



**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, February 25, 2019 at 9:37 am. 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 9:37 am.
- B. Present: Chair Berna Rhodes-Ford Esq. (person), Vice Chair Williams (phone), C. Donald Chaney (phone), C. Janelle Conine (phone), C. Hasaan Azam (phone), C. Michael Flores (phone), C. Yolanda Flores (phone), C. Adleen Stidhum (person), Counsel Gary Mathews, Secretary Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs (person), Deputy Director Marcel Schaerer (person).
- B.1. Public Attendance: Kathleen Taylor, Georgi Schultz, Marc Matsuo, Maggie Saunders
- C. Commissioners Absent: C. Jatoon Patel-Ghai

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none**

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

- A. Approval of January 26, 2019 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action) – C. Rhodes-Ford had two minor changes to the minutes. C. Chaney moved approval of the minutes as amended for the January 26, 2019 meeting. C. Y. Flores seconded. The motion carried.
- B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action).

**1. Education**

C. M. Flores gave details about the event Closing the Achievement Gap Among Students of Color, hosted by the Nevada System of Higher Education on April 12 at 9am (tentative) at the NSHE office on Maryland Parkway and streamed to the NSHE office in Reno. It will go into a deep dive why students of color are not performing at the same rates as white students in higher education, what can be done to help these students, what programs are in place, what other states are doing. The graduation rates are really low in Nevada, and we want to make sure we are doing what we can to address that issue. Prior to that meeting, NSHE is planning to hold a town hall meeting in Vegas and partnering with the different minority chambers and other community organizations to get feedback on what they think some of the issues are that students of color face in higher education. This is an opportunity for the Commission to give public comment. C. Rhodes-Ford asked what grade levels the event focuses on. C. M. Flores said it will focus primarily on higher education but will touch on some of the issues that CCSD and Washoe County are facing.

There has been a lot going on in the legislature in the K-12 space, with a big focus on students of color, especially in the Assembly Committee on Education. As the legislative session continues, C. M. Flores expects to hear more about the challenges students of color face in K-12 and higher education.

## 2. Health

C. Y. Flores said that the UNLV School of Medicine received an approval of \$2.3 million back in grant funding to expand critical care surgery and medicine fellowships and to support a geriatrics fellowship. The statistics provided by the government agency shows that in Nevada, there's a real need for more geriatricians, primary care doctors who have additional training in treating older patients. This is really important for our state because interim projections estimates that in 2030, Nevada's 65 and older population will increase by more than 260%. There's only 2 other states, Alaska and Arizona, that have recently seen an increase of over 200% in the same time period. Between 1999 and 2009, Nevada's 65+ population had the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest increase in the country of 47.9%. By 2030, the share of the 65 and older population is projected to jump from 12.1% to 18.6%. Nevada has about 350,000 adults over the age of 65 and go over 1 million in the next 15 years. Nevada has a population of 10,000+ people to 1 geriatrician, where the national average is 6,000 to 1. The need is here and it's wonderful that we have the additional support to train these doctors in Nevada.

## 3. Housing

C. Chaney met with Jim Haye, Neighborhood Services Coordinator for the City of North Las Vegas and had a discussion on how the Commission could better assist in disseminating information in the North Las Vegas community and all municipalities. He had a very good meeting with Congressman Horsford and spoke about some housing issues. Federal Home Loan has a \$100 million suit that Wells Fargo is required to pay as settlement. More information to come. There is also going to be a \$2-3 million grant that focuses on financial literacy, home ownership, workforce development, and increase affordable housing. We know there is an extreme shortage of housing and we need to focus on affordable housing in our state.

M. A. Ku attended the Brookings Lecture on housing by Andre Perry at UNLV. He talked about the devaluation of assets in black neighborhoods. He looked at mostly white neighborhoods and comparable black neighborhoods and calculated that black neighborhoods are undervalued by as much as 50%. There's still a lot of work that still needs to be done in that space. He stressed building up human capital in these areas and diversifying investments instead of just focusing on housing policies. C. Chaney said that financial literacy can help, and grants are coming down the pipeline to help with that. It will not help with the devaluation aspect, but how do we frame that? What does that look like? M.A. Ku will share the presentation when it is publicly posted.

## 4. Workforce Development

On February 13, C. Stidhum met with on Irene Bustamante Adams, who works at Workforce Connections, and figure out how the Commission can collaborate with Workforce Connections and gain a better understanding of all the services Workforce Connections offers, including the One Stop Career Center. They are designed to support not only Clark County and Nye County, but also Esmeralda and Lincoln County. The Northern group takes care of the North. Most importantly, there is a big funding pool with 17 partners, so those partners are Title I and Title II, all the way down to partners distributing food stamps, and those groups go out to the communities. Then they have 11 partners such as Goodwill and Olive Crest that work with the unemployed/underemployed population. Lastly, they have 13 local libraries, where all of these agencies are set up within those libraries. How is this information being

disseminated in the minority communities? How can the Commission be a conduit? When a career fair is coming, how do we get that to the person at that moment instead of the day of when we see it on the news. It appears that Councilman Crear would like all 17 partners to really come together and speak to each other. It does not track the person, so if one person started with coaching, and then uses other services, there is no final report to see how successful that person was at the end. Everyone is holding on to their own databases, so there is no way to track people through their entire journey. Councilman Crear's goal is to bring everyone together. C. Stidhum is receiving job updates, and proposed sending it to our listserv. She also has connected with the Clark County School District, because part of the One Stop Career Center is working with youth. Clark County does the SBI program and other agencies have youth internship programs. How do we connect them and be a part of the career fair within the schools. They have a very big slew of them from January to May.

M. A. Ku attended the Workforce Connections meeting. The City of Las Vegas presented Ward 5 Works by Councilman Crear. There are 5 zip codes that have double-digit unemployment, even though city overall has an unemployment rate of 4 to 5 percent. They are targeting their zip codes and they are working with Applied Analysis to do conduct that interview process that Commissioner Stidhum was talking about, making sure that we are tracking people and seeing how they are working through the system. They will be able to use that data to identify issues so they are not losing people and improving the systems going forward. They invited job developers to attend the meeting, who are the ones finding and placing people into jobs. They brought up some issues they were having with the system and working together to resolve those issues. They also talked about some of the upcoming events they were having. C. Stidhum proposed to keep attending the meetings.

## 5. Economic Development

M. A. Ku attended the LVGEA State of Economic Development event on February 6. They went over the top construction projects that will be taking place in Las Vegas. Jonas Peterson, head of LVGEA, talked about the shrinking middle class, and that wages are not keeping up with rising housing costs. In 1971, 70% of Americans were middle class but now only 50% of Americans are considered middle class. It's shrinking significantly and how do we create middle class jobs because that is the engine of our growth. M. A. Ku also attended the Asian Chamber workshop, where David Eclips from McCarran Airport conducted a small business certification class.

## 6. Legislative

On February 13, C. Williams traveled to Carson City and presented on behalf of the Commission in front of the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs. We received some really good feedback. On February 20, C. Williams presented in front of the Southern Nevada African American Employment Think Tank to talk about the Commission's legislative priorities. C. Williams also participated in a teleconference called "Straight Talk" hosted by the Latin Chamber, and Senator Denis responded to questions and talked about some legislation going on in session.

The Commission was able to move the needle on a couple of the initiatives that the Commission has presented to our legislative allies. Two of our BDRs are now bills—SB 211 is for additional Commission funding as well as SB 209 our marijuana initiative. The language of the other two BDRs has not be finalized. BDR 585 is the ESB incentive and BDR 586, which is support for a statewide disparity study. In addition, the Commission is keeping an eye on legislation towards predatory lending and putting some restrictions on that as well, hoping to lend additional support.

M. A. Ku added that we have been asked to present to the Senate Finance Committee on March 4 at 8 am for SB 211. She will send the room number at Grant Sawyer as soon as the room location is

announced. They also mentioned we are free to invite anyone for public comment to support our bill. C. Rhodes-Ford asked for any suggestions from Commissioners of any allies who might support our bill.

## 7. Community Liaison

No updates.

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

#### 1. Upcoming events –

- a. African Chamber ribbon cutting – Las Vegas: February 27 at 5:30pm at 4170 South Decatur
- b. RTC WC and Reno Airport disparity study – Reno: March 1 at 10am
- c. Fraud Prevention Fair – Reno at Reno Town Hall: March 4, Las Vegas: March 8 from 10-3pm at Nevada State Business Center 4<sup>th</sup> Floor
- d. Impact Summit/Minority Health Day by the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition – Carson: April 11 from 11-3pm, will be recognizing some of the legislators that advanced some health bills in the last session with a luncheon, and then following at 1:30 there will be a cultural competency seminar. There are tentative plans Friday to host listening sessions around health.
- e. Will have a booth at the Community Health Sciences job fair on April 15 from 12-3pm

The Management Analyst will be in Atlanta March 11-13 for the Advancing Justice Conference. C. Rhodes-Ford recalled that there was a minority week at the legislature in the past and several Commissioners attended that event. The Management Analyst will look into that and see if there is a similar event being organized this year.

