



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

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Chairperson

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Secretary

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Treasurer

Dr. Eugene M. Salorio

Commissioners:

Ramón L. Arroyo

Hon. Migdalia Castro

Roberto C. Fernandez

Dr. Sonia B. Mañjon

Lourdes E. Montalvo

Ed Rodríguez

Norma Rodríguez-Reyes

Maritza Tirú

Danny Torres

Acting Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

**Special Projects Director/
Grants Writer**

Lucía Goicoechea-Hernández

Senior Legislative Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES
LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting
January 16, 2013
Legislative Office Building, Hartford, Connecticut
5:34 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Yolanda Castillo, Honorable Migdalia Castro, Richard A. Cruz, Roberto Fernandez, Lourdes Montalvo, Dr. Eugene Salorio and Danny Torres
Commissioners on the phone:	Dr. Sonia Mañjon and Norma Rodríguez Reyes
Commissioners Absent:	Ramón L. Arroyo, Isaías T. Díaz, Esq. and Ed Rodríguez
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director, Lucía Goicoechea Hernández and Clarisa Cardone, Sr. Legislative Secretary

Tape 1 A

In the absence of **Chairman Díaz, Esq., Vice Chairman Cruz** called the meeting to order and asked **Secretary Commissioner Castillo** to do roll call. Quorum not established at the beginning of meeting but quorum was reached shortly thereafter.

Public Participation: None

CHAIRPERSON'S/ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vice Chairman Cruz reported on the following information:

- On Jan. 7, 2013 Gov. Malloy nominated Judge Carmen Espinosa to the State Supreme Court.
- On Tuesday, January 8, 2013 LPRAC Chairman Isaías Diaz spoke at a press conference at the invitation of the Secretary of the State Denise Merrill. Secretary of the State celebrated a 33% increase in number of Hispanic state legislators and more than 22,000 new Hispanic voters registered in 2012;
- On Wednesday, January 9, 2013 LPRAC Acting Executive Director attended the 2013 Opening Day of Session ceremonies at the State Capitol;
- LPRAC's 2nd quarterly newsletter was published on January 15, 2013 with the guidance of the Public Information Committee;
- Mr. Oyanadel completed his annual job evaluation on Jan. 7, 2013 at the request of Mr. Jim Tracy, Executive Director of the Office of Legislative Management;
- LPRAC, as a result of the 2012 deficit mitigation plan mandated by the legislature on the Legislative Branch, returned \$8,359.00 or roughly 2.62% of its current budget back to the state as required by state law;
- LPRAC staff contacted OLM to discuss the appropriate procedure to accommodate the Commission's vote that allowed CT Dreamers access to our scholarship program and received the following response to our inquiry: "In regard to scholarship payments to Undocumented Immigrant students - OLM, on behalf of the commission, may request a special exception code from Central Accounts Payable at the Comptroller's Office in order to process payments to students without social security/tax IDs. The request must be in writing and will be taken under consideration. Once OLM has submitted this written request, we should have a response with 72 hours whether or not the exception will be allowed. We ask that you advise the Commissioners of this special stipulation and requirement at the next Commission meeting. If the Commissioners are in consensus and wish to proceed, please provide us with minutes from the meeting stating such. We will then move forward with the written request"; &
- The Priorities and Legislation Committee in consultation with the Special Projects Committee and Public Information Committee successfully conducted our 2013 Legislative reception at the Society Room in Hartford, CT with a broad range of guests that included the large majority of Latino elected officials of the Connecticut General Assembly; Governor Dannel P. Malloy; Denise Merrill, Secretary of the State; George Jepsen, Attorney General, Commissioner Daniel C. Esty from the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), Honorable J. Brendan Sharkey, Speaker of the House, elected officials, members of the press, and many other guests. Commissioner Cruz thanked Commissioners Rodriguez-Reyes, Montalvo, Dr. Mañjon, Cruz, Castillo, & Dr. Salorio for lending a hand with the program.

Commissioner Salorio came in at 5:37 p.m. Quorum is established.

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

Commissioner Fernández came in at 5:56 p.m.

Commissioner Torres came in at 6:02 p.m.

Motion made to approve the Chairperson's/Executive Director's report by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Montalvo stated that when Bylaws Committee updated the LPRAC By-Laws, she thought they requested two separate reports, the Chairperson's Report and the Executive Director's Report. She asked the staff if this is correct.

Vice Chairman Cruz said that one report between the Chairman and the Director was the normal practice at LPRAC for the past two and half years.

Commissioner Salorio stated that he was a member of the By-Laws Committee when LPRAC bylaws were amended and informed everyone that his recollection was that the committee recommended two separate reports one for the Chairman on Community based issues and another for the Executive Director on the programs of the LPRAC.

Commissioner Montalvo requested that the By-Laws be emailed to her in a PDF file.

Motion carries as follows:

6 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres
5 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo, Castro, Fernández and Rodríguez

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Castillo asked to delete Commissioner Castro from the attendance sheet for the month of December of 2012 as being not present and mark her as absent since she arrived at the meeting after our meeting was officially adjourned.

Motion made to approve the minutes of December 19, 2012 as amended made by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres
3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Tape 1 B

PUBLIC INFORMATION/TALENT BANK COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes reported on the following:

1. They officially released the second LPRAC Newsletter;
2. She then reported on the Legislative Reception held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at the Society Room in Hartford, CT. Those that were in attendance did an excellent job, our Commissioners presenting to the different Legislators and mostly all of the Legislators were present except for a couple of them and we had a wonderful time, it was a really great event;
3. We are also going to begin to co-work with the Priorities & Legislative Committee organizing an information forum on contracting regulations for Latino businesses. Commissioner Donald DeFronzo (from DAS) wants to invite all the commissioners of the Permanent Commission on the Status Commission, the African American Commission and our Agency to discuss what works or what needs to be improved in this program.

Motion made to approve the Public Information/Talent Bank Committee Report made by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioners Fernández and Montalvo. Motion carries as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres
3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Cruz, Chairman of this Committee reported the following:

1. Last evening we had a successful Legislative Reception at the Society Room in Hartford and he announced LPRAC's priorities for the 2013 legislative session on behalf of our commission. LPRAC

- prioritized issues dealing with education and self-sufficiency. Priorities & Legislation (P & L) Committee shall work side by side with elected officials on issues that guarantee equal rights for our community, improve safety in our schools by making improvements to our mental health services provided by the state and monitor any other legislation that may have an impact in our community;
2. P & L Commission shall also begin drafting testimony in support of the nomination for Judge Carmen Espinosa;
 3. The Committee also recommended that LPRAC be in support of the driver's licenses to immigrants regardless of immigration status. A bill on that topic will be drafted by State Representative Juan Candelaria. This issue has already been approved by LPRAC last month;
 4. The P & L Committee shall also prepare testimony in support of "full community" schools;
 5. P & L Committee will also send an email memo to the Public Health Committee asking them to raise a bill on our behalf regarding our Barber's Apprenticeship Program.
 6. P & L Committee shall work with the Commission of Administrative Services organizing an informational forum in the month of March about the need for improvements to the minority business enterprises contracting system in our state.

Motion made to approve the Priorities & Legislation Committee report by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Castillo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Montalvo said that she had mentioned to the Acting Executive Director that about two or three weeks ago, she went to the radio station and she interpreted for Senator Gerrata and she said she will be more than happy to meet with us and also State Representative Susan Johnson who is the Chair of the Health Committee. She thinks it will be a great idea to have a meeting with both of them and with representation from the Department of Public Health and Department of Labor.

Mr. Oyanadel responded to Commissioner Montalvo that he received a call from State Representative Susan Johnson and she already asked for more information regarding bills that LPRAC would like to introduce and Mr. Oyanadel informed the Commissioner that he has been in contact with her staff getting her the information she requested. He has not been in contact with Senator Gerrata but I will follow up with her as she requested so that we can make sure we have the bill.

Motion carries as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Torres, Chair for this committee reported the following:

1. They are working on the golf tournament brochure and flyer pending approval from the board for disbursements;
2. We also discussed the 2.8 grade average in the nominations for scholarships, at this point they decided to keep it at 2.8; &
3. Also, we asked the Chairman about the legality of using the word "undocumented" so we need more information for that.

Commissioner Fernández mentioned that most scholarships, the majority of them want a 3.0 GPA.

Commissioner Montalvo said that she did ask several years ago for the Commission to start collecting some kind of data. She understands that we are very short on staff but it is time to start collecting data of what the students to see whether these students continue going to college, how they are doing, to somehow try to keep in contact to collect some data to see how these student do because in reality we don't know if three years down the road they decide to quit and they leave. We don't know if they take the check after they get accepted, they buy a car, they show up for three or four months and then they leave. We don't have any of that data.

Motion made to approve the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion carries as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

RBA COMMITTEE

Commissioner Montalvo reported that they have not met but will be working on the following:

1. She was approached by a professor from California through Dr. Jaime Gomez from ECSU and he asked if we can partner to do a Public Safety RBA Turn the Curve Session with the university. She is particularly

interested in learning how our state government brings public information to the Latino community in time of weather disasters such as Super Storm Sandy and others;

2. The Committee is also interested in conducting a Turn the Curve Session on HIV/Aids in the State of CT, how HIV is affecting the population which will be also be part of Public Health;
3. Also, last night, Commissioner Salorio and Senator Linares asked to conduct an RBA on entrepreneurs on businesses and they would like to do this next month. We really need to contact Commissioner Rodríguez. Next month is really not the best as it is a short month.

Commissioner Torres said that he believes the state has a reverse 911 that the state utilizes to inform people in time of crisis. Commissioner Torres said that maybe the state should consider sending the information both in English and Spanish.

Commissioner Castillo said that La Voz Newspaper is a weekly paper and maybe someone from the state can follow-up with that paper with public information relevant to our community so that the information may reach our community in Spanish. She also recommended that the RBA Committee conduct a Turn the Curve Session on Small Businesses and in the area of Public Safety.

Commissioner Dr. Salorio mentioned that the idea of urgency preparedness communication falls under the area of Public Safety. He would be happy to work with the co-chairs of that committee on issues relevant to small businesses and entrepreneurship.

Tape 2A

Motion made to accept the RBA report made by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Castillo. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Motion made to request an exception letter for Office of Legislative Management to bring to Comptroller's office for state funds for scholarships made by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Torres. Motion approved as follows:

6 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Rodríguez-Reyes and Torres

2 Nays: Commissioners Montalvo and Dr. Salorio

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Motion made for a formation of a subcommittee through Special Projects to have a discussion and deal with the decision making on the GPA for our scholarship awards by Commissioner Castro and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. A friendly amendment was made by Commissioner Fernández: A subcommittee is to be formed by a committee of the Special Projects which includes Commissioners Castro, Castillo, Dr. Mañjon, Fernández, Cruz, Montalvo and Torres made by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Motion made for the LPRAC to do a letter to support Judge Carmen Espinosa's nomination by Commissioner Castro and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Commissioner Fernández said that both he and Commissioner Montalvo have been dealing with the bilingual education issue both out of Windham, New Haven and Bridgeport. 72% of all Latino students in this state are classified learning disabled because they do not have access to language education. He had conversations with Representative Fleishman and Senator Stillman about this issue. He is asking that the commission grant both he and Commissioner Montalvo the ability to continue to speak to both Rep. Fleishman and Senator Stillman about this topic as they have spoken to most of those people and this needs to be rectified, it is unacceptable that 72% of Spanish speaking kids have no access to language appropriate instruction. Since we started this in October of last year, he's reached out to educators and to everybody he knows.

Commissioner Cruz said that he met last night during our reception with the Director of Public Policy and Research from the CT Commission on Children and this was his point exactly. This is a discussion that needs to be had, need to be addressed and he has asked him to come to our meeting and give us some testimony that he has.

Commissioner Castillo mentioned that if this is so urgent, then why we don't have a Press Conference. Have everybody, our Latino Legislators, we as a commission and report this. She said that probably half the people don't know the statistics he gave tonight. It is our community and we need to inform our elected officials about this in an urgent manner. It is our responsibility to take the appropriate action on this important matter.

Mr. Oyanadel encourages the commission to do an informative press announcement on this matter. When we have issues that rise to the level that you are indicating the best way to respond is for a call to action to fix the problem stated by Commissioner Fernandez. If you need our staff support to organize this press conference, please let us know so that we can begin coordinating it ASAP. We did exactly that last year when we urged the legislature to introduce legislation as a result of claims of racial profiling in our state and we were successful in attracting media attention which culminated with passage of Public Act 12-74.

Commissioner Castro mentioned that State Representative Juan Candelaria is on the Education Committee.

Commissioner Cruz as Chairman of the Priorities & Legislation Committee said that he would propose having a meeting in the next couple of weeks to discuss further on these topics that we are looking to address. They are very important topics and topics in which is in our priorities education, self-sufficiency and small businesses and we can have them either in person or conference call.

Motion made that the LPRAC agrees to have Commissioners Montalvo and Fernández should be delegated as representatives of the commission to speak to the individuals that were mentioned by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Motion made to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Castro.

Motion approved as follows:

8 Yeas: Commissioners Castillo, Castro, Fernández, Dr. Mañjon, Montalvo, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio and Torres

3 Absent: Commissioners Díaz, Esq., Arroyo and Rodríguez

Respectfully submitted by,

Yolanda Castillo, Secretary
LPRAC Board

YC:cjc