



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
COMMISSION ON MINORITY AFFAIRS**

**Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Commission on Minority Affairs was held on Monday, April 15, 2019. Pursuant to public notice: Via video conference call between all locations: 1) Nevada State Business Center, 3300 W. Sahara Ave, Nevada Room, Las Vegas, Nevada 89102, 2) Nevada Department of Business and Industry, 1830 College Pkwy, Suite 100, Carson City, NV 89706, and 3) Conference call: Carson City: 775-687-0999, Las Vegas: 702-486-5260, Participant's Collaboration Code: 64575.

**1. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

- A. Chair Rhodes-Ford called the meeting to order at 9:32 am.
- B. Present: Chair Berna Rhodes-Ford Esq. (person), Vice Chair Williams (person), C. Janelle Conine (phone), C. Hasaan Azam (phone), C. Adleen Stidhum (phone), Counsel Gary Mathews, Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs (person), and Marcel Schaerer, Deputy Director of Business and Industry.
- B.1. Public Attendance: Mercedes Krause, Kathleen Taylor, Marietta "Margie" Gonzales
- C. Commissioners Absent: C. Michael Flores, C. Donald Chaney, C. Yolanda Flores

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none**

**3. COMMISSION BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE COMMISSION.**

- A. Approval of March 18, 2019 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action) – C. Williams moved approval of the minutes for the March 18, 2019 meeting. C. Stidhum seconded. The motion carried.
- B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action).

**1. Education**

C. Rhodes-Ford attended the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents meeting, where they are trying to figure out how to close the achievement gap. Most of the minority populations are not graduating at the same rates or staying in school, and they discussed how to address that issue. Each school in the NSHE has been tasked with formulating a plan to make sure that they tackle those gaps. That plan is not a one-size-fits-all. What works in the Asian community does not work in the Hispanic or African American community. They are developing specific plans to make sure they graduate.

**2. Health**

M. A. Ku attended the 2019 County Health Rankings compiled by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Southern Nevada Health District presented data on length of life, quality of life, and other health factor. Clark County is the 8<sup>th</sup> healthiest county in Nevada, so we rank in the middle. It was interesting to

look at this data to hopefully start a dialogue on health. On April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, the Management Analyst traveled to Carson City and Reno for Minority Health Day. The first day was at the legislative building and recognized Senators Spearman and Cancela for the work that they did in health in the last legislative session. They spoke about the bills they were sponsoring in the current session, specifically on cultural competency and prescription drug pricing. The Children's Advocacy Alliance gave a presentation on early childhood obesity prevention, followed by a seminar on implicit bias and the impact on health care. We had a proclamation from the Governor declaring April as Minority Health month. The next day, we had a focus group at Reno City Hall on the diversification of clinical trials. We had representation from different minority groups to try to understand how we can get more minorities enrolled in clinical trials. The Management Analyst also met with Commissioners Azam and Conine while in Reno.

C. Rhodes-Ford attended a multicultural symposium at the Nathan Adelson Hospice dealing with end of life issues. One of the things that they discussed was that different cultures handle end of life issues differently, which can dramatically impact how a patient is cared for. We really have to be hands on and teach nurses/caregivers how to respond. One of the examples that they gave was that often the whole Latino family might make a decision, so you cannot just rely on the patient. The patient will want to consult with family members. We need to make sure we have our advance directives in place so that we are taking care of in the manner that we want to be taken care of.

### 3. Housing

No update

### 4. Workforce Development

C. Stidhum wants to do more follow-up with Workforce Connections. On March 20, she attended a meeting with job developers. There were around 20 individuals with different organizations at the table, and it gave her a better opportunity to understand how the collaboration of Workforce Connections works. They are continuing a vision that City Councilman Crear from Las Vegas has with Ward 5 Works and trying to pull these job opportunities together. She is on their mailing list to receive all types of job opportunities that are opening up out there, whether it is individual companies coming into Las Vegas, a job fair, or community driven for adults. She is also on the Clark County School District list to get information on their career fairs at the different schools. What to do with all the information? She wants to make sure the information is being funneled to the communities where it could make an impact. C. Stidhum plans to have some follow-up meetings with the Director of Dress for Success. She found out that most of the fairs today are hiring on the spot. The next meeting is scheduled for April 17<sup>th</sup>. It seems to be the largest workforce working group, and they discuss Southern Nevada, Northern Nevada, and the rurals. In addition to, with some of the businesses that are graduating from the county program, help them on the workforce side for those businesses that might be looking for individuals to hire as well. M. A. Ku attended the meeting as well, and we learned that job developers can fast track applicants to job openings than if someone were to apply themselves. Getting people connected with the job developers, and several different organizations have these job developers and also at Workforce Connections., so that they can apply through the NVjobconnect website. C. Rhodes-Ford asked what types of jobs are available. M. A. Ku said that CVS is opening a new call center and they are looking to staff a lot of jobs, not just the customer service representatives but also managerial positions. There is also a Sephora warehouse opening. They mentioned those two big companies. C. Stidhum said there are all types of jobs—construction jobs with Penta and Martin Harris and several manufacturing companies that are coming to Las Vegas. Haas is a manufacturing company that is looking to hire a thousand people. It appears that if companies are coming to Las Vegas, somehow they have been connected with Workforce Connections. Then Workforce Connections will assign a job developer person to meet with these groups, such as the Helix Company. Then the job developer sits with the company and help them

build the information flyer—locations, how many people they need, etc. It sounds like the Workforce Connections is bringing these job developers together from all sites--school district, HELP of Southern Nevada, other non-profits who have clients in their systems, to the table to avoid duplication. Many of these organizations not only offer job placement and workforce training, but other services such as temporary housing. They are still working on how to better get the information out to the community. Even in the last week, Workforce Connections has come up in other meetings, and C. Stidhum explained that there are 16 libraries across the Las Vegas valley where Workforce Connections is set up. She thinks it is just a matter of trying to get to the table, let them know we would like to be part of the process, and then how do we learn when these large companies are hiring. The job developers have the ability to give out codes, so when you send someone to fill out an application, then they know they came through the JobConnect system. C. Rhodes-Ford asked to send this out to our mailing list.

## 5. Economic Development

C. Williams said that on the horizon, the LVCVA is working on their Phase 3 convention center expansion and have shortlisted their final three candidates. Those candidates have a diversity plan as part of their proposal, so that is something to keep an eye out to see what that plan is and how we can get that word out to the public and constituents who would be interested in joining that project.

## 6. Legislative

C. Williams said we've made a lot of progress on the legislative side. AB246 was a bill to expand the Commission. We testified in neutral, and the bill did not make it out of committee by the deadline. SB490 was regarding a statewide disparity study. We submitted testimony in neutral, and it passed out of the Senate Government Affairs committee and now in Senate Finance. SB494 creates an incentive of 5% for Emerging Small Businesses that are competing against other businesses if they are up against the lowest bid. We testified in support of that bill and passed out of Senate Government Affairs. SB209 is on industrial hemp testing and was brought forward by the previous Commission and passed out of the Senate Natural Resources Committee. SB211 is on additional funding for the Commission. We helped introduce the bill and testified in support. There's no update on the bill at this time. M. A. Ku added that SB211 is exempt from deadlines so there hasn't been a lot of movement. C. Rhodes-Ford said she appreciates the hard work put into this subcommittee and commented how helpful it is to now have a full-time staff member draft and give testimony. C. Stidhum would like to thank C. Williams and the Management Analyst for testifying and keeping up to date on the bills. She is keeping up with the bills affecting NRS 332 and 338, and she said the ESB bill will be more work for the purchasing groups, but it's a matter of being able to say this is what the law says and we will be in accordance with the law. M. A. Ku added that four ESB certification holders testified in support of SB494, and those personal stories helped to show how this will help their businesses. C. Stidhum sent out an email to graduates of their small business program to let them know when the bill was getting heard and believe those testimonies were impactful as well.

C. Williams and M. A. Ku met with the RTC to discuss their disparity study. It's something we want to be more knowledgeable about, knowing that some of the public agencies have recently gone through one. We received feedback on lessons learned, and they left the door open for future conversations as this bill continues to move forward.

## 7. Community Liaison

C. Azam met with the Management Analyst while up in Reno and discussed what they can do in the Northern Nevada region. One of them is to look into whether the Reno Police has a multi-cultural advisory board. He plans to meet with the Chief of Police to understand what advisory boards they have,

and what can they do if there is not one currently. He also looking to connect and quantify the Asian community in Northern Nevada by talking with some of the local schools in the area, since he has not yet found an organized community.

To give some background, on March 15, at least 50 people were killed and another 50 injured in a hateful crime in New Zealand. C. Azam attended the Hearts United with Christchurch organized by the Northern Nevada Muslim community on March 20. More than 120 people from different faiths stood in solidarity of the terrorist attacks. It was uplifting to see multiple faiths and numerous nationalities come together. It was a very emotional event, and multiple religious leaders paid their respects and said prayers. Several elected officials from City of Reno and City of Sparks City Councils spoke and multiple law enforcement agencies were present. C. Azam asked the Chair if the Commission could have a moment of silence for the victims in New Zealand.

C. Management Analyst update (for discussion and possible action)

M. A. Ku asked all Commissioners to send in their subcommittee reports. We want to make sure we do not have any gaps in reporting, so please also submit your previous months if you have not done so.

1. Upcoming events –

- a. With all the activities this month, M. A. Ku did not get a booth at the UNLV Community Health Sciences job fair. The Minority Health Coalition does have a booth, and the Management Analyst will be helping with the booth this afternoon.
- b. On Wednesday evening April 17, Brookings will have a lecture on student discipline disparities from 6-7pm at the UNLV Greenspun Hall.
- c. April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Metro Chamber will have a pop-up business showcase.
- d. May 8<sup>th</sup> is the AAPI Day at the Legislature. Commissioner Azam and M. A. Ku both plan to be there.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mercedes Krause, National Education Association of Southern Nevada – Native American Caucus. She was very touched by the memorial event in Reno. There were also a few events in Southern Nevada, including at UNLV. There was a great diversity of faiths and very moving and beautiful to see the community come together. Speaking of disparities, she was recently in Carson City when the Nevada Ready Report came out. Looking at the numbers, two issues in the Native American community are visibility and not being counted. That Nevada Ready report exemplifies this. In the report, it showed that Native American students have the lowest amount of emotional security in Nevadan schools, not just Clark County. Also very concerning is when they have demographics, when they are listing 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade achievement results, the Native American students were not broken out. We do not have any tracking of our students like with other communities.

Marcel Schaerer, Deputy Director of Business and Industry – He would like to thank everyone on the Commission on Minority Affairs for their dedication and commitment. It is quite complex to build relationships but he sees the Commission do that all the time, from C. William's testimony to C. Azam and the Management Analyst meeting at the Reno airport. He would like to bring to the Commission's attention SB488, which has to do with emerging technologies, specifically for blockchain. The idea is to form an Emerging Technologies Task Force.

Kathleen Taylor – Question to Commissioner Azam: Have you contacted the Asian Chamber of Commerce? They may have inroads to specific gatekeepers who could help facilitate to get the information you need for those particular Asian groups up North. She also thanked the Commissioners for their work. C. Azam thanked Ms. Taylor for her comment and reach out to the chamber.

Margie Gonzales, Asian Community Resource Center – She is training to become the new Executive Director at ACRC, and she is happy to see one AAPI member on the team. She thanked the Commission for representing her community. C. Rhodes-Ford said the Management Analyst does a lot of work in the Asian community, but also in other communities, but really increased the Commission presence in the Asian community. C. Williams added that it's important to note that the work the Commission does is across all ethnic and racial groups. Although we may represent one or two groups on our own, the work that we do is on behalf of all minorities. When we are testifying, we are testifying on behalf of all minorities.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting adjourned at 10:13 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, May 20, 2019 at 9:30 am