



STATE OF WASHINGTON
COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS
COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS

ABERDEEN
Study Session Minutes
July 15, 2005

I. Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 2:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call. Commissioners present: Diana Avalos, Rubén Baca, Faviola Contreras, Leo Gaeta, Yvonne Lopez-Morton, Lourdes Portillo Salazar, Gabriel Portugal, Homero Tamez, Graciela Villanueva López, and Rebecca Villareal.

Staff Present: Uriel Iñiguez & Alicia Luna

Guests Present: Fred Olson and Cheryl Hanks

III. Presentation by Fred Olson. Fred Olson from the Governor's office attended the study session and advised and informed the Commissioners on the following issues.

- Pesticides – Columbia Legal and L&I have sub committees that are looking at this issue. It is important that we contact legislators and address our concerns regarding pesticides. Currently there is no unified effort to address this issue. All are working at different levels but not collaboratively. Perhaps a summit is needed to bring everyone together. Legislation and Budget need to get involved. The soil contamination bill passed, however, this does not address pesticides.
- Education – There needs to be representation by the Latino community in the Governor's office. WASL is a big concern and it is definitely a terrible time for students particularly the blind and deaf.
- Stepping Stone and how process works – Board and Commission appointments are handled by Kim Tanaka. She also helps with ongoing issues. Operation Issues process is that they go to CHA Executive Director, then Fred Olson and final step is to the Governor. Policy Issues go to CHA Executive Director and then Fred Olson.
- Expectations of Board and Commission Members – Fred informed the Commissioners that they are there to serve the public and not individual issues. Their attendance and coming prepared to their Commission meetings is critical. They should make progress on issues and that a sense of compromise is critical in forging agreements.

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The most important trait to be successful is to have public credibility and to have transparency in our public records. Fred also reminded the Commissioners to review the booklet that was provided in their Commissioner packets and to make sure to follow these basic standards. Last but not least he informed the Commission that the Governor holds a meeting for all new Commissioners. Fred's email address is: Fred.Olson@gov.wa.gov. He will send business cards to the office for distribution to the Commissioners. Office Staff will send Fred our CHA Newsletter.

Fred Olson acknowledged Chair Leo Gaeta's work and advised him that the Governor wished him the best. Leo's letter, unfortunately was not signed in time for the study session, however, it is forthcoming.

VI. Cheryl Hanks Presentation – Cheryl Hanks from the WA State Department of Health was introduced. She advised the Commission that there are very serious health issues related to pesticides for Latinos. She will continue to work at addressing these issues and providing statistics.

Commissioner Lourdes Portillo Salazar asked that the Committees be clarified before the break out sessions. Chair informed her that originally there were three committees, however, two merged due to their similarity. Economic Development Committee which promotes economic development is one of the committees and Student Retention and Student Learning are the two committees that have merged to become one. The chair of each committee is responsible for the agenda and submitting minutes of the conference call. Conference calls are held every two months. Staff has the responsibility of arranging the conference calls and reminding the commissioners a week prior to the scheduled conference call.

Commissioner's Faviola Contreras and Diana Avalos will look at the conference call scheduled dates for the two committees that merged (Student Retention and Student Learning Committee) and determine which dates they will keep for future conference calls. They will submit the determined conference call schedule to CHA staff.

Break-out of Committee Groups

V. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Baca

- Mt. Vernon MECHA concerns with Margaret Flink
- Small Business Agenda Conference
- Monroe School Issues and a need for a diversity meeting with schools

Commissioner Portugal

- Mabton Issues – Community advocates working with School district. Superintendent meeting is happening and he will work with Commissioner Villanueva Lopez regarding the racial slurs
- Letter of Intro to the Superintendents is needed
- Presentation to the Tri cities Herald Board – Tips on how to build relationships with the media
- Need for a power presentation on Hispanic demographics nationwide and statewide
- Tri Cities Herald meeting coming up next week - TCH want to know how to reach out to Hispanics-Pasco has a 50% Hispanic buying power
- Racial Profiling – Professor wants to join us in one of our study sessions to speak on his report

Commissioner Portillo Salazar

- Youth Conference (Si Se Puede) in Bellevue – All Hispanic presenters and the conference was all free. Consul Jorge Madrazo, Judge Hurtado and others attended. School officer was the only security present.
- Reichart started a quarterly meeting for the Latino Advisory Group which is Republican driven. Pesticides can be addressed at Reichart's meeting.
- Bellevue Lawsuit – 1 officer suing for bad treatment and racial profiling. He is also a whistleblower

Commissioner Lopez-Morton

- Increase in Domestic Violence in Spokane- Most of the women are undocumented. There is a law where they can qualify for assistance even though they are not documented. Will work on posting signs that give information on where to go for assistance. Signs will be posted in restrooms in restaurants and churches. Will also have legal advocacy group's work with these women. Lutheran Social Services, clinics, and Amigas Unidas are some referral services.
- Postal System has asked Commissioner Lopez Morton to do affidavits on claims of discrimination
- DSHS – filing a discrimination complaint official process. Not sure if this is a systemic issue
- Complaint of local dentist discriminating against Hispanic Women (supposedly the help is being given to Cubans -rising influx in Spokane) Commissioner Lopez-Morton will investigate.
- El Centro de Spokane's co-founder left and the person running it does not have the necessary leadership skills or money to run it. 501C has not been filed.
- Unity in the Community is happening on August 6th (Multi Cultural event)
- Increase of Hispanic Youth coming into Martin Juvenile Hall

- Phyllis Kenny will be the guest speaker at the Student of Color Day
- Local Sheriff Department hiring Hispanics including a woman

Commissioner Villanueva Lopez

- Richland Business Expo in May to help Latinos was well organized but not well attended
- Toppenish parents organizing a “March against Violence: – Gangs on the rise
- Yakima had an annual conference where kids with a 3.0 GPA or better were recognized
- Pool Closure in Yakima – Pools are old and too expensive to repair
- Immigration Forum in Seattle- Senator Patty Murray attended and heard immigration stories and the many problems, Facilitators were great, they identified problems and solutions
- Immigration Office in Seattle has an access issue unlike Portland which is easily accessible
- Voter Education – Developing representative report cards and working with Yakima County Auditor
- Latino Legislative Day is coming up. Latino’s for America training is only for Latinos.
- Walla Walla – Victor Chacon set up a meeting with the school district to address various issues such as expanding tutor services and high GPA’s students were invited to attend a recognition function.

Commissioner Contreras

- Wenatchee has a local LULAC chapter – Jorge Chacon is the Chair and sixteen of the twenty that attended pledged to become members
- Will continue to attend Farm worker housing meetings - They received additional beds. Not many workers this year perhaps because of fruit being lost to bad weather.
- Workers were kicked out of farmers housing because of new contracted folks from Mexico. H2A apparently is a federal program contracting in Mexico so more issues will arise from this type of hiring. Who is monitoring this program?
- Has become member of the Wenatchee Diversity Committee

Chair Gaeta

- Othello has no seasonal housing for homeless and victims of violence. More and more families are staying in the park or with other folks creating a fire hazard. Will work with housing authority on the homeless issue
- Ft. Lewis army person was injured in Iraq and placed on leave for a year. He has lost his home and wife. He has worked with chain of command at Ft. Lewis and the Family Resource Center and they have

placed him on paper duty, however, it is inconvenient because of his injuries.

- Dayton, WA – Issue with an individual charged with same crime repeatedly Referred him to the attorney that dealt with his case. He wanted us to translate some documents for him.
- Transportation Coalition Committee – Access for Latinos was made better.
- Closing of Pools in Yakima – Gentleman persistent in keeping them open in spite of the lack of funds to repair and keep open.

Commissioner Villareal

- She was unable to attend the Latino Expo Conference in Pasco.
- Invited by SBA for panel of People of Color Leaders – The meeting was well attended by a large group of numbers including many Russians. It was mostly a question and answer session. Not many Latinos attended
- Mt. Vernon Business of the Year Awards event – A Hispanic restaurant owner was the lucky recipient and he was very excited with the award.
- There is a new organization which consists of mostly attorneys called Latino Political Action Committee. Alex is the team lead and Lupe Gamboa is involved. Healthcare and Education are some of their issues. CHA Director will be attending their next meeting.

Executive Director Report

- We are all moved in to our new quarters however not completely settled in
- Juvenile Deportation Issue – Attorney contacted him regarding opinion from AG- Are we ready for the opinion? Talking to judges individually before their decision is made. Once this happens it will be brought to the Commission for a final decision
- Budget for 2006-2007 – Doing better than last year. We have \$35,000 to work with after the fixed costs in 2006. We need to identify our priorities. We have \$42,000 to work with in 2007. Should we hire a work study person during the legislative session?
- Annual Report – Marissa informed Commissioners on the status. The report should be completed by the next couple of weeks. She does need bios from some Commissioners. Economic and Education updates need to be added to the annual report. DOL issues will also be added to the report.
- Met with Consul Madrazo and have been invited to Mexico to an August 10 through the 13th to a conference addressing Latino issues in the US.
- Our new Commissioner is Rosa Cabrera from Tacoma.

- Reminder regarding the Re-Appointment letters – two are in and one is pending. Need to get them in as soon as possible.
- Interviewed by the Olympian regarding City of Shelton obtaining a grant to teach the city members Spanish.
- Reminder to send in any newspaper articles to the CHA office
- Farm Worker Housing Committee is being activated by the Governor

VI. Committee Reports

Commissioner Tamez

- April L&I Advocacy meeting's issue is discrimination. There is a 90 day time frame to file a discrimination report. We need to continue educating community about these programs.
- Radio spots have been increased
- Commissioner Villarreal called about Economic Conference and took table and signs
- Commissioner Villanueva-Lopez – Increase in community to get grants for businesses, however, very small numbers in attendance
- Pasco has made a decision to make it an annual event in conjunction with the city
- Tri Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce makes it necessary to rotate between the 3 cities
- Hispanic businesses need to be involved and Tri Cities Hispanic Chamber needs to reach out to them
- Missed the Pesticide Board meeting of June 8th which was held to educate Hispanic businesses. Did obtain the minutes and will attend their next meeting in October in Yakima
- Interpreter testing by DSHS – There is a shortage of interpreters that are court certified. Homero took the test and is waiting for the results
- Medical Director – Exposure to pesticides and their impacts – Classes have been made available. Children centers are allowing parents to pick up kid even though they have not showered and were using pesticides. Spreading of the pesticides in their car and the children. Cheryl Hanks will look into this issue.
- 9th Circuit Court of Appeals overruled and cattle trade will open. Mabton will definitely be happy.

