



State of Connecticut

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

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Chairperson

Ivette Servera

Vice Chair

Ramón L. Arroyo

Secretary

Pablo Rivera

Treasurer

Sonia P. Ayala

Commissioners:

Carlos E. Candal, Esq.

Isaias T. Diaz, Esq.

Enrique Marcano, Sr.

Juan M. Pérez

Ed Rodríguez

Norma Rodríguez Reyes

Maritza Tirú

Acting Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

Special Projects Coordinator and Grants Writer

Lucía Goicoechea-Hernández

Senior Leg. Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES

LPRAC Commission Meeting

November 18, 2009

Legislative Office Building

Room 2600

5:37 pm

Commissioners Present: Sonia P. Ayala, Carlos E. Candal, Esq., Isaias T. Díaz, Esq., Enrique Marcano, Sr., Juan Pérez, Pablo Rivera, Ed Rodríguez, Norma Rodríguez Reyes, Ivette Servera and Maritza Tirú

Commissioners Absent: Ramón L. Arroyo

Staff: Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director
Lucía Goicoechea Hernández, Special Projects Coordinator
and Grants Writer
Clarisa Cardone, Senior Legislative Secretary

Tape 1A

Chair Servera asked **Secretary Pablo Rivera** to do roll call. Quorum was established.

Public Participation:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of October 21, 2009 by Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Ayala. Motion approved unanimously.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Servera spoke about the importance of Commissioners being involved in the work of the sub-committees. She also mentioned that there are funds available for a Money Management forum in New Haven and in Hartford. She stated that the LPRAC has \$800.00 available to organize an educational forum on Aids. Moreover, she recommended that all Commissioners make sure to speak to their appointing authorities for reappointment purposes.

Motion made to approve the Chairperson's Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Ayala.

Discussion:

Commissioner Pérez asked if the Executive Board is responsible for appointing the sub-committee Chairs.

Chair Servera responded yes and added that all sub-committees chairs are responsible to get commissioners to join and set up the meetings with staff assistance. She also asked for the bylaws committee to work on updating or clarifying certain parts of our bylaws in order to have better guidance in regards to issues such as the ability to call-in for committee meetings. She then spoke about our agency's 2009 Christmas party. She said that the LPRAC needs to decide on a location and mentioned that we shall have plaques prepared for our former Commissioners.

Commissioner Rodríguez came in at 5:44 p.m.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández reported on the different location choices we had for the holiday gathering, which included Puerto Vallarta in Newington, CT, Main Street Fishbowl which is part of Adrea's on Franklin Avenue, Azucar Restaurant and Costa del Sol.

Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes asked about La Casona Restaurant.

Commissioner Candal, Esq. suggested that everyone should pay \$10.00 per person.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to inquire prices at La Casona Restaurant 1st and Azucar Restaurant 2nd which included a statement that said that all commissioner would be responsible for paying \$10.00 each and everything over that amount would be paid by the LPRAC (no more than \$5.00) . Motion made by Commissioner Candal, Esq. and seconded by Commissioner Tirú. The motion was approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director briefed the LPRAC regarding several issues. For instance, he stated that he was working on staff evaluations and informed the LPRAC that, at the request of the LPRAC executive board, he sent a letter to the office of Legislative Management requesting a transfer of \$10,000 from "payroll" to "other expenses" account in order to be able to pay for mileage for the additional commissioners joining the LPRAC due to the new mandate. He spoke about the 2009 LPRAC Awards/Reception, the LPRAC webpage and our annual report. Furthermore, he informed the LPRAC that he applied for a \$3,000 grant through the U.S. Census Bureau for an outreach event in the month of February of 2010 and reported on the progress of the survey on Connecticut Latinos. Finally, Mr. Oyanadel spoke about his work on the Connecticut chapter of the United States Civil Rights Commission and their decision to prioritize education reform on their civil rights agenda for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Tirú asked if the commission should talk to Mr. Juan Figueroa about education and suggested that he be invited to talk to everyone in the month of December.

Chair Servera said that the next meeting is going to be short because of the Christmas gathering. She recommended that the invitation be potentially issued for the month of January 2010.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. asked if a committee should be established on education. If yes, he would prefer to chair this one and not the one he is currently on.

Chair Servera recommended for the LPRAC to hear from Mr. Figueroa's comments first and then decide what to do next.

Motion made to approve the Executive Director's Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr., motion approved unanimously.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Diaz (Nominating Committee Chair) stated that the LPRAC bylaws provide very little guidance on the election process and being new to the commission is more challenging to know how the process has been handled in the past. He recommended that the bylaws committee clarify this section of the bylaws for future use. However, he stated that the nominating committee decided to hold the ballots secret for this election year.

Chair Servera mentioned that one of the candidates running for chairperson was not present and she asked if the election should be postponed to the next meeting?

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. said absolutely no. He encouraged the LPRAC to hold the elections and be in compliance with our bylaws which stipulate that the election be held in the month of November.

(A lengthy discussion took place on this topic on the question posed by Chair Servera)

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. said that due to the fact that there is nothing stipulated on the LPRAC By-Laws on this topic. He decided to continue with the election process. He, however, highly recommended that the bylaws committee clarify this section of the bylaws for future use. In the meantime, he proceeded to call the nominations as follows: For Chairperson the nominations committee received requests from Commissioners Ivette Servera and Ramón L. Arroyo and asked if there were any additional nominations from the board.

Commissioner Servera nominated Commissioner Pablo Rivera and stated that she would not be running for Chairperson.

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. as a result of Chair Servera's announcement stated that Commissioners Arroyo and Rivera were the new candidates for the LPRAC Chair position. He also informed the LPRAC that Commissioner Pablo Rivera had indicated to the nominating committee of his intention to run for Vice-Chairman of the LPRAC.

Commissioner Rivera decided to withdraw from the Vice-Chair position in order to run for the chair's position now available and nominated Commissioner Servera for the position of Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Servera declined the offer.

Commissioner Candal, Esq. asked if the election could be suspended until further notice due to the fact that new commissioners are going to be appointed based on the new mandate and maybe the LPRAC can utilize the extra time to redefine or clarify the LPRAC By-Laws for this process and have an opportunity to ask questions from all the candidates running for this position.

Commissioner Tirú said that we need to continue this process because we will be violating the By-Laws.

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. agreed with Commissioner Tiru. He then proceeded accordingly. He asked if there were any other candidates from the board interested for the position of Vice Chair.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes asked for some clarification on the process.

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. proceeded to clarify the process for Commissioner Rodriguez-Reyes and asked three times if anyone from the board had any nomination for Treasurer.

Commissioner Tirú nominated Commissioner Ed Rodríguez for Treasurer.

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. asked three times if anyone from the board had any nominations for Secretary.

Commissioner Rivera nominated Commissioner Tirú for Secretary.

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. asked three times if anyone from the board had any nominations for vice-chair.

Commissioner Tirú nominated Commissioner Ayala for Vice Chair

Commissioner Rodríguez had two issues that bother him on the slate. He wanted to ask these of Commissioner Arroyo. The questions were as follows: "It is his understanding that this Commission gave him a vote of no confidence the last time you were president. Please help me understand why that vote was taken and what has changed for us to vote in favor of you to do this again. He's very uncomfortable with someone that this commission gave him a vote of no confidence and now come forward to running the commission"; Commissioner Rodríguez second question is as follow: "With all due respect to Representative Minnie Gonzalez, your spouse, it feels that there is somewhat of a conflict. The conflict being that your wife leads legislation and this organization creates legislative priorities. Are we going to put the cart before the horse, in other words, are you going to run this commission to satisfy your spouse's Legislative Agenda or are we going to do our Legislative Agenda and ask for your spouse's support? There's a significant difference on how you approach that. So, please help me understand Commissioner Arroyo, how we convince this organization to be sure we are not satisfying your spouses' legislative agenda when we are in fact satisfying the Commission's legislative priorities."

Commissioner Diaz, Esq. asked three times if there were other nominations to be made. Hearing none he asked for the voting to begin.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. counted the votes and read the results as follows:

Chair: Commissioner Ramón L. Arroyo (2) & **Commissioner Pablo Rivera (8)**

Vice Chair: Commissioner **Sonia P. Ayala (7)** & Commissioner Pablo Rivera (3)

Secretary: Commissioner **Maritza Tirú Voted Unanimously**

Treasurer: Commissioner **Ed Rodríguez Voted Unanimously**

Chair Servera congratulated all the new Executive Board members.

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ayala stated that there is one item that needs to be voted by the LPRAC, that is that \$10,000 is moved from the Personnel Funds to the General Funds to cover Commissioners mileage reimbursement requests as we will have more Commissioners on the LPRAC board.

Motion made to accept the Budget Committee Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. The Motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. said he had a conversation with Chair Servera and he about the Money Management Conference. He needs to meet with LPRAC's new Chair, the Acting Executive Director and the Special Projects Coordinator and Grant Writer to get this going again. He will be setting up a meeting soon.

Motion made to accept the Public Information Committee Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Díaz. Motion approved unanimously.

PRIORITIES AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Rodríguez said the committee met and reviewed the draft of the End of Session Report. Also discussed is the need to survey the LPRAC Commissioners to see what they think about the legislative priorities for the upcoming year. This should be brought to the whole committee to be discussed.

