



State of Connecticut

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

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MINUTES

LPRAC Commission Meeting
September 16, 2009
Legislative Office Building
Room 2600
5:35 pm

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 Marciano, 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

Legislative Analyst II

Lina Lorenzi, Esq.

Public Info Officer

Karlo X. Ruiz

Senior Leg. Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

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

Commissioners Absent: Juan M. Pérez

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 the roll call. Quorum was established. She then asked Mr. Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director to introduce our public participation.

Public Participation:

Mr. Oyanadel introduced Ms. Deanne Shapiro, President of Life Skills Associates LLC. She reviewed the May 18, 2009 Teambuilding Retreat Summary Notes. Handouts of these notes were given out to everyone.

Commissioner Arroyo came in at 5:45 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of July 15, 2009 by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioners Rodríguez Reyes and Candal, Esq. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Ayala, Candal, Esq., Díaz, Esq., Marciano, Sr., Rivera, Rodríguez Reyes & Tirú

1 Abstention: Commissioner Rodríguez

1 Absent: Commissioner Pérez

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Servera went over a few items on her report as follows:

- 1) She continues meeting with members of LPRAC board of Commissioners, non-profit agencies and elected officials;
- 2) She participated in a meeting in Waterbury with Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis, PhD., Commissioner Tirú, Mr. Oyanadel and with Mr. Gregory Belanger, CEO of the Amistad of America to discuss LPRAC Ambassador position and the voyage to the Caribbean;
- 3) At our last meeting, she presented that there was an investigation being done in LPRAC and all LPRAC Commissioners received copies of the result. Also, that there is a standing law suit against Commissioner Ayala, Mr. Oyanadel and herself by Mrs. Lorenzi.
- 4) At last E-Board meeting she presented an idea of a President's Award for either a commissioner or a staff member. She has brought a list of criteria for everyone to review.

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

Discussion:

Commissioner Arroyo asked what the basis of staff person suing is.

Mr. Oyanadel briefed everyone that Mrs. Lorenzi forwarded a letter to Legislative Leaders on 6-22-09. This was during the period of time where she was being asked to step down from the position of Acting Director. She alleged that Chair Servera created a hostile work environment against her. The report that was prepared by OLM, there were two investigations. One was in response to this allegation and the other was that Chair Servera was creating a hostile work environment. In this investigation, it actually says that Chair Servera did not make a hostile work environment for Mrs. Lorenzi. Now Mrs. Lorenzi has started a whistle blower complaint with the CHRO against 3 people because she continues to allege that these allegations are true. This is now pending. What Chair Servera, Commissioner Ayala and he asked OLM was whether or not they can have legal defense and the Attorney General's office agreed and they are going to be helping with this endeavor.

Commissioner Arroyo said that CHRO is a complaint and a lawsuit is something different. He doesn't think it's a lawsuit.

Commissioner Díaz, Esq. said that because it is an administrative action, the first thing Mrs. Lorenzi, Esq. has to do before she can bring it to the court is to exhaust all administrative remedies first. Going to the CHRO is starting a lawsuit because if she claims she doesn't get relief there, she can go to state court.

Commissioner Ayala mentioned that the Board should get a copy of this report where she is asking to be put in the Director's position permanently with security and she wants removal of Chair Servera, Mr. Oyanadel and herself plus she's seeking money for damages.

Commissioner Arroyo said that everyone should ask the attorney if all commissioners can get a copy.

Commissioner Tirú commented that Mrs. Lorenzi, Esq. is asking to be made the full-time Executive Director. Her appointment was only an interim capacity. It was temporary with no additional compensation than what she was already being paid.

Chair Servera said she will check with the lawyer. She then spoke of a President's Award that she would like to give to a Commissioner and/or Staff member. The criteria for President's Award is enclosed in all packets.

Commissioner Díaz, Esq. said that Mrs. Lorenzi has to go through these steps first because it's an administrative matter.

Commissioner Ayala said that Mrs. Lorenzi is asking for the following:

1. The Executive Director's position permanently;
2. The removal of Chair Servera, Commissioner Ayala and Acting Executive Director Werner Oyanadel.

She then said that she thinks that all Commissioners should have a copy of this paperwork.

Commissioner Rodríguez asked if it is appropriate for the Commissioners to get a copy.

Chair Servera said that she did not know if they can legally send out copies.

Mr. Oyanadel said that the first allegation was against Chair Servera. Then with Commissioner Ayala and then when he was Acting Executive Director, she put him there too.

Commissioner Arroyo said that all should have their attorney, they should ask them and if ok, we should all get a copy.

Commissioner Tirú commented that Mrs. Lorenzi is asking for full time Executive Director. That position is only an interim position, it's temporary and no compensation.

Commissioner Candal, Esq. said that anything filed in court is public.

Commissioner Díaz, Esq. said that CHRO may be public but not sure.

Motion approved unanimously

Motion made to consider the making of a President's Award for a Commissioner and/or Staff by Commissioner Rodríguez and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion approved unanimously.

Tape 1 B

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Mr. Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director spoke of the Immigration Forum to be held in Windham. He mentioned that Commissioner Pérez played an important role in this event. He wanted to thank Senator Christopher Dodd for getting the Mexican Consulate to be there for 5 days. He also thanked Dr. Elsa Nuñez, President of Eastern CT State University for paying for the lodging for the consulate workers. Ana Alfaro is doing an interview on Saturday there.

Chair Servera said the Mayor from that town will be speaking.

Mr. Oyanadel said that Commissioner Candal, Esq. has also been helping on this. He then mentioned that the Hispanic Society of West Haven is looking for a Keynote Speaker for their Gala on October 3rd, 2009. There is also another event to be taken place at the Learning Corridor in Hartford, CT. It's the inauguration of the Puerto Rican monument on Wednesday, September 23, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. Invitations are in the packets.

