers for families wishing to subscribe. This represents a significant shift and makes it easier for Latinos to access the program.

Unfinished Business

Hernandez thanked Lopez for completing the Thank You letters for the commissioners who had resigned.

Hernandez went on to say that the Strategy Summit is of extreme importance and that commissioners need to be involved. He said that he would not allow the meeting to move forward if, by August 24, it was evident that insufficient work had been done.

Hernandez ran through the proposed program for the event and explained what had been discussed on the conference call on July 22 between him and Lopez. He noted that the technology being used made this an exciting concept and he hoped the participation was high. He said that a commissioner would be needed for each of the five sites to facilitate the breakout sessions. He listed the different aspects of the event and what would be needed and asked Lopez to provide a checklist to each of the commissioners outlining exactly what would be needed of them.

Lopez stressed that the logistical aspects for the event have been completed or are in the process of being completed. Then asked whether outreach had been done at each Ivy Tech campus, to which Lopez replied that contact had been facilitated to each campus through the President's office at the Central campus, Chancellors had been notified, and that technical personnel were being contacted by one main point of contact to ensure they would be available the day of the event. Lopez said the commissioners on site would be needed to facilitate the breakout sessions, ensure that participants are registered, and take care of accommodating the catering for each site.

Lopez also asked that commissioners reach out through their contacts to ensure high participation numbers.

Then asked what has been done already through Ivy Tech. Lopez reiterated what Ivy Tech's role is and ensured that commissioners would be provided with a checklist of their responsibilities. Hernandez also asked Lopez to send out the names of the contact people at each campus, and Lopez promised to send it to commissioners as the event neared and details were confirmed.

Lopez then mentioned a number of events, including the Women Veteran's conference and other the Indiana Latino Institute's October event, had asked for sponsorships from ICHLA and Lopez had explained to them that while the commission had not set any funds aside this year for event

sponsorships, he would be happy to bring it up at the meeting. He then asked for help in exhibiting on August 8 at the Indiana State Fair for Hispanic/Latino Day from commissioners at a table that had been donated to ICHLA. Commissioners would be distributing materials and speaking with constituents.

Adjournment

At 4:32pm, the meeting was adjourned by Hernandez.