



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
San Wong, Director

MEETING MINUTES
IOWA COMMISSION OF LATINO AFFAIRS MEETING
March 3rd 2016
Second Floor, Lucas State Building
321 E 12th Street, Des Moines Iowa 50319

Commissioners Present

Sal Alaniz
Alejandro Pino
Maria Lara
Juan Rodriguez

Commissioners Absent

Ramon Rodriguez
Gloria Rodriguez

DHR/Office of Latino Affairs Staff

San Wong, Director and Ex-Officio
Monica Stone, Deputy Director and Administrator
Sonia Reyes-Snyder, Executive Officer
Elyse Wheaton, Writing Intern from Drake University

Members of the Public

Jeanette Martinez, new commissioner beginning May 1, 2016
Anahi Abarca, Ask Resource Center
Luis Arredondo, Lutheran Church of Hope
Karen Thompson, Executive Director at Ask Resource Center

Call to order and roll call

Call to order and introductions by chair, Sal Alaniz at 2:30 PM

Motion:

Approval of minutes from September 25, 2016

Pino made motion; Lara seconded.

Aye: all

Nay: None

Motion carried.

Presentation: Ask Resources

Anahi Abarca from Ask Resource Center. Ask Resource Center is a non-profit organization that provides support and education to parents who have children with disabilities such as down syndrome, ADHD, or have an IEP and 504 recommendations. They don't do home visits, but can help write letters to physicians, attend school meetings, and make appointments to discuss the needs and situations that might arise. Ask Resources Center can serve as a mediator, never as an attorney.

Anahi Abarca is the bilingual staff person who is serving the Latino Community in the state understand and learn about resources available to them and how to use them.

The office is located in Johnston, IA, but they can provide services statewide; they are working closely with Marshalltown Schools and setting up support groups for Latinos meeting once a month to talk about different topics such as *how to handle stress, feelings of grief and how to*

deal with children with autism, etc. Anahi had 12 people sign up to get more training and possibly become mentors to other parents.

One of the purposes of the program is to recruit volunteers whom will be trained to help parents understand waivers, IEPs and how to advocate for their children. This program is in need of volunteers, so they can become leaders in the community.

Alaniz asked Anahi to send information so the commissioners can share the information with their communities.

Pino offered to connect Anahi with community members in Cedar Rapids

Public Comment

Luis Arredondo introduced himself as a concerned citizen who wants to be a part of what is going on in helping the Latino community. He works for Lutheran Church of Hope, originally from Mexico; he just moved to Iowa from Chicago a year ago.

In his work with the church e represents an organization that helps to have conversations about immigration changes, support for immigration from the evangelical community.

Luis is interested in getting involved in a soccer league for men in their 30s and in helping bring services to kids in the inner city.

Luis is also working with refugees, he would like help in trying to start an initiative of regulating housing, rental properties, helping people learn where to go for rental properties that are up to code.

Luis asked the commission about what they do and how often they meet, this was answered by Alaniz and Reyes-Snyder.

Department of Human Rights Updates

San Wong, Director shared the series of activities staff DHR has been in this week.

Starting with the department-wide open house; community partners and anyone we have any kind of collaboration relationship with was invited to attend so they could learn about what we do.

We had a legislative breakfast the morning of March 3rd at the Capital and most of the commissions are having their meetings.

We had the DHR board meeting on this day as well.

Director Wong shared that we have about 120 commissioners/board members who have been appointed and have stepped up to be a part of our department to help guide our work, many of them blocked the whole day to support our department.

People who attended our events this couple of days were able to reconnect or connect with other commissioners, supporters and/or volunteers across the state. The department's main role is to create access.

The Lt. Governor read a Proclamation that the Governor had signed declaring this Human Rights Day.

S. Wong added that it is important for us to get to the point and talk about our work.

Monica Stone, Deputy Director and Division Administrator.

Stone shared an informational graph with clear disparities in the state and the following department strategies for success:

Increasing civic engagement Kim Cheeks is the lead.

Enhancing youth leadership and achievement, Sonia Reyes-Snyder is the lead.

Improving communication, Kristen Corey and Kim Cheeks are leading.

Improving language access, Sanjita Pradah is the lead.

If Commissioners are interested in helping in one of the above plans they can sign up at different levels of involvement.

M. Stone added that in a meeting with Alaniz they discuss the Commission's 40th anniversary coming up and Alaniz shared that he would like to do something, M. Stone shared the development of a film highlighting what's happened in 40 years with some of the early commissioner will be done.

There will be another project highlighting how human rights has changed, who are the people who live in Iowa, How we are changing and how this drives our future.

The CAS team is also working as a team on putting together a Diversity and Inclusion training to be provided to state agencies in order to help them be more successful in engaging their own employees and lowans. M. Stone had informally reached out to other departments who have shown great interest.

The department is working on ironing out specifics and regulations to implement social media presence.

We will be working with GovDelivery, which will allow us to have our list serves more accessible. It's a specialized tool developed just for governmental entities.

Iowa Department of Human Rights, Office of Latino Affairs Report

Sonia Reyes-Snyder reported on her activities since her first day on January 11, 2016.

Reyes-Snyder is working on updating and adding content to the DHR website and keeping the community informed of events, job opportunities, scholarship and other news through emails.

She shared that she had performed intense outreach activities around the state meeting with community partners and collaborators, including Civil and Human Rights Commissions across the state.

Reyes-Snyder is the lead in the Youth Engagement part of CAS' strategic plan and she is working on creating a new program for youth across the state. She has been connecting with several youth programs statewide to ensure partnerships and avoid duplication of services.

Department of Human Rights Board Representative Report, Sal Alaniz

Alaniz shared that he participates in the DHR board and that he has served under Governor Vilsack, Culver and Branstad. He mentioned that Maria Lara is leaving the commission; her current term is up April 30, 2016.

Next Meeting

Tentatively set for June 16th with location to be determined. Once set, Sonia will send out the information. At this next meeting, Sonia will also be taking pictures of commissioners who don't have one available for the website.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:54 PM.