



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS**  
*COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS*

Mt. Vernon  
Study Session Minutes  
September 23, 2005

**I. Call to Order.** Meeting called to order at 2:09 PM

**II. Roll Call.** Commissioners present: Ruben Baca, Rosa Cabrera, Faviola Contreras, Yvonne López-Morton, Félix L. Negrón, Gabriel Portugal, Lourdes Portillo Salazar, Homero Tamez, and Graciela Villanueva Lopez.

**Staff Present:** Uriel Iñiguez and Alicia Luna

**Guests Present:** Cheryl Hanks

**III. Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner reports need to be summarized and sent via email to everybody for review the Wednesday before the Study Session.

Only three items on Commissioner's reports will be presented at the study sessions.

**Commissioner Baca**

- Mt. Vernon Public Meeting coordination with Silverio
- Minutemen Coordination Meeting
- Discussion and Invitation to Congressman Larson to participate in CHA activities

Commissioner Portugal asked Commissioner Baca what was the perception of the law enforcement offices. Were they supporting the Minutemen?

Commissioner Baca stated that the Whatcom County Sheriff expressed concerns that the media had misrepresented his position on the Minutemen. The Sheriff, during two community meetings, clarified his position saying, he does not endorse the Minutemen and that it was his department's responsibility to remain neutral when U.S. citizens are exercising their rights. He also stated that he felt it was important to establish an open line of communication with the Minutemen in order to minimize any chance of criminal activity. He said they would continue to monitor the border and the activities of the Minutemen.

Commissioner Negrón asked if they were armed.

Commissioner Baca said that Tom Williams, Coordinator for the Minutemen had said that their participants would not be armed. He, however, said that Mr. Williams had said that (he personally) would be armed for safety purposes because of the isolated

210 11<sup>th</sup> Ave Suite 301A PO Box 40924 Olympia, WA 98504-0924  
Toll-Free: (800) 443-0294 Olympia: (360) 725-5661 Fax: (360) 360-586-  
9501

[www.cha.wa.gov](http://www.cha.wa.gov) [hispanic@cha.wa.gov](mailto:hispanic@cha.wa.gov)

wilderness areas they would be in. Commissioner Baca reminded us that Washington State law allows citizens to carry firearms. If a firearm is concealed it requires a "concealed weapons permit." Commissioner Baca said, because Washington State is a "right to carry state", citizens have that right. We, therefore, can not presuppose that some of the Minutemen participants will not be armed. Baca also stated that Mr. Williams had said that their initiative was not about Latinos but about the lack of attention by the Federal Government on our National borders.

Director Iñiguez advised the Commission that we should not go on perceptions and that we need to get the facts.

Commissioner Baca stated that he was going to meet with Tom Williams next week to continue the dialogue, therefore, if the Commission has any concerns please let him know.

Commissioner Portugal asked Commissioner Baca to be very clear with Tom Williams that we **do not support** what they are doing.

**Commissioner Tamez**

- Pasco Training for Hispanic Leaders conducted in the Tri-Cities
- Pasco School District's standing on the WASL
- Hispanic National Convention in Milwaukee

**Commissioner Negrón**

- Acquired Proclamation of Hispanic Month from the Governor
- Informal get together of key leaders at Wagner's to share what is going on in Government & will continue to meet on a monthly basis. He hopes that he can add members to the group.

**Commissioner Cabrera** – Had nothing to report. She is still trying to figure out the geography.

Commissioner Villanueva Lopez suggested that new Commissioners get more support or mentoring from the Commission.

**Commissioner Villanueva Lopez**

- Small Business Owners concerned with the increase in Liability Insurance fees
- Business Owners discriminatory hiring practices
- Planning of 2<sup>nd</sup> Immigrant Consumer Education conference in Sunnyside with NW Justice Project

**Commissioner Portillo Salazar**

- South Park Issue with Salvadoreños gang activity (Salvatrucha Gang) where people are being beheaded with a machete.

Commissioner Baca asked, "How do we as a Commission move on this issue, especially since it involves our people?" He stated that we need to play an important role in resolving this issue and not just expect the law enforcement agencies to resolve it.

Commissioner Portillo Salazar stated that Sea Mar in conjunction with the City of Seattle were working together to clean up this activity. They did a round up and unfortunately took people that were not members of the gangs.

Director Iñiguez agreed that we need to be part of the solution and not expect the law enforcement agencies to address this issue on their own.

Commissioner Cabrera asked if a relationship existed between the law enforcement agency and the people of South Park. She stated that there are monies available from the City of Seattle for these issues.

Commissioner Tamez stated that the group needs to form their own group and to get these people engaged.

Commissioner Portillo Salazar stated that they were very much engaged and that there was a meeting scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5PM which she would be attending.

Commissioner Cabrera said that she was interested in attending this meeting as well.

**Action Item:** Commissioner Portillo Salazar will provide further details of this meeting.

Commissioner Baca asked Commissioner Tamez if he was willing to put together an email with his thoughts on how to generate monies and share with us.

**Action Item:** Commissioner Tamez will send an email regarding his thoughts on how to generate monies and share with all.

Director Iñiguez stated that the community is engaged regarding the Minutemen. We as a Commission were instrumental in facilitating this engagement. He posed the following question, "Can we as a group put together a list of questions and then have two or three from this group engage in a dialogue to identify a plan of action on where we stand on this issue?" He stated that there are five counties near the Canadian border that not only have a Latino immigration problem but gun smuggling, drugs, and terrorist issues as well. He said that we do not want to add fuel to the fire. It is crucial that we proceed with caution. He also said that groups and organizations are asking the Commission what we are doing in regards to this issue. He asked Commissioner Baca to inform local leaders that we are concerned about the Minutemen and that we **do not endorse** them. A message will be put together and posted on the website.

**Action Item:** Commissioner Baca and Director Iñiguez will put together a statement for the website and Alicia will post it.

Commissioner Portugal stated that the hidden message of the Minutemen is that they are a hate group.

Commissioner Negrón stated that the Minutemen have taken an umbrella under the militia men and that he has a concern. He said that we do not want to be connected to them in any way. He also said that he is extremely concerned with the perception of the community.

#### **IV. Legislative Contact Report**

Commissioner Villanueva Lopez recently sent letters to all her Senate Representatives and Legislators.

Commissioner Negrón has made contact on the federal level with Adam Smith and Maria Cantwell.

Commissioner Baca has not completed his letter. He will highlight the key issues in his letter and invite them to our CHA meetings in addition to forming a relationship with them.

Commissioner Tamez stated that he would use the letter but will make it specific to his area. He and Commissioner Portugal will work together on this issue.

Director Iñiguez stated that CHA Commissioners would be more influential through the relationships formed with their Legislators.

**Action Item:** Alicia will send both letterhead templates to all the Commissioners.

#### **V. Emerging Local Issues**

Commissioner Villanueva Lopez stated that Global Horizons was a statewide issue and that we should not be satisfied with the fact that GH just had their hands slapped and did not have to pay the whole amount in the settlement. She wants CHA to write a letter to the Governor expressing our dissatisfaction and to take a stance on this issue.

Director Iñiguez suggested that we wait to hear from Antonio Ginatta before we proceed with the letter to the Governor. In addition we need to get input from Columbia Legal and hear from the Farm workers regarding this lawsuit.

**Action Item:** Director will contact Columbia Legal and get their input.

Commissioner Cabrera stated that studies indicate that there is plenty of Latino labor force in the state of Washington. She said that the Tai people are being exploited, living in terrible living conditions and that they do not speak the language.

Commissioner Baca asked if we had talked to the Commission on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs. What are they doing regarding this issue?

**Action Item:** Director Iñiguez will contact the Commissioner on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs and ask for their input.

Commissioner Portugal suggested that Commissioner's Cabrera and or Villanueva Lopez direct these questions to Antonio Ginatta at the public meeting.

Commissioner Tamez suggested that we get money from Global Horizon and use it to educate people on their rights to insure that this does not happen again. In addition, he said that each Commission should get some of the monies from these settlements.

Commissioner Portillo Salazar stated that she was not in favor of accepting this type of monies.

Commissioner Negrón stated that the company got its hand slapped and that they had to spend the money to correct the exploitations and to educate the Tai people of their rights. He stated that such companies should provide money for the education of rights of workers or scholarships for students.

Commissioner Portillo Salazar stated that we need to hold people accountable and engaged. She, however, suggested that we table this issue and move forward with the agenda.

## **VI. Community Reports**

### **Executive Committee Report**

- There were many candidates that submitted applications for the Commissioner openings. We now have all positions filled.
- Kim Tanaka is great to work with and very accessible. She gives us updates on what is going throughout the whole process.
- Will do a report twice a month to share information with Commissioners to keep you engaged.

**Action Item:** Executive Committee will send minutes of their meetings.

### **Economic Development Committee Report**

- Mt. Vernon conference was this past week, however, not a good turn out due to bad time and day. Only 15 people attended.
- A Spanish speaking consultant in the Business Centers suggested we consider fund raising in the future.
- Victor Valdez suggested that the Commission have a card that captures what we do
- Cities identified for 2006 conferences are: Vancouver, Spokane, and Yakima
- We should continue to sponsor these conferences but limit it so that we are not running them
- OMWB is structured for small business development and is fully funded, therefore, we should have Genaro be more involved and in the frontlines
- Perhaps bring in large company's to recruit or show their product

**Action Item:** Create card that captures what CHA does.

Chair Lopez Morton asked how many economic councils were in each Commissioner's respective communities. She said that she had put together a Hispanic Resource Sheet for her Spokane area and suggested that all Commissioners put one together.

### **Education Committee Report**

Commissioner Contreras stated that the current members of the Education Committee were Lourdes, Yvonne, Homero, Gabriel, and herself. She also stated that the committee conference calls would follow the established 2005 Conference call schedule for the

Education Retention and Student Learning Committee. The letter of introduction for school districts was finalized and sent to all the Commissioners.

Chair Lopez Morton reminded all to please send their letters and follow up with a phone call since this was a very crucial issue.

**Action Item:** Chair Lopez Morton will follow up with each Commissioner to make sure this task is completed.

### **Ad Hoc Committee Report**

- An email was sent out requesting interest on having a Latino Legislative Day. Couple of organizations volunteered with staff and money. Most people are willing to help but do not know what to do.
- Will get Hispanic Chambers together and put together a list of issues faced by businesses
- What issues do we want to tackle? Healthcare, Economic Development, Education, etc.
- We need to make a decision if we are going to have a Latino Legislative Day and move forward.

Director Iñiguez stated that we need to decide if we are going to proceed with a Latino Legislative Day and step up to the plate. We need to take the lead and organize a meeting because a conference call is not as effective. We need to remember that we can only facilitate, set-up and make sure people get there.

Commissioner Tamez said that he thinks that we need to be more than just facilitating. We need to be committed and we need to inform people of what they need to do in their communities.

Director Iñiguez stated that the next step is for a letter to be sent by the Commission to all state leaders inviting them to join us in a planning session with the purpose of establishing a legislative day. He said that there should be two meetings, one in Eastern Washington and one in Western Washington. He also said that we need to ask them to present the local concerns of their communities.

### **Executive Director Report**

- Diversity Healthcare Summit – Did you distribute the brochure to your communities? The following CHA people will be assisting in this endeavor: Commissioner Portillo Salazar, Commissioner Cabrera, Commissioner Negrón, Commissioner Tamez, Commissioner Villareal, Rogelio Burgos, Alicia Luna, and I.
- Had a Meeting with Terry Bergeson, OSPI on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The meeting went well and was very productive. The Drop-out rate, WASL, Dr. Gomez replacement, etc. were some of the issues that were discussed. Our expectation is to have a Latino/Latina replace Dr. Gomez and Terry has made a commitment to us that this will be her goal. Roger Barron will assist us in drafting a response which we will send to Terry for agreement before we post on the CHA website.

We also want someone that is Latino/Latina filling this position on a temporary basis until it is permanently filled.

- Training in December - A meeting has not been established. The other Commissions do not want to have a combined training session. We do have training needs, therefore, the idea is to have a one day training session and bring in well qualified personnel to do outreach training and talking with legislators. We will also invite community leaders for a day session and reception in order to meet and network with them. We don't want just a dinner. It needs to be a discussion and a united effort that will contribute to the Latino Legislative Day. We need to get aggressive in this endeavor.
- GMAP – A process in which agencies are held accountable. CHA will also be held accountable through this process. We should, therefore, be having community meetings and providing advice to people. We need to produce results and will need feedback from all on what the measures will look like.