Motion made to approve the Executive Director's Report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Rivera.

Discussion:

Commissioner Arroyo asked if the reason why Commissioner Pérez is not present was given to everyone.

Chair Servera said that his father, who is 105 years old, had passed away and he was flying to Puerto Rico for the services.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to change the order of the Agenda to have the Special Projects Committee Report before the Budget Committee Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Ayala. Motion approved unanimously.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ayala said that they have been meeting every two weeks with Dana Crompton on Gala. Because of grave concerns of us still being a Commission, there were questions on what if we merge or close. Then they decided having a small reception at the LOB. Also, we were thinking of the perception of what the community would think of us having a reception. Then they thought of having something a little nicer at a hotel. We have to thank Mrs. Cardone and Commissioner Rivera made several phone calls to different hotels as Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández was on vacation. Mrs. Cardone found that the Crowne Plaza in Hartford, CT has the same date available. They made a decision to have something smaller there and call it an Awards Ceremony and only have 200 tickets, 50 tickets are complimentary for award winners, State Legislators, Commissioners and Staff members.

Motion made to approve the Special Projects Committee Report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made that we recognize that the payment was made for the deposit for the Crowne Plaza Hotel on October 24, 2009 made by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Ayala, Candal, Esq., Diaz, Esq., Marcano, Sr., Rivera, Rodríguez & Rodríguez Reyes
1 Abstention: Commissioner Tirú
1 Absent: Commissioner Pérez

Motion made to assign Shakira Ramos as Honorary Chair made by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr.

Discussion:

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes thought that when you get a Chair, it's somebody that has a name recognition. We don't know who she is, let alone the public.

Commissioner Ayala said that they approached many, many people and no response.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández said that because our theme is Hispanics in Aerospace. She was one of our 2002 Promesa Youth Award recipient and works as an Aero thermal Engineer at Pratt & Whitney makes her a good candidate for Honorary Chair. She's also one of the members of the Board of Trustees at Trinity College.

Motion approved as follows:

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

1 Abstention: Commissioner Rodríguez

1 Absent: Commissioner Pérez

Motion made to have Kultura Borikua as the main entertainer for the Awards Reception 2009 by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made that we have the Awards Reception 2009 tickets at \$60.00 each by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to have a live presentation by La Puertorriqueñísima at \$300.00 for both radio and television by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Ayala, Candal, Esq., Marcano, Sr., Rivera, Rodríguez, Rodríguez Reyes & Tirú

1 Abstention: Commissioner Díaz, Esq.

1 Absent: Commissioner Pérez

Motion made that we contract Ana Alfaro to have her come to LPRAC's Awards Ceremony to tape her Analeh Show at a price of \$300.00 by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to bring 1 astronaut from NASA as a Keynote Speaker for LPRAC's Awards Ceremony which includes hotel, flight and meals up to \$5,000.00 by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Ayala said that there are two Latino Astronauts but one will be contacted first and if they can not do it, the other one will be asked.

Commissioner Arroyo asked if any grants have been received.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández said that she has raised \$11,200.

Commissioner Rodríguez asked why NASA isn't picking up their flight ticket.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández said that the criteria states that we cannot pay them an honorarium but we have to cover ground and air travel and also their lodging.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes said that if we give her the names of the two people, she will make the call to NASA.

Tape 2 A

Commissioner Arroyo said that depending on what Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes can find out, we should request these astronauts if they can come.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández said that she only sent a request to one astronaut first and if he says no, then a request will be sent to the other astronaut.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes said that we send a letter to Senator Christopher Dodd to assist us to please help us to bring this person here.

Motion approved unanimously.

Commissioner Ayala spoke of an appeal from Ms. Ashley Delgado. Her nomination form was sent to her place of work directly. She did turn in her application early and for one reason or another, I was not able to bring it to the office and Lucia was not able to pick up the application on the day we made the selection. Usually when something is missing in the file, Lucia sends a letter to them to get that missing item quickly. This young lady did not have that opportunity because it was the last day when we had to do the selection even though we received it two weeks prior. Lucia states that her application was incomplete and it didn't get to office till select day 6/28/09. She sent in a letter to the board to the LPRAC office. It was addressed to the E—Board. She's asking for a consideration to receive it.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. said that if it was turned in on time, then she should get it.

Commissioner Tirú said that she was a member on the review of all the applicants. There were several that did not have all the documentation. If you are going to open it for one, you need to open it for everybody. Everyone is required to send everything to the LPRAC office.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. said that if it is not her mistake but ours we should give it to her.

Commissioner Tirú left at 7:25 p.m.

Motion to accept Ashley Delgado's appeal for the scholarship application to have an opportunity to receive a scholarship made by Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Ayala, Candal, Esq., Diaz, Esq., Marcano, Sr., Rodríguez & Rodríguez Reyes
1 Nay: Commissioner Rivera
1 Absent: Commissioner Pérez

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes left at 7:27 p.m.

Commissioner Candal, Esq. left shortly after Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes.

Motion made to go into Executive Session by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez. Motion approved unanimously.

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

Motion made to rescind the motion that was made last Wednesday, September 9th which stated that we would keep the 5 positions and reduce their salaries 22% and one furlough day a week by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez.

Motion made to cut the two positions of Legislative Analyst II and Public Information Officer and to reduce the salary of the remaining staff across the board by 25% by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to table all other Committee Reports by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to adjourn by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Commissioner Pablo Rivera
Secretary to the Board

PR:cjc