Mr. Oyanadel summarized for the LPRAC a few of the items of interest that were discussed by LPRAC commissioners at the Priorities and Legislation Committee. For instance, Commissioner Candal's, Esq. spoke in support of the Dream Act and driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants and Commissioner Perez spoke about the need to prioritize issues of civic engagement. Mr. Oyanadel also mentioned that the commission has 1,000 emails in the LPRAC database. This number is very small considering that there are about 400,000 Latinos residing in Connecticut. He asked if the staff could contract with e-mail marketing firm to allow us to contact our population and help us increase our e-mail contacts. He stated that it would cost the LPRAC about \$30.00 a month for this purpose.

Commissioner Rodríguez asked the LPRAC to look at other commissions, i.e. Commission on Children, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, etc. to find out ways to work together on this endeavor.

Mr. Oyanadel said that they will be cutting the cost of the carrier service which is \$80.00 a month by having one central area for all mail to be received and that one person from each commission go and get their mail. We'll save \$50.00 a month by doing this which is about the cost of this new e-mail marketing system.

Motion made to approve the Priorities and Legislation Committee Report made by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Díaz. The motion was approved unanimously.

Motion made that LPRAC try E-Marketing for 1-year by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Pérez. This motion was approved unanimously.

PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Tirú reported that there was a revision to be made to the criteria for the Chairperson's Award to a Commissioner and a Staff.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes asked for an update regarding the position of the LPRAC Executive Director.

Chair Servera said that there will be funding in July of 2010 but only the Office of Legislative Management (OLM) will be doing the hiring. No-one but OLM will be able to be part of the interview process.

Motion made to approve the Personnel & Procedures Committee Report by Commissioner Díaz and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE REPORT

Motion made by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes that the LPRAC By-Laws be revised by Commissioners Díaz, Esq. and Candal, Esq. and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved unanimously.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ayala has several items for approval as follows:

Motion made to have LPRAC's Awards Ceremony on 10-23-2010 by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Pérez. Approved unanimously.

Motion made to have 800-1,000 guests for LPRAC's 13th Annual Awards Ceremony by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Candal, Esq. Approved unanimously.

Motion made to go the Casinos for our Awards Ceremony by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioners Candal, Esq. and Rodríguez Reyes. Carries as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Ayala, Candal, Esq., Díaz, Esq., Marcano, Sr., Rivera, Rodríguez, Rodríguez-Reyes and Tirú

1 Nay: Commissioner Pérez

1 Absent: Commissioner Arroyo

Motion made to have the theme of Legal Field for our Awards Ceremony by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Candal, Esq. Approved unanimously.

Motion made to give the Lifetime Achievement Award to Justice Sotomayor or Judge José Cabral at our Awards Ceremony by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr.

Friendly amendment made to go local for the Lifetime Achievement Award made by Commissioner Rodríguez and seconded by Commissioner Candal, Esq. Approved unanimously.

Motion made to send out the LPRAC Scholarship Nominations forms in January through the end of April by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes.

Discussion:

Commissioner Tirú asked to discuss this in December as the criteria has to be reviewed again.

Motion made to sell the tickets for our Awards Ceremony in the amount of \$75.00 per person, \$45.00 for only 50 students and half price for spouses/significant other by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Ayala, Candal, Esq., Díaz, Esq., Marcano, Sr., Pérez, Rivera, Rodríguez-Reyes and Tirú

1 Nay: Commissioner Rodríguez

1 Absent: Commissioner Arroyo

Motion made to approve the Special Projects Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Díaz. Motion approved unanimously.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Pérez spoke about the need for the Commission to look for funding from the Secretary of State's Office to create an aggressive Voter Registration system to help increase the number of our elected officials in the Board of Education. He also spoke about a problem in Windham, CT which for the second time, went from 5 voting places down to 3 voting places. A problem for Commissioner Perez since they are located farther away from where the Latino population reside.

Commissioner Tirú responded to Commissioner Perez by saying that if we really wanted to make changes to the Latino vote, the Secretary of State has to spend more marketing money with companies such as Telemundo and Univision in Spanish so they can understand the importance of voting.

Motion made to create an Ad Hoc Committee at the helm of Commissioner Pérez to help with this endeavor by Commissioner Díaz and seconded by Commissioner Marciano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

Commissioner Tirú said that she would like us to get active in the community with this as it is part of RBA and the mandate that we have.

Mr. Oyanadel spoke of Commissioner Tirú's legal advice for her to remain in the LPRAC because of the new mandate. D'Ann Mazzocca, Executive Director for the Office of Legislative Management did not have a response but asked him to contact the attorney that wrote the mandate for a legal opinion. It was his legal opinion that Commissioner Tirú remains a member of the board until the new Appointment Authorities replace her.

Chair Servera mentioned that Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes was reappointed up to 2009 but a copy of the reappointment was not sent to LPRAC.

Motion made to adjourn by Commissioner Candal, Esq. and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Commissioner Pablo Rivera
Secretary to the Board

PR:cjc