



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

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Chairperson

Isaías T. Díaz, Esq.
Vice Chair
Richard A. Cruz
Secretary
Yolanda Castillo
Treasurer
Dr. Eugene M. Salorio

Commissioners:

Ramón L. Arroyo
Francisco R. Borres
Hon. Migdalia Castro
Roberto C. Fernandez
Jay González
Lourdes E. Montalvo
Emanuela Palmares Leaf
Dr. Agnes Quiñones
Norma Rodríguez-Reyes
Danny Torres
Elena Trueworthy, M.S.

Acting Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel

**Special Projects Director/
Grants Writer**

Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández

Senior Legislative Secretary

Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES
LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting
September 18, 2013
Legislative Office Building Room 2D
Hartford, CT
5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Isaías T. Díaz, Esq., Ramón L. Arroyo, Francisco R. Borres, Yolanda Castillo, Honorable Migdalia Castro, Richard A. Cruz, Roberto Fernández, Jay González, Lourdes Montalvo, Emanuela Palmares Leaf, Dr. Agnes Quiñones, Norma Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Eugene Salorio, Danny Torres and Elena Trueworthy, M.S.
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director, Lucia Goicoechea Hernández, Special Projects Director and Grants Writer, and Clarisa Cardone, Sr. Legislative Secretary

Tape 1 A

Chairman Díaz, Esq. called the meeting to order and asked **Board Secretary Commissioner Castillo** to do roll call. Quorum was established. He then asked new Commissioners Palmares-Leaf, Quiñones and González to introduce themselves to the Commission.

Commissioner Emanuela Palmares Leaf highlighted as an introduction to LPRAC that she is the editor of the Tribuna Newspaper for the past seven years – a publication in English, Portuguese and Spanish that was founded by her parents and also highlighted her civic engagements in the community particularly as Chairwomen of the Citizens Council to the Brazilian Consulate in Hartford, CT. **Commissioner Dr. Agnes Quiñones** stated that she has been working with the State Department of Education serving as a Program Manager and Education Consultant overseeing programs in the areas of youth development after school, service learning and serving as a liaison with the faith-based community here in the state. She is also a mentor to two kids from New Britain and she has been a “Big Sister” for Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters program for about 10 years. Also, she has visited many schools around the world to help them get accredited. **Commissioner Jay González** said he’s been working for Verizon for the past 10 years in sales. Recently he has become more involved in the community in Waterbury, mainly with non-profit organizations. He is a member of the board of the Rivera Memorial Foundation.

Public Participation:

Chairman Díaz, Esq. called on the following speakers:

1. **Dr. Nivea L. Torres, Interim Superintendent** of the Technical High School system introduced herself to LPRAC and provided information to LPRAC about the Technical High School system. In summary she indicated that the technical high school system presently educates over 11,000 students in the state and they are the largest high school system in the state. Over 1/3 of the student population is of Hispanic/Latino decent and they are proud of that fact. However, there are some areas in the state they really want to impact and work very closely with LPRAC in those communities to increase enrollment for Latino students and make sure that they see this as a viable educational opportunity. She has been interim superintendent of the district for 8 ½ months.

Commissioner Cruz came in at 5:43 p.m.

2. **Mr. Garvin G. Ambrose, Esq., State Victim Advocate** spoke next. He has been in this post for the past six months. Part of their office, The Office of Victim Advocate is sometimes termed as the watchdog agency to oversee the different agencies that are providing services to the different crime victims, victims of financial crimes, physical crimes and sometimes civil as well. Looking at that and the Constitutional Statutory Rights of Crime Victims. He brought some brief handouts with some services as well as a description of their office and the Constitutional Statutory Rights that they currently enforce or take control over. He was a former Prosecutor. Historically, their office has not really reached out into the Latino and African American communities. There are a lot of people who do not know about their office and he believes that his post should help increase that and he looks forward to going into our communities, upon invitation of course, and addressing our communities. He also handed out bookmarks with the constitutional rights on the back of them.

