



STATE OF INDIANA

**INDIANA COMMISSION ON
HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS**
Mitchell E Daniels, Jr., Governor

ICHLA

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 28, 2012
3:00pm – 4:30pm
Conference Center Room 2
Indiana Government Center South
Indianapolis, IN**

Commissioners Present:

Richard Espinosa, Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne (Vice-Chair)
Diego Morales, House Lay Member, Indianapolis
Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction
Gerardo Gonzalez, House Lay Member, Bloomington
Jesusa Rivera, House Lay Member, South Bend
Pedro Ledo, Senate Lay Member, Ft. Wayne
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Chair)

Commissioners Not Present:

Teresa Velez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration
Guadalupe 'Herb' Hernandez, Senate Lay member, Fort Wayne (Treasurer)
Virginia Hernandez, Designee, Civil Rights Commission
Senator Frank Mrvan
Lenee Reedus, Designee, Dept of Education
Rep. Rebecca Kubacki
Charlie Garcia, House Lay Member, Indianapolis
Alfredo Gonzalez, Governor Appointee, Indianapolis
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon
Senator Greg Walker

Visitors:

Staff Present:

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

Opening

Vice-chairman Richard Espinosa called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

He noted the lack of quorum, with seven members in attendance at the start of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

With quorum, all pending minutes were unanimously approved.

Approval of Financials

With the establishment of quorum, the most recent financial spreadsheet was approved unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Danny Lopez noted that while the commission did not have quorum for the meeting, a majority of lay appointed commissioners were in attendance. He asked commissioners to pick up copies of amended bylaws prior to leaving the meeting.

Lopez began by noting that he had received a letter from the Office of the Speaker indicating the replacement of Commission Freddie Thon with new Commissioner Diego Morales of Indianapolis. The letter indicated that in an effort to provide an opportunity to serve to another member of the community, Thon was not going to be reappointed. Lopez noted for the record Thon's long-standing commitment to the commission and thanked him publicly for his work. Commissioners then introduced themselves one by one to Morales.

Morales said that he was pleased to have the chance to serve and provided some of his background and his current work, and commissioners welcomed him with a round of applause.

Lopez then said that many of the inquiries for the month of June centered around helping to identify Latino talent for local businesses. Commissioner Gerardo Gonzalez asked about the public service announcement the Governor and Lopez taped in May and inquired as to whether those would be disseminated. Lopez said the PSAs had already been disseminated to both TV and radio outlets and he anticipates good placement. Lopez then said that in the past the commission had not spent money on media buys, but that was something that could be considered for the coming fiscal year. He also referenced the Indiana Civil Rights Commission's partnership with the Indiana Department of Education and Black Expo – all of which has benefitted ICHLA directly – to create messaging pieces.

Espinosa mentioned the marketing plan done under the previous executive director in 2008 and said nothing ever came of it. Lopez said that numerous issues had arisen from the generation of that report, not the least of which was the way in which the contract for its creation was awarded. A new media strategy plan would need to be developed to effectively blanket the state in a cost-efficient way for the agency, given an interest by commissioners. As a side note, Lopez said that

the lack of Spanish-language and bilingual media outlets in Indiana presents a problem for agencies and organizations providing services to that community. Espinosa said he had approached Comcast in Fort Wayne about providing programming, such as a community calendar, but nothing materialized. It could be pursued again. Commissioner Pedro Ledo said that he had worked with Fort Wayne's public television station through IPFW to play reruns of *¿Que Pasa, USA?*, a Spanish-language television series from the 1970s.

Ledo then said that one thing that could be extremely helpful would be to organize a listening session with teachers in the Fort Wayne area who work with Latino students to identify challenges and obstacles. Lopez agreed that this would be valuable and said he would work to get something on the calendar.

Finally, Lopez talked about the Strategic Plan proposal he had put together for commissioner consideration. He noted that, included in the proposal, was funding for both direct partnerships and important initiatives to develop tangible results as well as resources to support a policy group to develop focus groups to ultimately facilitate legislative recommendations. The combination, Lopez said, is in line with the mission of the commission.

Gonzalez said that establishing meaningful results obtained through more sophisticated focus groups conducted by professionals would be more effective than simply surveying and would yield better information to be used to inform legislators and policy-makers. Commissioner Jesusa Rivera asked about using both focus groups and surveys, and Gonzalez said that given limited resources, using focus groups would be ideal and more cost-effective. Lopez reiterated that surveys don't allow for adequate follow-up, and for the resources expended focus groups would facilitate a greater engagement.

Lopez also said that the strategic plan needs to be a collaborative document with input from commissioners, something that has lacked in the past. He asked for feedback on initiatives, indicating that many of the partnerships are ones built on past projects. Others are new, but Lopez stressed that ICHLA is not a granting agency and active partnerships would need to be formulated before funds could be obligated.

Gonzalez said that the commissioners present should make a motion, despite the lack of quorum, to recommend approval to the larger commission at the coming meeting. Lopez said it was noted and would be recorded in the minutes. Lopez also said that agreements would have to be ironed out with partner organizations, so the Strategic Plan is actually a framework for commission business for the year.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Christian Gallo said that many people had come to him with questions about the new deferment program for undocumented immigrants issued by the White House. He said that much misinformation was being provided. Lopez said that he knew of immigration attorneys from Indianapolis who were conducting seminars and workshops throughout the state, and he knew of no final forms that had been supplied by ICE. Gallo said he is taking phone numbers of those making inquiries and will be back in touch with them when more information becomes available.

Gallo also provided information on several civil rights-related cases on which he has been working. Additionally, he agreed to give a presentation at a future meeting on the details concerning the new federal deportation deferment policy.

New Business

Lopez said that one thing that would be helpful to the group would be the establishment of a youth advisory committee. Lopez asked Morales to lead it and said that the time commitment would be limited to one conference call per month. The average age of Latino Hoosiers is 24, Lopez noted, and he said he thought that bringing together young Latinos to provide insights on what realities exist in our community would be helpful.

Lopez said he would contact commissioners and ask each to make one recommendation for the committee. An agenda could be established by Morales and Lopez, and potential participants would be contacted prior to the coming meeting. He recommended including those ages 17-25.

Adjournment

At 3:19pm, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair.