



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

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Pablo Soto
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Danny Torres

Executive Director
Werner Oyanadel

Special Projects Director
Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández

Associate Legislative Analyst
Orlando Rodríguez

Senior Legislative Secretary
Clarisa Cardone

MINUTES
LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting
July 16, 2014
Legislative Office Building Room 2D
Hartford, CT
5:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Yolanda Castillo, Migdalia Castro, Richard A. Cruz, Roberto Fernández, Ana González, Emanuela Palmares Leaf, Dr. Agnes Quiñones, Dr. Eugene Salorio, Pablo Soto, Feny Taylor, Elena Trueworthy, M.S. and Danny Torres
Commissioner on the phone:	Jay González and George Hernández
Commissioners Absent:	Rosa Acosta, Ramón L. Arroyo, Francisco Borres and Isaías T. Díaz, Esq.
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Executive Director, Lucia Goicoechea Hernández, Special Projects Director Orlando Rodríguez, Associate Legislative Analyst and Clarisa Cardone, Sr. Legislative Secretary

Tape 1 A

Chairman Cruz asked **Board Secretary Commissioner Palmares-Leaf** to do roll call. Quorum was established. He then announced our speaker for public participation.

Public Participation:

Ms. Christine Breslin is a documentary photographer for over 20 years. She presented to LPRAC her portfolio so that the commission can see what she does and informed the Commission of her future endeavors for informational purposes only.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made to approve the minutes of June 18, 2014 by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Ana González. Motion was adopted by voice vote with one abstention.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairman Cruz reported the following:

1. He informed LPRAC that Commissioner Borres decided to step down from the commission for family reasons. The E-Board recommends that Commissioner Ana González take over the Public Information Committee due to the vacancy left by Commissioner Borres.
2. On July 15, 2014, he joined Mr. Oyanadel at on a meeting with the State Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) with Commissioner Dora B. Schriro about diversity and promotions in her department.
3. He commended all LPRAC Commissioners that have taken a very active role in their LPRAC Committee work. This is where all of the hard work goes into place and make sure we are responsive to our Legislative Mandate.
4. LPRAC, as many of you know, will not meet in the month of August so have a great summer break and we shall see you soon as we embark on a very aggressive agenda for the remaining of the year on areas of legislation outreach, awards reception, RBA sessions, educational forums and a retreat which will allow us to fine tune our long term efforts here at the legislature.

Motion made to accept Chairperson's report by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Palmares-Leaf. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Oyanadel reported the following:

- LPRAC staff is beginning to develop our agency's biennial budget request for Fiscal Years 2016-2017. Our deadline for this project is August 8, 2014. This proposal shall include both current services and requested budget – including expansions, reallocations, etc. The Office of Legislative Management

informed us in writing that regardless of projected budget constraints we should still forward our new initiatives as they will assist the appropriations committee in the long-term planning process for the legislative budget.

- It gives me great sadness to inform you that LPRAC Commissioner Francisco Borres has decided to resign due to unforeseen family obligations that will impede his civic commitment at our agency. He informed us in writing that it was an honor and privilege to work with us and hope to continue helping our agency in the not so distant future.
- Staff is currently being encouraged to take training classes offered by the Office of Legislative Management (OLM) for State Employees of the Connecticut General Assembly. In the upcoming summer months 3 out 4 staff members will be taking advantage of this offer.
- Several LPRAC staff will be taking vacation time during the month of August – and during my personal absence (i.e., Aug. 21 through Aug. 29) Lucia Goicoechea-Hernandez will be in charge of all staff operations.
- Legislative and Special Projects update reports are sent separately by members of the LPRAC staff.
- LPRAC Staff is looking for assistance from LPRAC Commissioners from Meriden to help us select a centralized location for our Commission meeting scheduled in the City of Meriden. The goal is to have this meeting in the fall.

Outreach/Liaison Activities Update:

- LPRAC will be releasing a press advisory on Monday, July 14, 2014, which will announce our Public Service Announcement (PSA) entitled “Un Ticket,” which aims at raising awareness of the need to support economically our youth with the high costs of higher education by attending our 2014 Scholarship Awards Reception. The PSA will be aired for two months in both in Univision and Telemundo. **(Please see attachment A for more information)**
- At the request from the University Of Connecticut School Of Social Work I provided a PowerPoint Presentation in Spanish about Puerto Rican and Latino Politics in Connecticut. The audience for this event was exchange students from the University Of Puerto Rico Beatriz Lassale Graduate School Of Social Work. I commend LPRAC Commissioner George Hernandez, Clarisa Cardone and Orlando Rodriguez for their support and attendance for this outreach endeavor.
- I am also working with Telemundo/Hartford, Springfield on a video production that will encourage people from our community to vote. The PSA is entitled “¡Haz Oír Tu Voz! Regístrate y vota por tu future,” which will air in the month of October of this year.
- LPRAC, as many of you know, is a proud advisory board member of the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project (CTRP3) as a result of the passage of the Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act (CGS Sec. 54-11 and 54-1m). This act prohibits any law enforcement agency from stopping, detaining, or searching any motorist when the traffic stop is motivated solely by considerations of race, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. In the future, LPRAC staff Orlando Rodriguez will be our official representative in this committee which will focus on developing a methodology to both track and report racial profiling during a traffic stop. Moreover, the CTRP3 is currently conducting an aggressive educational outreach/training campaign intended to raise awareness of this critical issue and our agency has already shared it via our social media networks.
- On June 17, 2014 I attended an event spearheaded by State Senator Donald Williams, President Pro Tempore about his newly released book about Prudence Crandall’s Legacy – Civil Rights and her influence on legal arguments for equality in America.
- Attended meeting at DMV office in Wethersfield on June 25th to discuss a train-the-trainers outreach plan/presentation in preparation of their rollout for providing driver’s licenses for undocumented state drivers. Commissioners Hernandez & Palmares-Leaf and Orlando Rodriguez were also in attendance. DMV Commissioner Melody Currey asked for help from LPRAC coordinating an outreach event targeted to community leaders regarding this new law.

Short/Long Term Planning

- LPRAC with the support of the Priorities and Legislation Committee is exploring the possibility of sending the Attorney General of Connecticut a request to find out if the Office of Higher Education, Board of Regents for Higher Education, and Board of Trustees for the University of Connecticut may by policy, regulation, or other administrative directive lawfully provide state financial assistance to eligible students without immigration status. **(Please see attachment B for more information);**
- LPRAC Staff, members of the Executive-Board, and Special Projects Committee are currently working on finding the best time and location to conduct our 2014 board/staff retreat. This event will be extremely important to our agency as we continue exploring innovative ways to become highly effective in the legislative arena responding to our state mandate in the Connecticut General Assembly. I encourage all our Commissioners to help us developing a strong and relevant agenda for this event in order to maximize a well-attended and productive meeting.

Important Issues of National Importance

- U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy conducted a press conference at the Legislative Office Building on Thursday, July 3, 2014 to highlight what they categorized as a humanitarian crisis affecting the U.S. So far this year, more than 52,000 children have been apprehended crossing the country's Southwest Border at the Rio Grande Valley. Most of the people affected are children coming from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, and many are fleeing violence and extreme poverty conditions in their home countries. Sen. Blumenthal recommended an economic package for the countries fueling the exodus of immigrants – the senior senator characterized the package as being comparable to the post-World War II Marshall plan, aimed at addressing conditions in the region which are contributing to the problem. The increase in children from Central America trying to cross the border and being caught has created a humanitarian crisis of **unprecedented** proportions according to the statement made by both senators.

Motion made to accept the Executive Director's report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones.

Discussion:

Commissioner Palmares Leaf added that she was interviewed as the Editor of the newspaper not as a Commissioner.

Motion was adopted by voice vote.

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT

As **Commissioner Borres, Chair for this Committee** was absent, report was tabled but Mr. Oyanadel did speak about the PSA's sent via email to everyone and that the commercials, the PSA's are going to be aired for two months. If we don't receive any phone calls, we'll have to see about other alternatives. We already are getting some feedback from people that have seen it on-line and television.

PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Fernández, Chair of this committee reported the following:

- They met on July 10, 2014 but he couldn't attend but then Mr. Rodríguez and he got together via phone conference a few days later on July 14th, 2014. The whole purpose is to try to start formulating our Legislative Agenda for the Fall after the election and as soon as the Legislature gets back into session as this year it will be a long session.
 1. Increase of government contracts to Latino owned businesses; this comes back to the disparity study aspect of it. The history on this is LPRAC is leading the way on trying to get the disparity study done with state contracting. We had a meeting with all the subsequent commissions from the state. We had an agreement that everybody believes that the disparity study needs to be accomplished and we need to push this. One of the RBA aspects of it that we talked about before was access to capital for Latino small businesses. This was brought up in the Housing RBA as while back. We also believe that we should start utilizing our connections in SAMA and trying to get at a Federal Level, the Small Business Administration more involved in giving out Latino businesses an access to capital.
 2. Stop discriminatory hiring practice as directed to the chronically unemployed and the community a whole. A lot of people are being discriminated on due to the serious economic crisis that fell in the U.S. economy in 2008 and we would hope that that long-term unemployment would not be a discriminatory factor in people trying to get jobs.
 3. To stop discriminatory employment practices directed at documented immigrants. There are reports out that the even though that they might have their papers to work legally, they don't have some basic job rights in some of the companies that they work for.
 4. Increase racial and ethnic diversity in the workplace at Central CT State University and throughout State Government. The representation of minorities both in the Executive Staff and as Representative either Commissioners or Directors of state agencies is really lacking. The agency, the Board of Regents recently reported out that all their new hires and since their new hires have been 99.7% white.
 5. Increase Latino participation in state, local regional and commissions and boards. As the census proved in 2010, there's a Latino family or Latino living in every town and city in the State of Connecticut.
 6. Tax cuts for retired state employees and retired teachers. That legislation will be introduced in 2014 to give additional tax exempt status to retired teachers.
 7. Reduce in-school juvenile arrests among Latinos. We talked about this in our Retreat in October. The youngest child that was arrested in the school was 5 years old. Along with that, the ELL English and second language agendas but also reporting recidivism and chronic absenteeism amongst Latino youth in High School, Elementary, Secondary Middle Schools. These kids move school to school, in Windham this is almost a crisis.
 8. Increase public assistance to grandparents raising grandchildren. They need to get a voice and need to be helped on that.

9. To reduce the birthrate of minority teenage Latinas, but also to reduce the birthrate among teenage females in general.
 10. Increase summer youth programs for low income youth. That's what these programs were made for. Right now they bring in kids from other communities to fill those jobs.
 11. Support construction and transportation spending.
 12. Incentivize business growth.
 13. Support accountability and social programs
 14. Defend minimum wage and earned income tax credits and social services for elderly Latinos in Connecticut.
- He then thanked Orlando for putting the report together and doing all the research necessary to move what the commission's wishes are as far as what the legislation priority will be for the upcoming year.

Motion made to accept the Priorities and Legislation Committee report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Castro.

Discussion:

Commissioner Castillo asked if the list that everyone was given is what they are going to work towards for this coming session.

Commissioner Fernandez responded yes, they will keep continues to dwindle the list and prioritize the list as well as anything that comes up during the session. Even though we would have a legislative agenda we also don't know what faces us coming up in the biennium.

Commissioner Castillo said that she hopes that we would look at these during our retreat to get it further kind of perspective for the next session.

Commissioner Ana Gonzalez asked would a recommendation or a little push to encourage our elected leaders to push a Federal Immigration Reform come from the commission, is that something that we would tackle.

Commissioner Fernandez responded that we would if it's the commissions will to tackle on the federal level.

Mr. Oyanadel commented that Commissioner Ana Gonzalez asked a very important question. Before she came to the commission, probably in the month of March of last year, LPRAC decided to write a letter to the Senate to be supportive of the passage of Comprehensive Immigration Reform. We are currently on the record as a commission in support of the passage of the law. What we have also done in years past when we've had bills that were considering immigration reform, we have also sent delegation of board members to Washington,, D.C. to advocate in support of it.

Commissioner Palmares Leaf said that in the State of New York some of their State Representatives have introduced the Bill that would create a State Citizenship in order for the undocumented immigrants that are residing in the state have access to state resources and in that way circumvent the inaction of the Federal Government.

Commissioner Trueworthy announced officially that she will like to be added to the Priorities and Legislation Subcommittee.

Motion was adopted by voice vote.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Torres, Chair for this Committee said that he will use this time in Old and New Business.

Motion made to accept the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

RBA COMMITTEE

Commissioner Dr. Salorio, Chair for this Committee said that their committee issued their report if you were here at the last meeting and since then Mr. Rodriguez has been good enough to do some follow-up. We suggested three potential items for our first turn the curve sessions. He said one was Teen Pregnancy and then asked Mr. Rodriguez for the other two. Mr. Rodriguez said underrepresentation of state and regional boards and commissions, and the arrests of Latino youth. There is a meeting tentatively scheduled for Monday night where they will teleconference to discuss which of these we want to proceed on or if we want to start with something else. They need the Priorities and Legislation to tell them their two or three highest priorities if they chose topics that fit better with Priorities and Legislation.

Motion made to accept the RBA Committee report by Commissioner Castro and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Tape 1B

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS

As Commissioner Díaz, Esq., Chair of this Committee was absent, report was tabled.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Cruz spoke about a vacancy for Public Information Committee, Commissioner Borres has stepped down. The Executive Committee has made a recommendation for Commissioner Ana González to take on that position. Before he asked her, he asked if there was anyone else that would like the position. No-one asked. He then asked Commissioner Ana Gonzalez.

Commissioner Ana González accepted the position.

Mr. Oyanadel said that the Executive Board mentioned some activities that they are looking for the Chair of that committee to do one of which included doing some work in particular accomplishments that have happened in the past 20 years.

Commissioner Palmares Leaf suggested since we have a very special visitor with us this evening, a photographer that decided to stay for our meeting. Maybe she would like to help the work of the commission as well as we'd like to help you, we are celebrating our 20 years anniversary and maybe you would like to help in a sense that we are trying to find ways, through images to put together something that people in the cocktail hour can look at the work that we'd done whether it be by pictures of commissioners in the past or even pictures of actual legislation that has passed through the work of the commission.

Ms. Christine Breslin said sure and asked for more specific information.

Commissioner Palmares Leaf explained that it is our 20th Anniversary ceremony, and LPRAC's 17 Scholarship/20th Anniversary Ceremony that we are having on October 11, 2014 and asked if she can do a collage with the pictures that LPRAC has throughout the years.

Motion made to accept the Latinas/Latinos Citizens and the Community Service Awards for 17th Scholarship/20th Anniversary Ceremony by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to accept the 20 selected students for 17th Scholarship/20th Anniversary Ceremony by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to accept for a total of \$2,000 minimum to be awarded for each student bringing the total award this year to \$40,000, however, if we do achieve a very good sale, we may double that to \$80,000 and give each student \$4,000 which is our goal for 17th Scholarship/20th Anniversary Ceremony by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Soto. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to accept having the LPRAC Stamp Exhibit to travel among the 12 Community Colleges, 17 Technical High Schools and a couple of Urban Centers and City Halls and the policy of hanging the displays is not released prior to September 15, 2014. Basically, LOB has not given us an answer to hang them there so we are doing a contingency plan by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to request sentence of this year's theme for the Hispanic Heritage month which is "El Orgullo Hispano Latino" by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made of hosting of the Board/Staff Retreat on Saturday, September 13th, 2014 or September 20th, 2014 at the Water's Edge in Westbrook by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Fernández.

Discussion:

Vote was taken by all Board Members and September 13th, 2014 was decided,

Motion was adopted by voice vote with two abstentions.

Mr. Oyanadel reported that an email from Commissioner Dr. Salorio was received today telling us that he would like the Commission to discuss the issue of the Governor rejecting a proposal from the Federal Government to house up to 2,000 children that are seeking refugee here in Connecticut.

Commissioner Dr. Salorio commented that many of us have seen on the news of people screaming and yelling at children for fleeing devastation in their home countries. Every single one of us either came here or had parents or grandparents come here from abroad and they are all running away from something. He's been shocked but it is real easy for us in the Northeast to wag the finger at people that live in Arizona, Texas and California who are being inundated. It is one country and if we want to, sometimes it's better rather than simply telling other people that they ought to be better to shut up and be a better example. Governor Malloy has done exactly the opposite by saying that

no, we won't take 2,000 children, children and he thinks he would like as a Commission and perhaps with some of our colleagues in the Legislature to issue a public statement urging Governor Malloy to reconsider his decision and to make the point that this is Connecticut offering to do its part in what is both a serious humanitarian crisis and also an issue of national importance and we are not just passing the buck on the neighboring states.

Tape 2 A

Motion made to write a statement, deliver it tomorrow to the Governor indicating that we are asking the Governor to welcome these children and allow us the opportunity to put a plan together but then the plan can be released as part of a Rally-Press Conference in three weeks by Commissioner Ana González and seconded by Commissioner Castro.

Motion made to withdraw the previous motion by Commissioner Ana González and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Chairman Cruz called for a short recess.

Chairman Cruz called meeting back to order.

Motion made that we, as the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission write a letter to Governor Malloy asking him to reconsider his position and have a delegation to deliver this letter by Friday at the latest by Commissioner Ana González and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to select the delegation by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy, M.S. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made that the entire Commission be invited to attend a meeting with Governor Malloy and those who are available to be there by Commissioner Trueworthy, M.S. and seconded by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made that Commissioner Ana González write a drafted resolution by Commissioner Dr. Salorio and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Motion made to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion was adopted by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by,

Emanuela Palmares Leaf
Secretary
LPRAC Board

EPL:cjc