Tape 1B

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of July 17, 2013 by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

12 Yeas: Commissioners Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, González, Montalvo, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy

2 Abstentions: Commissioners Arroyo and Fernández

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairman Díaz, Esq. then reported the following:

1. First of all, he thanked everyone that attended the scholarship ceremony; it was a very successful event.
2. He received the data for the school suspensions from the FOI request but it needs to be analyzed before LPRAC make a determination.
3. Both he and Commissioner Fernández participated in a phone conference with Atty. Juan Cartagena, President and General Counsel of Latino Justice (PRLDEF) regarding the education issues in Willimantic with regards to the Special Master. There could potentially be a statute of limitations issue but it is something that we are still reaching out and analyzing. Once they have a conclusive answer, they will report back to the Board.
4. Last week, both he and the Acting Executive Director met with the Governor of the State of Connecticut to discuss the need to increase the diversity of state judges and of Latino officials with state government.

Motion made to accept Chairperson's report by Commissioner Borres and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

14 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Montalvo, Palmares-Leaf,

Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Oyanadel announced that this is probably the last commission meeting which he will be serving the commission as the Acting Director therefore he asked to be given extra time to read his last report.

1. As the Acting Executive Director for the commission, he participates in several outreach activities that are intended, based upon the State Law, to raise awareness of critical issues that impact our community including television interview regarding the Affordable Care Act. He attended community leader recognition events such as the Latino de Oro Award given by Identidad Latina newspaper; newspaper interview regarding a new legislative appointment of LPRAC Commissioner Emanuela Palmares Leaf and recently Judge Carmen Espinosa, and a radio interview about our 2013 scholarship program. With La Voz Hispana newspaper, he also provided some information about the scholarship in Spanish so it can also be released in La Voz Hispana as well. He also had the pleasure to attend a community outreach activity where for instance LPRAC Chairman Isafas was recognized as Puerto Rican Mayor for the Day by the Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury. Furthermore, he, along with other LPRAC staff and LPRAC Commissioners, participated in a distribution of LPRAC materials/handouts and gunlocks during the Puerto Rican festival held in the City of Meriden. More importantly, he worked along with peers of LPRAC during the 16th Annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony and our Stamp Exhibit last Monday during the Hispanic Heritage month. Finally, he would like to brief you on some of the activities that he is working with the Public Information Committee which is currently seeking funding from the private sector to conduct an outreach campaign to inform the Latino community of the benefits to them of the Affordable Care Act by delivering a credible and linguistically appropriate message from trusted sources throughout a comprehensive advertising campaign.
2. He is also very proud to have worked with several LPRAC Commissioners during these past months on issues related to another of our state mandate which is also very important which is the release of our latest LPRAC newsletter; coordinate research regarding pending LPRAC queries on potential civil rights violations for Latino students in Windham County; discuss the need for the public service sector to become more inclusive and using our influence to expand opportunities for Latino leaders aiming at promotions in state government such as the recent meeting that Chairman Díaz mentioned with the Governor to discuss how LPRAC can help him identify qualified Latino leaders to be considered for top public service positions in our state; and ongoing discussions with several staff individuals from OLM regarding LPRAC contracts for instance, for our upcoming research on the Latino community under RBA format among others. He is also providing staff assistance to the newly formed ad hoc committee on civic engagement spearheaded by LPRAC Commissioner Borres. Also, he continues representing LPRAC at the Racial Profiling Advisory Board as they work to enhance the collection and analysis of traffic stops data in Connecticut as required by the passage of P.A. 12-74 better known as the Alvin W. Penn Anti-Racial Profiling Law.
3. In response to one of our mandates that stipulate that we as an agency maintain a liaison between our population and governmental agencies, including the General Assembly, he is excited to respond to several requests from legislators including one that he had a few days ago from State Representative Juan Candelaria with their needs for information regarding the Latino and Puerto Rican population and from legislators seeking our recommendations for legislative appointments and for constituent needs per our

- state mandate. He also received requests from our sister legislative Commission on Aging for our advice concerning current barriers to state programs affecting Latino seniors in CT and at the invitation of the Consul of Brazil, Mr. Cezar Amaral, he attended a formal dinner hosted in honor of the Mayor of Hartford, Pedro Segarra. Commissioner Palmares Leaf and her husband were present at the event as well.
4. LPRAC, as you are aware from our legislative mandate requires us to review legislation and/or to make recommendations that may affect our community so that we may send it to the members of the CT General Assembly. This is probably one of our top missions under state law, one of the reasons why we are here in the legislature and we are now beginning to receive some of those issues that you as a board will need to decide how to prioritize so that when the legislative session begins next January we are going to be able to provide our testimony in reference to those issues. Many of you received a copy of some of those discussions via email during the interim which is the report that was recently released by CT Voices for Children which highlighted that while in CT there is a decrease in school arrests for the arrest of Latino children and other minority groups that is actually much higher maybe twice the level of the general population. That is important because the arrests are not for major violent crimes; they are crimes for people throwing gum, throwing pencils and small violations which is probably an area that the commission needs to review. He knows that there will probably some legislation in the legislature this year. He also spoke of another big report that was recently release which is the *Connecticut Disparity Study*. That study is very important because for five years they have been waiting for this report to be provided in the state. Former Commissioner Ed Rodríguez made this to be his top goal. He spoke about this at our big reception that we had a few days ago, about the lack of contracts that are going to Latino businesses. This disparity, once released, will help us make the point or prove the point or talk about the point of whether or not there is discrimination in state contracts in CT. What the report is saying is that the state is not ready to conduct that report. The report is saying that CT will probably be ready to have a disparity study for 2018. That's a tremendous setback for our commission because we have been testifying for such a long time to have the data to be able to show that there is discrimination and we need to figure out ways to fix that. The commission needs to decide if that is one of the issues that you want to advocate next year or is there something missing.
 5. LPRAC is applying for a major grant of \$6,250.00 with the CT Human Rights and Opportunities Commission to be able to translate state documents for immigrant Latino communities. If we are able to get that contract, we are able to translate our brochures, other documents that are pertaining to our agency which will give us more money to publicize it around that State of CT.
 6. Governor Malloy just released yesterday something very important to our commission for the work that we have done in regards to community schools and After-School programs. The state will be providing more than \$8 million in funding for after school programs in 16 districts in the State of CT most of which are going to be going to communities where our kids live.
 7. The state in the month of August had a request for people to apply for the position of permanency. He heard that it was up in the state panels for about a month. Now, the Office of Legislative Management is beginning to call those who are most prepared to do the work and are in the interview process currently. This is going to be happening for the next couple of weeks. Probably for our next commission meeting, the state will already make a decision, then OLM will send a recommendation to Leadership for the State of CT and then Leadership will have to sign on to that recommendation or it will decline it at which point the state will have to begin that process again if that is what they want to do. When we started this work about four years ago, the commission was in a transitional time and he is happy to report that four years down the road, with all your leadership, with all your work, the work of LPRAC is very strong and it will probably get stronger as we begin to continue to move this entity, this institution forward when we get the 21 commissioners on board.

Commissioner Montalvo left at 6:40 p.m.

Motion made to accept Acting Executive Director's report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Castro.

Chairman Díaz, Esq. acknowledged all the hard word that Acting Executive Director Oyanadel has done for LPRAC.

Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy

1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

PUBLIC INFORMATION/TALENT BANK COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Rodríguez-Reyes Chairperson for this committee welcomed all of the new commissioners. Then she reported on the following:

1. The Public Information Committee published their third issue of our agency's quarterly newsletter which was already distributed in several locations including at our latest Latino Scholarship Awards Ceremony. We do have two segments that are very, very important.
 - A. One is the commissioner profile. They have agreed to profile the commissioners based on seniority. Our senior member has been with us for 14 ½ years, Commissioner Ramón L. Arroyo and then the second commissioner should have been herself but she thought it would have been very self-serving if she decided to profile herself in a newsletter that she has quite a bit to do with so she decided to

then pass and she's sure there will be other years or other times when that could happen. The second one was Commissioner Ed Rodríguez but he is no longer with us. The third Commissioner is Chairman Isaías Díaz, Esq. and the next one that they will be profiling, there are two commissioners that were appointed on the same day therefore we went in alphabetical order and it will be Richard A. Cruz. She then asked Commissioner Cruz to submit his profile to Mr. Oyanadel.

- B. Also, they are profiling a youth from the promesa awards and we want to make sure they are from a different part of the state. If any of the Commissioners have a youth that they would like profiled, if you can please let them know.
 - C. Also, in your packages there are different outlets that have articles on the different scholarship awards. They will have the next one from Identidad Latino and from La Voz.
2. The committee, with the help of an intern, Oscar Quesada finished the translation of the State Constitution of CT and would like to hear your feedback as how, we as a commission would like to announce it. Every single Friday or once a month, citizens are sworn in as American Citizens so maybe they can put the package very nice and given them to the Spanish-speaking citizens. If anybody has any ideas on how they can promote this translation, please give your thoughts to Mr. Oyanadel who will disseminate to them. They propose to send the documents to the State Librarians, to the Legislative Library and to community stakeholders so that the document may be archived accordingly.
 3. The committee also explored how to obtain private funds to create a community outreach to educate Latinos on the benefits to them of the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately our local founders were unable to fund us for this specific project, but that doesn't mean that we are going to stop here. In October, the airwaves, the print and the TV will have lots of advertisement going on about the health care act because by next year all of us must have insurance and obviously we want to help the Hispanics like we helped with the Puerto Rican birth certificates.
 4. Finally, the Public Information Committee would like to partner with our newly created ad hoc committee on civic engagement in order to maximize our limited resources on this issue that is very closely matched our two committees and Commissioner Borres and she will be working closely together.

Motion made to accept the Public Information/Talent Bank Committee report by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy.

Discussion:

Commissioner Cruz commended the Public Information Committee for a really nice newsletter, job well done. Also, he said he wants to take them to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce GBLN Expo and have it at their GBLN table.

Commissioner Borres said that the Naturalization Ceremonies are held every third Friday, there are four sessions per day at the Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford Federal Court Houses. The judges and the courts are always more than happy to have people come in. He knows this because at the Bridgeport Court House, he generally registers about 250 newly made citizens every month.

Commissioner Dr. Quiñones recommended distributing the Constitution in Spanish at the adult education programs that service and incredible amount of Latinos and the Technical High Schools that have the adult programming and in some of the City Halls throughout the State.

Tape 2A

Commissioner Trueworthy asked if there are restrictions as to which documents can be translated.

Mr. Oyanadel said that the State of CT does not have an "English Only" law and not having that allows some flexibility for the State to have more languages in the documents that they have. There is a movement in the State to actually change that, as a matter of fact, every year there is a bill that is introduced but it normally does not go anywhere so not having the state prohibiting it, the state agencies can actually begin to do whatever they need to. Speaking of which, if you look at the state motto in CT is in Latin. If we have an English Only law in CT, that would have to be changed as well.

Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Cruz, Chair for this committee said they are interested in meeting with commissioners to develop an action plan for the issues that they need to discuss in this upcoming Legislative Session for 2014. As mentioned before, there are pressing issues dealing with the areas of Self Sufficiency, Discrimination, and Education such as the Service Side Disparity Study and the recently released report by CT Voices for Children on the overrepresentation of school arrests for Latino children. He would also like to add Housing under discrimination. He would like to try to get a good sense of those who are interested in being part of this discussion, check your availability in having a preliminary discussion on these issues and other pertinent legislative issues. Relative to our state mandate, Senator Andres Ayala would also like to sit in on this part of the discussion as to how we are going to move forward with this.

Motion made to accept the Priorities and Legislation Committee report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Torres, Chairman of this committee reported the following:

1. He spoke about the 16th Annual Scholarship Awards that we held on Saturday, August 31st, 2013 at the Bond Ballroom. There were a total of 170 committed to attend, 65 were complimentary tickets and 105 were paid and a total of 147 attended. They awarded \$29,900 to 13 students or \$2,300 each. Recommendations for 2014, the 17th Annual Scholarship Awards, they would like to combine it with the 20th Anniversary celebration. They are hoping to get 400 guests, and a major entertainer and a speaker. They have asked for an opinion from OLM to the casinos, maybe Lake of Isles or MGM Grand. They would like to hear from the board tonight on their opinion.
2. On the Retreat, they want to do it either Friday, October 11th or Saturday, October 12th at either the Gouveia Vineyards in Wallingford or Seasons at Traditions in Wallingford or any pro bono location and we'd like to hear from the board on this.
3. The Hispanic Heritage Celebration was held on Monday, September 16th. Eighty-Seven people confirmed to attend on that date, sixty-nine actually came. It's a great event, stop by and view them if you haven't done so and let others know. The stamps will be there until October 15th.

Motion made to accept the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

RBA COMMITTEE

Commissioner Fernández, Co-Chair of this Committee Tabled the report.

Mr. Oyanadel said that LPRAC is currently going through a RFP process to produce a Community RBA Report and all these companies are currently applying for this RFP and we will get the response by the 30th of this month.

Chairman Díaz, Esq. reported that Commissioner Montalvo would like to do an RBA with regards to inadequate response times for emergency calls in Latino neighborhoods.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Commissioner Borres Chairperson for this Committee reported that the Chairman, Mr. Oyanadel and he met last month. Civic Engagement is trying to get our Latino community involved in the electoral process and educated about the electoral process and involved in every standpoint possible. There are a few things like a branded slogan such as what was done a few years ago, "Rock the Boat"; having an information HUB with different links; social networking, public relations events, political forums, registration drives, etc. Another big topic was a video PSA. We have the ability to get involved with Telemundo and Univision, and he comes from a background of television production. Mr. Oyanadel was going to work on putting together a budget and also to discuss fiduciary responsibilities. They are going to have another meeting and they will be working with Commissioner Rodríguez Reyes and it is scheduled for 11/11/13 at the LPRAC Office. You can attend or call in on the toll-free conference number. He also mentioned that he is currently a Deputy Registrar of Voters and he gets to hire 250 people to work at the polls.

Motion made to accept the Ad Hoc Committee on Civic Engagement report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones.

Discussion:

Mr. Oyanadel also mentioned that Commissioner Borres has asked him to produce a logo for the Civic Engagement. He said that if anybody on the board has any talent with creating logos, they would like to seek your guidance as well. Another item is that they want to do a video showcasing the Commissioners.

Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Motion made to suspend meeting by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

Motion made to return to meeting by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

Tape 2 B

Motion made to have the LPRAC Retreat on Saturday, October 12, 2013 by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

Motion made to have the scholarship celebration and LPRAC's 20th Anniversary together at the casino by Commissioner Torres and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

Motion made to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. by Commissioner Torres and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion carries as follows:

13 Yeas: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Castro, Cruz, Fernández, González, Palmares-Leaf, Dr. Quiñones, Rodríguez-Reyes, Dr. Salorio, Torres and Trueworthy
1 Absent: Commissioner Montalvo

Respectfully submitted by,

Yolanda Castillo, Secretary
LPRAC Board

YC:cjc