Election of Chair

Chair Gaeta went over the CHA and Governance procedures. The Executive Committee is structured with a Chair, Vice-Chair, and three committee members. They will be appointed by the Chair on the next meeting which is this meeting. Since Commissioner Avalos is hung up in traffic she will not be voting.

Elections of Officers started with the election of the Chair.

Nominations for Chair were as follows:

Commissioner Portugal made a motion to nominate Commissioner Lopez-Morton and close nominations

Commissioner Villanueva Lopez seconded the motion

Result of Vote: All in favor of Commissioner Morton Lopez as Chair

Nominations for Vice-Chair were as follows:

Commissioner Portugal made a motion to self nominate

Commissioner Tamez seconded the motion

Commissioner Lopez-Morton made a motion to nominate Commissioner

Baca

Commissioner Villareal seconded the motion.

Results of Vote: Commissioner Portugal = 5 votes; Commissioner Baca = 3 votes

Congratulations to Commissioners Lopez-Morton and Portugal. Kim Tanaka will do a press release once the re-appointments have been confirmed.

Legislative Session Discussion

other Last year we were behind on getting on board. We need to work with

Commissions such as CAPAA, CAA, etc. and make it a community based effort. Perhaps piggy back with LEAP or a separate function and planning should happen in September. An organization (more than one needs to be involved) would have to take the lead; however, we would provide support. The scheduling of appointments with legislators would have to be made by us. There is a new group in Seattle mostly composed of attorneys that could possibly take the lead. Commission Portugal was concerned that this group would only be interested in re-electing the Mayor.

A survey was sent out by the Director and Cindy to 150 Latino organizations, however, only three responded. A coalition of several existing organizations needs to be formed and asked to take the lead. Commissioner Villanueva-Lopez will pursue this. She will give a report in the September study session so that we can determine whether to proceed or not.

Planning stage should include issues, bills that passed, and bills that failed. Need to determine if CHA should be involved in the drafting of bills and whether we should invited speakers to our study session. Commissioner Morton-Lopez stated that we need to connect via letter or telephone call

with our local Legislators, establish a relationship with them, and then draft a plan. We also need to do a follow-up connection at the time of the Legislative session. We need to stop relying on Phyllis Kenny or Margarita Prentice. In addition we need to make calls to our local people such as power brokers, organizations, leaders, etc. Commissioner Portugal suggested that we make a goal to meet our local legislators and report at the September meeting. Information you should know prior to meeting with them is: voting track record, knowing their district, reading their bios. Topics to discuss would be: bills that they voted against, issues that you want them to sponsor (engage them with facts) and promote the CHA website.

In Ellensburg – Partner with organizations on summits/forums versus reinventing the wheel. We need to work with all even if we don't necessarily agree with everything that they do. The focus has to be to improve the Latino community.

Pre-Session Action Items:

- Latino Legislative Day
- Meeting with your Legislature
- Forum/Summit
- Coalition Building

VII. Driver License and Social Security Number – This has resurrected due to 9/11. There is a form available at the DOL agency for those that do not have a social security number. DOL Staff should be trained regarding the availability of the forms. If a local issue arises it should be addressed by the local community before Commission involvement.

VIII. School Districts and Diversity - We need to develop a process that we can all work with regarding discrimination and activity related with discrimination. Commissioners need to do the investigation and then present it to the Commission. If this occurs throughout communities, than we need to identify if there is a pattern. If we identify a pattern then we need to write a letter to the schools and offer to be a resource. Also inform them that we as a body of the Commission support OSPI and influence legislators to fund for this training. It could be that the issue is due to a lack of cultural competency. We also need to develop a report listing the incidents and resolutions and present it to Dr. Terry Bergeson in a face to face meeting.

Action Item: Commissioner Contreras to draft a letter and pass to Commission for input. Once finalized it should be sent to all school districts before school convenes and it should go out no later than September 1, 2005. This action item will be measured.

Chair Gaeta stated that kids need to be exposed to diversity at an earlier age and that we need to hold schools accountable for spending money on cultural diversity.

IX. 2006 Commission Meetings- Should they be the 2nd week of each month and every other month or should there be four meetings versus six meetings. Do we want to have quarterly meetings which would require less traveling and make each meeting a little more formal such as a resource fair? We need to change the format of the study session so that it allows for more productivity. Should the quarterly meetings be based on what is being done in the community? Commissioner Portillo Salazar suggested that the meetings be structured and longer. There would be four public meetings which would consist of two full days (Friday and Saturday) along with two conference calls.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.