**Action Item:** Commissioners will provide input regarding what the measures will look like

Chair Lopez Morton gave an example of how advice was provided to the people in her community. It was advice on Domestic Violence via an initiative adopted by the city of Spokane. Flyers were posted on restaurant restrooms informing the people on where to go or call to get help if they were in a domestic violence situation.

**Action Item:** Change “Action taken by” to “Outcomes” on Commissioner Report template report and also move it to the last column.

Director Iñiguez said that GMAP live sessions with the Governor will take place with all heads of agencies to attempt to take care of problems that in the past have taken time to resolve. These problems are presented in front of everyone and are addressed right there and then with commitments made. A lot of “why” questions are asked during these sessions. He also stated that the Governor can call him at any given time and ask about CHA activities, issues and what he is doing to resolve them.

**Action Item:** Alicia will send GMAP PowerPoint presentation to all the Commissioners.

Chair Morton Lopez communicated to all the Commissioners that her expectation was that each one of them have a list of community contacts that they send information to. (Information such as Education, Immigration, etc) Please do not ask anyone to endorse or ask to vote in favor of anything. She also said that they need to know their communities and be prepared to answer any questions that the Governor might have when calling upon them.

Director Iñiguez informed the Commissioners that the Saturday public meeting may be attended by a large number of people who do not speak English and unfortunately we have a limited number of interpreter devices so how do we want to conduct the meeting.

Chair Lopez Morton suggested that the decision be made until we determined what the attendance would be.

Commissioner Tamez stated that three School Districts (Pasco, Aberdeen, and one other ) decided to do away with the WASL. He asked the Director what position did CHA want to take on this issue.

Director Iñiguez advice was that we should ask for resources that will help us compete and succeed in the job market. His recommendation is to stay away from taking a stand on WASL since WASL 1993 School Reform is a Legislative mandate in our state. It is a very heated issue right now and that by challenging WASL we run the risk of sending a message that our kids are not smart enough to pass this test. He said that standardized tests do not fare well with kids of color and that cultural competency tests are acceptable but not WASL. Unfortunately WASL was put together with no input from us. Director Iñiguez suggested that his WASL talking points be used when asked about WASL.

### **Executive Assistant Report**

- Informed Commissioners on mileage and per diem rate changes. Mileage change is effective September 15, 2005 and per diem change is effective October 1, 2005. Map showing the changes was given to all Commissioners that attended the study session. Please make sure you are using the current per diem rates and mileage rate when doing your own vouchers.
- Please provide prompt responses to staff emails and calls
- Reminder to use the Commissioner Report Template when doing your report
- Newsletter will be done on a quarterly basis so please provide information on a timely manner when requested from staff
- Updates to the Website will be posted every Friday
- Commissioner study session packet folder will be re-used so please return at the end of each public meeting session.
- Please keep information/event emails for your respective area since we delete after we have shared with you

Director Iñiguez informed the Commissioners that the CHA credit card will be used to pay hotel charges for **only** one person. Additional people and incidentals are to be paid by the Commissioners.

WAC – Please provide your input regarding pesticides. Cheryl Hanks will send all input to the Commissioners.

Director Iñiguez stated that he wants to be part of the LEAP Conference planning.

2006 CHA Meetings were established and are as follows:

February 9-11	Olympia
April 14-15	Mattawa
June 23-24	Yakima
August 18-19	Quincy
October 20-21	South Park/Seattle
December	Teleconference

Commissioner Contreras informed the Commission that Pedro Cerda is running for office in the city of Brewster and would like for CHA to send him a letter wishing him luck in the election.

Commissioner Baca agreed to make a motion at the public meeting.

Chair Lopez Morton asked if there were any changes that needed to be made to the Aberdeen minutes prior to approval.

Alicia stated that only two changes had been submitted and that they had been made. Minutes were approved.

Chair Lopez Morton asked that Commissioners continue to send in events for the Governor. She also asked them to advise the Director when they have been interviewed by the media and to send a copy of any coverage to the CHA office. She and Commissioner Negrón will be putting together a marketing plan which will focus on the Commission. She also said that there is a website called "Oye tu" which might be helpful to all.

Alicia said that Rogelio had current contacts for both radio and the newspaper.

**Action Item:** Alicia will have Rogelio send the list to Yvonne.

Chair Lopez Morton asked the Commissioners to please read the Federal Government procedures and be familiar with the process. VERY IMPORTANT to read this document.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM

