



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs
Commission

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DRAFT

Chairperson

Ivette Servera

Vice Chair

Ramón L. Arroyo

Secretary

Pablo Rivera

Treasurer

Sonia P. Ayala

Commissioners:

Carlos E. Candal, Esq.

Manuel García

Enrique Marcano, Sr.

Luis A. Menéndez

Alcides Ortíz

Juan M. Perez

Ed Rodríguez

Norma Rodríguez Reyes

Maritza Tirú

Acting Executive Director,

Lina Lorenzi, Esq.

Special Projects

Coordinator and

Grants Writer

Lucía Goicoechea-Hernández

Principal Leg. Analyst

Werner Oyanadel

Public Info Officer

Karlo X. Ruiz

Senior Leg. Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES
LPRAC Commission Meeting
May 20, 2009
City Hall Annex, Bridgeport, CT
5:50 pm

Commissioners Present: Ramón L. Arroyo, Sonia P. Ayala, Manuel García, Enrique Marcano, Sr., Juan M. Pérez, Ed Rodríguez, Norma Rodríguez Reyes, Pablo Rivera, Ivette Servera and Maritza Tirú

Commissioners Absent: Carlos E. Candal, Esq., Luis Menéndez and Alcides Ortíz

Staff: Lina Lorenzi, Acting Executive Director
Werner Oyanadel, Principal Legislative Analyst
Karlo X. Ruiz, Public Information Officer
Clarisa Cardone, Senior Legislative Secretary

Tape 1A

Chair Servera asked **Secretary Pablo Rivera** to do the roll call. Quorum was established. Then she proceeded to announce that this is the first time in the history of the commission that the monthly meeting is held in Bridgeport, CT and we welcome all our visitors. Everyone introduced themselves around the room. Also, she introduced LPRAC's intern, Ana Maria Servantes. She said that there are going to be many changes to the commission to be able to work with everyone. Then she had Mr. Oyanadel talk about LPRAC. She then asked Commissioner Rodríguez to introduce LPRAC's staff.

Commissioner Rodríguez asked every staff member introduce themselves and what their role is in the commission. After everyone introduced themselves he thanked Chair Servera for letting the commission have its monthly meeting in Bridgeport.

Public Participation:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of April 15, 2009 by Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez.

Motion approved as follows:

7 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Ayala, García, Marcano, Sr., Perez, Rivera & Rodríguez-Reyes

1 Abstention: Commissioner Tirú

3 Absent: Commissioners Candal, Menéndez and Ortíz

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Servera proceeded to give her Chairperson's Report.

- 1) Chair Servera attended the inauguration of Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D., as President of Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) on 4-17-2009.
- 2) She also spoke about the Board/Staff Retreat at NVCC on Monday, May 18th, 2009. LPRAC is trying to plan everything that we are trying to do throughout the state. Mr. Ruiz is working hard on the marketing plan for this. Commissioner Marcano, Sr. is working with the college students and Mr. Ruiz is also working with interns on this.

- 3) We took Mrs. Cardone out for Secretary's Day and we gave her flowers from the Commissioners. Also gave her a birthday cake the day before. This builds good working relations with the staff and Commissioners.
- 4) She is also getting together with the Directors of non-profit organizations to see how much better we can work together.

Chair Servera then asked Mr. Oyanadel to talk about other items we are working on.

Mr. Oyanadel summarized a phone conference meeting that occurred at the LPRAC regarding a request from the President of Amistad America to the LPRAC. Mr. Gregory Belanger, President and CEO of the Amistad America, Inc. would like the LPRAC to make two recommendations of Latino leaders to be part of an advisory committee. The tasks of this committee consist on selecting qualified Latino students to participate on a trip from Connecticut to the Caribbean.

Chair Servera mentioned that the Executive Board got together with Jim Tracy of the Office of Legislative Management on the final preparations in regards to Fernando Betancourt.

Motion made to approve the Chairperson's Report by Commissioner Perez and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Acting Executive Director Lina Lorenzi, Esq. gave her report. A lot of the Chairperson's report pertains to her too.

- 1) Mrs. Lorenzi, Esq., also attended the inauguration Ceremony for the new President of NVCC.
- 2) She attended meetings at the Office of Legislative regarding the 2008 Gala Report.
- 3) She's working on the staff evaluations.
- 4) And she represented LPRAC at Drop Out Rate Press Conference.
- 5) Mrs. Lorenzi, Esq., also holds staff meetings and holds individual staff meetings too.
- 6) We're working on the process called RBA. The Chairperson and herself are working on that and hope to bring in the rest of the Board.
- 7) She's had an individual meeting with Commissioner Perez in reference to Willimantic issues. We are planning an event in August for that area.
- 8) We are also planning a non-profit event for June 5th.
- 9) We are working on an event on May 29th for Latino Veterans in CT.
- 10) She took part of the planning and took part in the Retreat.
- 11) Working on a Money Management planning event.

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

Discussion:

Commissioner Rodríguez mentioned that he is in favor of the work on the drop out rate and that he has spoken to several Legislators and some support it and it is a step in the right direction. It is not enough. We have a crisis. As a commission, thank you for supporting it. We have to put some heat and make sure our kids get more.

Motion approved unanimously.

Mrs. Lorenzi then followed-up saying that the position that LPRAC took on the drop out rate was in addition to supporting the legislation that increased the age by which kids could drop out of school from 16 to 18. We also took the position that we need to invest more of the stimulus monies in our schools to decrease the achievement gap that our children face. We have requested that the Governor listen to our concerns about not being at the table for the distribution of this money.

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ayala announced that we did not need the money that we thought we did for the gathering for Tribute to Hispanic Veterans.

Motion made to approve the Budget Committee Report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Approved Unanimously.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Ayala spoke of the Tribute to Hispanic Veterans deadline and showed everyone the cover and the book of the fallen soldiers. We are still taking names and pictures and their stories.

Chair Severa announced that this reception will take place on Friday, May 29th at the Legislative Office Building with refreshments and music.

Commissioner Ayala said that this is the third year that we are holding this reception. We are going to have a high ranking officer there. She then asked Commissioner Norma Rodríguez Reyes to be the Mistress of Ceremony.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes said that she responded to Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández on this.

Commissioner Ayala said that at our Retreat, we thought that LPRAC should have a slogan to bring visibility to our Commission, something catchy. She also mentioned that our Acting Executive Director and Public Information Officer, do a list of vendors for food from different restaurants for our meetings so that we can rotate who we use. Also, the Nominations forms were sent out and the deadline is Friday, June 19th, 2009. She explained the criteria.

Motion made to approve the Special Projects Committee Report by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez.

Comment:

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes asked if a female can be added to the cover of the book for the Tribute to Hispanic Veterans event on May 29th, 2009.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion made to have a contest for a slogan to make our Agency more visible by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Tirú mentioned that the idea sounds great but this should be discussed among all commissioners and we need to establish the rules and criteria and forms.

Chair Servera said that Commissioner Tirú presented the idea to send back to the Personnel and Procedures Committee to develop the criteria and then it comes back to the table.

Motion rescinded.

Motion made to approve the deadline for the nominations form deadline of June 19, 2009 by Commissioner Rodríguez and seconded by Commissioner Marcano, Sr. Motion approved unanimously.

PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Oyanadel said that they held a meeting on Monday, May 11th with the attendance of Commissioners Perez, Candal and Rodríguez Reyes on the phone. Commissioner Rodríguez could not attend but wanted us to move forward. We discussed five items.

- 1) We spoke specifically on Bill 6569 which was the Bill on the graduation rate increasing the age, with parental permission, from 16 to 18 for the dropout age.
- 2) We spoke of the Press Conference that our Acting Exec. Dir. went to.
- 3) Also, of the Renters that are losing, through no fault of their own, their shelter due to the fact that the property owners are being foreclosed upon.
- 4) We also spoke in favor of Bill 5478 in the Banking Committee to provide funding to small Latino business owners.
- 5) Our Acting Executive Director, Lina Lorenzi, Esq. and Mr. Oyanadel testified at a public hearing coordinated by the Black and Latino Caucus regarding the stimulus money on 4/24/09. This is probably one of the most important issues in the Legislature aside from the Primary Health Care which is a lot of the funding that is coming from the federal government, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) which is coming to CT. It's billions of dollars.
- 6) We also spoke about the book on Latinos.
- 7) We explained to the members of the Commission that the budget for the Commission was approved with the 20% reduction but the Governor said that she will veto this. The Leaders in the Legislature are currently writing a new Bill with new numbers.

