



**State of Connecticut**  
**Latino and Puerto Rican**  
**Affairs Commission**

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**Executive Director**

*Werner Oyanadel*

**Special Projects Director**

*Lucia Goicoechea-Hernández*

**Senior Legislative Secretary**

*Clarisa Cardone*

**MINUTES**  
**LPRAC Regular Commission Meeting**  
**March 19, 2014**  
**Legislative Office Building Room 2D**  
**Hartford, CT**  
**5:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present:	Ramón L. Arroyo, Francisco R. Borres, Yolanda Castillo, Honorable Migdalia Castro, Richard A. Cruz, Roberto Fernández, Jay González, Emanuela Palmares Leaf, Lourdes Montalvo, Dr. Agnes Quiñones, Danny Torres and Elena Trueworthy, M.S.
Commissioner on the Phone:	Pablo Soto
Commissioners Absent:	Rosa Acosta, Isaías T. Díaz, Esq., Ana González, Dr. Eugene Salorio
Staff:	Werner Oyanadel, Executive Director, Lucia Goicoechea Hernández 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 asked for a moment of silence for State Representative Minnie González's and Commissioner Arroyo for the loss of their son, Josue Maldonado, also for the loss of Commissioner Fernández's mother and as well as for Lucia Goicoechea Hernández's sister and grandmother.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion made to approve the minutes of January 15, 2014 by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy.**

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**2 Abstentions: Commissioners Arroyo and Borres**

**Motion made to approve the minutes of February 19, 2014 by Commissioner Trueworthy and seconded by Commissioner Palmares Leaf.**

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**7 Abstentions: Commissioners Arroyo, Borres, Castillo, Fernández, Montalvo, Dr. Quiñones and Torres**

**Motion made to approve the Special Commission meeting minutes of February 26, 2014 by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo.**

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**2 Abstentions: Commissioners Castillo and Palmares Leaf**

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

**Chairman Cruz** spoke on the following items:

- He requested a moment of silence for State Representative Minnie Gonzalez and Commissioner Ramon Arroyo for their son Josue Maldonado who passed away on March 16, 2014.
- He attended a public hearing at the LOB last Monday March 17 alongside Commissioner Roberto Fernandez and Werner Oyanadel to discuss the merits of increasing the bilingual education statute from 30 to 60 months. This is one of our agency's legislative priorities.
- He joined the members of the RBA Committee with their research on our upcoming population report due in June of this year. Commissioner Salorio is out of the country this week so I will have our Co-Chair Commissioner Montalvo and Mr. Oyanadel give you additional updates on these Turn the Curve Sessions

on areas of Health and Education that took place this past month and more information on the overall research project.

- The Commission continues to advocate in support of producing a disparity study that can help us determine appropriate contracting rules for our Latino businesses as prioritized by LPRAC during our last retreat. On March 12, 2014 a delegation of LPRAC, CRHO and the Governor's Office had a very productive discussion about our concerns and the potential scenarios that could happen as result of our legislative advocacy on this topic.
- He was very pleased that our agency's work with Eastern and UConn regarding the Emergency Communications is moving forward and that it is likely that our advocacy and research moved the Governor to create a high profile Governor's Emergency Communications taskforce to also study how the state communicates with residents who are non-English speakers in large emergencies. He recommended that Commissioner Emanuela Palmares-Leaf be our official representative at this task force.
- He also commended the LPRAC staff and Commissioner Ana Gonzalez for participating in the outreach effort of the Latino Expo and helping distribute hundreds of LPRAC materials and scholarship applications to the general public.
- He asked Commissioner Castillo to report to the Commission our suggested changes to our agency bylaws due to the absence of the Chair of the Committee.

**Motion made to accept Chairperson's report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Borres.**

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to change order of business to hear public participant by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Miss Meghan Vesel, Deputy Director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center. She thanked Commissioner Palmares Leaf for the invitation to speak to everyone. She informed LPRAC that they advocate for workers' rights, research and mediate violations of workers' labor rights, and refer cases to the US Department of Labor. They also provide monthly workers' rights training, free English classes, and Portuguese classes at a reasonable fee. She explained that their main program is the domestic workers project of CT and they are currently in support of legislation that will create a domestic worker bill of rights, which would expand labor rights to nannies, caregivers, and housekeepers. She asked LPRAC to support this legislation.

**Commissioner Montalvo** suggested that this information be placed in the Info Line 211.

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Oyanadel highlighted the following:

1. He informed the board that the state auditors audited the legislative branch (including the six legislative commissions) since January 3rd. The two year audit period reviewed included July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013. The outcome of the review was spotless for LPRAC and no recommendations will be given as result of their findings. He also commended our Senior Legislative Secretary for helping our agency keep stellar records on our behalf and for her collaboration collecting all information requested.
2. Governor Malloy created a new Emergency Communications Taskforce, which will be responsible for reviewing how state government communicates with residents, with special attention to those who are non-English speakers, have disabilities, or have certain functional needs. While the group will look at all communications, the immediate focus will be on communications during emergency situations, which will be followed by a more detailed look at overall communications due at the beginning of next year. The taskforce will be responsible for evaluating the cost, benefit, efficiency, effectiveness and measurable performance of the existing communications methods used by the state, and for developing best practices. It will consist of 18 members, including one member appointed by LPRAC.
3. The hiring of the LPRAC Legislative Analyst is currently in its final stages. Mr Oyanadel informed LPRAC for transparency purposes that the hiring committee for LPRAC interviewed 12 candidates after having reviewed over 46 applications. The search committee was planning to bring back six finalists for a second interview (which will include half an hour interview and one hour test). The search committee, Mr. Oyanadel stated would have a recommendation in the month of April.
4. The Results Based Accountability (RBA) Committee conducted two "Turn the Curve" Sessions in the months of February and March in preparation for our agency's population report due in the month of June. LPRAC discussed in great detail our primary indicators with a broad range of stakeholders in the areas of education and health and the committee is in the process of deciding the schedule for the turn the curve trainings on the areas of economic self-sufficiency, discrimination and public safety in the upcoming next two months.
5. LPRAC staff continues to conduct research on the role the Latino Media and Government play in response to natural disaster emergencies. Our research is being conducted with the assistance of our research partners from Eastern and UConn. Our latest fact finding hearing took place on Thursday, March 6th, 2014 at the LPRAC office and included speakers from the Governor's Office, governmental officials from the City of New Britain, and Commissioner Dora B. Schiro from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

6. The Priorities and Legislation Committee continues to work in support of our agency's 2014 legislative agenda which includes speaking in support of (1) the minimum wage; (2) the need to properly fund a disparity study to be conducted in CT to assess Connecticut's minority owned small business participation in state contracting; (3) Universal Access to preschool; (4) bilingual education reform; (5) and a technical change that will allow CT to create a clear definition in statute about student arrests in Connecticut. The Committee is also working in support of Raised H.B. No. 5385 "An Act Concerning Language Interpreters in Hospitals," which is an issue historically supported by LPRAC. The Committee is currently working with Sen. Andres Ayala prepare a press conference to highlight the urgent need for passing this legislation. In another note: The Committee leadership recently met with the Chief of Staff from the Governor's Office to discuss our support for the disparity study.
7. LPRAC needs to decide if it will approve our agency's use of a credit card system that will be used by LPRAC staff to collect payments for the scholarship awards reception. LPRAC would like to utilize the same company utilized by already the legislature for pay-on-demand services. Currently, OLM would like confirmation that LPRAC Commissioners want this service and that they are aware of the risks associated for any credit card transactions that are accepted over the phone without a signature. OLM also would like to find out if LPRAC is going to charge the fees – against the Commission or the ticket revenue for the event. Finally, OLM would like to get confirmation which cards we shall accept (debit, credit, American Express, and/or Discover) as there are price differences involved with different types of cards.
8. Dr. Miguel Cardona, one of the Co-Chairs of the CT Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force will be sending LPRAC a copy of their "Master Plan" they prepared to attempt to eliminate the Achievement Gap for our review. They want LPRAC to testify in the month of April when they seek official feedback on their final draft of the plan.
9. The Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaws will be discussing on Wednesday the committee's suggested changes to our agency bylaws. A vote on this issue will be required during new business.

**Discussion:**

**Commissioner Arroyo** asked who did the interview process?

**Mr. Oyanadel** said that it was conducted with a Search Committee which included a Human Resources Director from Legislative Management, a Senior Legislative Analyst and the Executive Director of LPRAC.

**Commissioner Arroyo** asked if the Commissioners can have the names of the five finalists.

**Mr. Oyanadel** said that after the law was changed in 2009 all the staffing and hiring issues are conducted by the office of human resources within the Office of Legislative Management (OLM) and that the commission does not have any authority over staffing or personnel matters so unfortunately the answer is no.

**Commissioner Arroyo** said that basically what's going to happen is that Mr. Jim Tracy and his staff whoever he designates for that purpose are the ones that are going to make the decision for this organization.

**Mr. Oyanadel** responded that a recommendation will be made by the search committee which will have to be approved by legislative leadership of the Connecticut General Assembly.

**Commissioner Arroyo** stated that he opposes that, he believes that Mr. Oyanadel, as the Director of this organization should have the final say of who should be hired.

**Tape 1 B**

**Commissioner Trueworthy** asked what the risks for using the credit card reader are.

**Mr. Oyanadel** responded that one of the risks is whether or not we accept a payment without signature. The second one is in reference to the costs associated with the credit cards we accept.

**Motion made to accept the Executive Director's report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Motion made to table the Public Information Committee report by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Castillo. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**PRIORITIES & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Commissioner Fernández, Chair of this committee:**

- The committee has been working extremely hard on the two biggest priorities they have, both on the ELL bill which is Senate Bill 476 and the Disparity Study. Chairman Cruz, Mr. Oyanadel and he met with the Governor's Chief of Staff concerning the Disparity Study in looking at possible funding solutions to have a Disparity Study completed. That was after a marathon meeting session with ACCC, the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, DAS, the Comptroller's office among others. We invited all stakeholders to discuss strategies to request the legislature to speed up the time frame that the Disparity

Study gets completed. So far they have commitments both from the House Chair of Appropriations, the Senate Chair of Appropriations and now the Governor's Chief of Staff that this is going to be a priority this year. The realistic dollar amount for the Disparity Study will be about \$2 million and there are currently about 4 or 5 corporations in the entire United States who can get one because the Disparity Study is needed and the Disparity Study once complete has to be upheld in court if challenged. No. 1 - We will try to remove the Disparity Study from CASE. Right now CASE does not appear to have any objection to that, he thinks they want out and No. 2 – the \$2 million that they recommended to the Governor is to put it under the CHRO. Today Senator Stillman announced her retirement and basically the result of this bill is from Representative Juan Candelaria who wants this issue tackled.

- Rep. Sanchez's medical interpreters bill HB5385 "An Act Concerning Language Interpreters in Hospitals" which, if adopted, would require that hospitals provide interpreter services for 5% of the languages spoken in the service region for those hospitals has been taken over by the Public Health Committee and has become a Public Health Committee bill and looks like it will pass.
- Senate Bill 18 "An Act Concerning ELL Incentive Programs" would provide any teacher in CT who is going into the ELL profession they were going to give them an incentive grant of \$5,000 against their student debt or any student loan.
- SB 54 "An Act Concerning the Collaboration between the Board of Education and Law Enforcement" is one of the proposals that LPRAC supported at our retreat and Mr. Oyanadel did the public testimony on that. He knows that this may not go anywhere this year but it might be brought up next year in the long session. He wants to commend the staff, the Executive Director and the Chairman and everyone.

**Motion made to accept the Priorities & Legislation Committee report by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Castro.**

**Discussion:**

**Commissioner Palmares Leaf** suggested the way we should handle the short session is maybe create a google group where we can drop documents into and be more mindful of our emails during the short sessions.

**Mr. Oyanadel** announced that there is the new Legislative Analyst for the Health Equity Commission. LPRAC has a representation in that Commission so this may be a good time to hear from her since she will be working on issues relevant to our agency.

**Laura Bartock**, Legislative Analyst for the Commission on Health Equity started last Tuesday. She spoke of Bill 5457 which is about standardizing data collection amongst the state agencies. It will probably not get done in the short session. The language in it comes from the Affordable Care Act in section 4302, it says that we need to standardize data collection based on certain groups and she does have some information to send to LPRAC.

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Commissioner Torres, Chair for this Committee** reported the following:

1. Our Keynote Speaker – The staff has informed the committee that the Senate President is not sure whether he will travel with his wife or his aide. He is requested that if he brings his aide, LPRAC cover the airfare. Staff has reached out to his staff to see whether he has made a decision as to who will travel with him. His biography and updated photo are enclosed.
2. So far staff report receipt of the first check, \$5,000 from Eastern CT State University.
3. Souvenir coins – The staff has reported and a copy of the coin is attached to the report. It has been designed with the intent of giving them to our guest as a commemorative piece on the evening of October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014.
4. In addition, Commissioner Dr. Quiñones is going to speak on a part of this which is the silk screen to be designed by a young artist.

**Commissioner Dr. Quiñones** said that she had an idea the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this Commission so she thought about commissioning an artist/a graphic designer and that she will work with the LPRAC staff vetting the idea further.

**Commissioner Torres** said that on the Credit Card option, the Committee agreed to bring it to the board tonight for a vote.

1. For the flowers the staff reached out to Commissioner Palmares Leaf for ideas on floral centerpieces;
2. The nomination process and the scholarship applications continue to be dispersed in Connecticut;
3. The work plan is in your packets;
4. The Lifetime Achievement, the committee discussed the possibility of giving the award to Sergeant First Class Restituto Oyala Alvarez, he's 95 years old, soon to be 96 from the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry to be held in May;
5. In the Tribute to the Hispanic Veterans, the staff has reported on the idea of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry as a whole, and one gentleman is in a nursing home in Puerto Rico with children living in CT and he is ill and doesn't have much time left. They approached us and we would like to make an effort to Skype him during the

- ceremony to receive his award via Skype;
6. We also discussed the coins to this event too and we were able to recommend a small amount to be sold at this event to cover the costs of making them.
  7. He will be bringing gun locks to an event in Meriden.

**Motion made to accept the Special Projects Committee report by Commissioner Castillo and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

#### **RBA COMMITTEE**

**Motion made to table the RBA Committee report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Castro. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

#### **AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS**

As Commissioner Díaz, Esq., Chair of the Committee is absent; Commissioner Castillo reported the recommendations based on their discussion regarding the By-Laws:

1. Remove the word “physically” from Line 305 to allow voting over the phone;
2. Changes to the usage of the phone for the Commission meetings for attendance purposes and the recommendation is to decrease the access to the phone system from three to two times per year and you will see that on Line 335
3. Technical change, eliminate “illness” and “business travel” wording on Line 334-335 as it will not be needed with the new two times a year usage of the phone rule; and
4. That the Ad-Hoc Committee also recommends a technical change that would allow the Executive Committee to meet once a month but not only on the first Wednesday of the month which is on Line 365 but it would change to allow the Executive Committee to be more flexible to meeting prior to the Commission meetings so they could do it whenever as long as they meet.

#### **Tape 2 A**

Commissioner Arroyo asked if to vote for the officers you have to be present or you can basically cast your vote over the phone because you have two chances.

Commissioner Castillo responded that she will bring this back to the Ad-Hoc Committee.

**Motion made to accept the AD-Hoc Committee on By-Laws report by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Trueworthy, M.S. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

#### **OLD & NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Oyanadel commended Commissioner Castro, she was an elected official in the City of New Haven, now she has recently accepted to head an agency in New Haven that will focus on the elderly.

Commissioner Castro mentioned that it is in honor to serve in another capacity and an honor that our Senator who became our first time female Mayor, Toni Harp who all of us know, gave her this opportunity to serve.

**Motion made to accept having silk screen graphic artist to do commission work by Commissioner Castro and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to be able to use credit card reader by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to give Lifetime Achievement Award to Sergeant First Class Restituto Oyola Alvarez by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Fernández. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to use Skype for the gentleman that is in Puerto Rico that's in the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry that's in the nursing home and his children live in CT so he can see the event by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Quiñones.**

#### **Discussion:**

Commissioner Borres would like to recommend that there be a back-up plan in place in case there is any kind of technical error which are ever present, maybe if one of his children could be used as the back-up in case the feed does not go through to accept the award.

Mrs. Goicoechea Hernández gave the name of the gentlemen in Puerto Rico to be Skyped in as follows: Sergeant Antonio del Carmen Rivera Villareal is in his 90's and one of Puerto Rico's fighting 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry man was diagnosed with Alzheimers and he has bone cancer and has a few months to live.

Commissioner Castillo suggested videotaping him.

Commissioner Montalvo recommended contacting former Commissioner Juan Pérez to do this task.

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made for Commissioner Palmares Leaf to represent us at the Governor's Task Force by Commissioner Fernández and seconded by Commissioner Borres. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to accept the LPRAC By-Laws on the specific language changes by Commissioner Arroyo and seconded by Commissioner Quiñones. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Commissioner Montalvo** asked for an update on the Barber's Task Force because she hasn't heard anything on this.

**Mr. Oyanadel** responded that we sent a written request to the Department of Labor to give us a status of the report but the Department of Labor has failed to provide us with a good response for what we are looking for. Literally, it has been three months and they are not finished with the report.

**Commissioner Montalvo** asked if we can have a meeting with Senator Geratana when she went in full support of this to see if she can push this and Representative Bobby Sanchez and also to Representative González as well.

**Motion made to request a meeting with Senator Gerratana, Representatives Minnie González and Robert Sanchez and gentleman from the Dept. of Labor by Commissioner Montalvo and seconded by Commissioner Arroyo. Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

**Motion made to adjourn at 7:49 p.m. by Commissioner Dr. Quiñones and seconded by Commissioner Montalvo.**

**Motion was adopted by voice vote.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Emanuela Palmares Leaf  
Secretary  
LPRAC Board

EPL:cjc