We don't now what's going to happen. Mrs. Lorenzi is working with the staff and consultant on the Results Based Accountability (RBA).

Discussion:

Commissioner Perez asked if Mr. Oyanadel could show why the book is important and who would benefit from it.

Tape 1 B

Mr. Oyanadel said that at the national level, Brown University felt that it is so important to make some investments on this.

Chair Servera asked if there are going to be extra books to send to the non-profit agencies.

Mr. Oyanadel answered that the goal is to produce 1,000 copies.

Motion made to approve the Priorities & Legislation Committee Report by Commissioner Ayala and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion approved unanimously.

PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner García restated to the commissioners that if there is anything you want to discuss in this committee, should be sent in writing to Lina Lorenzi, Esq., Acting Executive Director who is the staff assigned and to him, not airmail. There was a short meeting today to review newly created policies that were given from Special Projects Committee. They will be sent to the whole Commission body for review within the next 7 days and then a vote. They are also working on the personnel evaluations with the office and will be sent to everyone too.

Motion made to approve the Personnel & Procedures Committee Report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Rodríguez. Motion approved unanimously.

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Servera asked Commissioner Marcano, Sr. to report.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. announced that he is the new Chair for this Committee and mentioned that the committee is planning on holding a Money Management Conf. to be held in the New Haven area on Tuesday, Sept. 15th, 2009 because it coincides with the beginning of the Hispanic Heritage month. He then asked Mr. Ruiz, LPRAC's Public Information Officer to continue.

Mr. Ruiz reported on the following:

- 1) The monthly newsletters going out monthly and he is preparing one for May, 2009.
- 2) He is also working on the database, inputting as many emails as possible to cut the cost of postage.
- 3) Working on a Housing Forum at Housatonic Community College. Parking is free and they are trying for some time in July 2009.
- 4) We are working on a new brochure once finalized, it will be in Spanish too.

Commissioner Servera said that they are planning forums all over the state. We have monies available and are planning a Money Management in New Haven, a Housing Forum in New Britain and Commissioner Perez will be holding an Immigration Forum in Willimantic.

Commissioner Perez announced that they want to address the issues of what are the rights for immigrants. We're hoping to do this in the middle of August. We're trying to get a commitment from Elsa Nuñez, President of Eastern Community College, and we already have a commitment from SAMA. A lot of people are already interested in this.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. thanked Mrs. Correa who gave us information on the family re-entry program. This is the information we would like to receive so we can disseminate this.

Mrs. Correa commended the LPRAC for holding its meeting in Bridgeport and spoke of the re-entry program.

Motion made to approve the Public Information Committee by Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes and seconded by Commissioners Arroyo and Rodríguez. Motion approved unanimously.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Motion made to table Section VII – New & Old Business Line a) Commissioner Garcia’s attendance issue on the Agenda by Commissioner Perez and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion approved unanimously.

Commissioner Tirú spoke of a concern and would like clarification on what is the process of any commissioner to follow when they are directing any staff members from LPRAC to find out business that should be heard/discussed at this Commission.

Commissioner Marcano, Sr. said that point of clarification that this sounds like a Personnel issue.

Commissioner Tirú feels that any Commissioner should go to the Chair first and put it in writing anything that they would like the staff to do or perform for them. She feels that when someone makes a phone call and asks the Executive Director to perform a job and the Exec. Dir. will feel that if she doesn’t follow through that it is insubordination. We have to clarify the process for all commissioners.

Chair Servera said that she will do that in the June meeting and that there will be a class on Roberts’ Rules and will send out an email with that information.

Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes asked if LPRAC could work on looking for the Monument about the Hispanics in CT.

Mrs. Lorenzi said that a few months ago she researched where the statue might be and the last place was at the Hartford Armory. She called there and they said it is gone. They don’t know who has it or where it went.

Motion made to have Acting Executive Director, Lina Lorenzi, Esq., look for the monument by Commissioner Rodríguez and seconded by Commissioner García. Motion approved unanimously.

Mr. Oyanadel then spoke of recommending two names for the Ambassador for students for the Amistad trip. All Commissioners decided that this should be discussed further.

Commissioner Perez said that he would like to help Mr. Oyanadel. They will bring recommendations to June’s meeting.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Commissioner Pablo Rivera
Secretary to the Board

PR:cjc