2. Commission for Women joint event on March 14 at 6-9pm – The proposed event has now changed from legislators on the panel to community groups. We have a speaker from AAUW (American Association for University Women) and League of Women Voters. We want to have organizations talk about the different bills they are supporting and seeing if there is any synergy and coordination of having them in the room together. It will be video-conferenced between Carson City and Las Vegas. Chair Rhodes-Ford asked if there would be any minority organizations. M. A. Ku said we could certainly invite them if we move forward with the event. C. Stidhum moved that the Management Analyst to begin finalizing the work that is needed to run the joint event with the Commission for Women for March 14. C. Conine seconded. Motion carried. C. Rhodes-Ford would like all Commissioners who can be present to attend.
3. Commission applications are due February 28. We have received several applications in so far. The Management Analyst will send a reminder for all those who inquired. M.A. Ku said she will find out when the Legislative Commission's first meeting is when they get it scheduled, which will likely be the first meeting in June. C. Rhodes-Ford said that in the past, Commissioners did not know who applied but she is not opposed to sharing that information.
- D. Proposed communications and media policy – The Management Analyst drafted a one-page policy on communications and media. There are been more media requests lately, and because we do not have a framework, we have been very cautious of doing any media requests. It is good to get out there in the public and talk about the Commission. There is also policies on Commissioners giving presentations since we have been asked to give more presentations. Having this policy will help us move forward by ensuring we are all on the same page and giving the same message. If Commissioners do talk with the press, make sure to let the Management Analyst know immediately so the Department and PIO can look out for the article. C. Chaney moved that the Commission accepts the draft Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs media and communications guidelines. C. Williams seconded. Motion carried.
- E. Follow up question on budget from presentation to Assembly Committee on Government Affairs – C. Williams said that Chair Flores wants to give the Commission more teeth, or more authority, so

we can be more impactful and effective. He asked what direction we might go if we had that authority. C. Rhodes-Ford said that the Commission is limited on how we can spend the money, and those limitations do not give us as much authority as we like. It is her understanding that we mostly are a referral and recommendation body to the Governor, and we try to inform and advise the community. To the extent we can have a dissemination vehicle where we could reach out to thousands in the minority community, that would be helpful. C. Williams said it is good to clarify what our limitations are. C. Rhodes-Ford asked Commissioners to send any ideas of where we can be more impactful to the Management Analyst by Wednesday. M. A. Ku suggested having our own website with an easier to remember website – hosting useful information for minorities, a mailing list service such as MailChimp or ConstantContact, and a laptop for presentations. C. Rhodes-Ford asked about the status of the listserv. M. A. Ku said we have around 60 people on the listserv right now and is still in its infancy. The listserv software is not user friendly. M. A. Ku is still trying to figure out the best way to handle the job emails since she gets multiple emails a day about jobs and most of the people on the listserv are not looking for jobs. How do we use the listserv in a meaningful way but also do not alienate them with too many emails. Do we split the listserv into several groups? It is still very much a work in progress right now. We have two different lists right now – one is only for people who want to know about Commission meetings. The other is for Commission meetings and other events. C. Rhodes-Ford said MailChimp is free to a certain level of subscribers and has certain categories. M.A. Ku said the current listerv does not allow for that. C. Rhodes-Ford said it might be helpful to ask various organizations to spread the word about our listserv. We could get 50-100 members from an organization that way. Once there is an interest, then members of the community are being ambassadors for us. C. Stidhum asked to send it out to the Commissioners again so we are not sending duplicates, and identify which group is better suited to get career/ workforce information. C. Stidhum asked if we could carve out our own website without it costing anything. M. A. Ku looked into it and they charge by web traffic. The more visitors we have, the more we will get charged.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathleen Taylor (Nevada Business Opportunity Fund and Women’s Business Center) said the Nevada Women’s Business Center is an SBA program and they collaborate with the Armed Forces Chamber of Commerce, which is a 30-minute segment on an online radio show broadcast through the UNLV media center. It is every Monday from 3:05-3:26pm. She had the pleasure of having Commissioner Stidhum has a guest before the holidays and it was fantastic. They have been up and running for about 2 years and welcomes any of the Commissioners to be a part of or a guest of the radio show to get the word out and promoting awareness to the community of what the Commission does. She posted a show on LinkedIn and it got 200 views.

Marc Matsuo said he belongs to several Asian organizations in town, and is interested in getting the word out to the community so they are more aware. He also asked if can speak to different business organizations about what is going on in the community.

Marcel Schaerer (Deputy Director, Business and Industry) thanked the Commissioners for the wonderful work they are doing, and for the efforts on SB 211. He welcomed to invite Kathleen Taylor to discuss with the Management Analyst ways to collaborate because traditionally we do very well on business development or business help. For the subcommittee on Economic Development, he asks that maybe we can add in language to include economic development/business development. Economic development focuses on spending and creating jobs but business development is profit – and that is a day in and day out labor-intensive activity and minorities need a voice for that as well. It goes very well with Governor Sisolak’s increased small business activity throughout the state.

Commissioner Stidhum asked if she could be a part of the radio platform if she had upcoming career day

events on behalf of the Commission. Part of the interview would focus on the Commission and talk about upcoming events, and the other platform would be on the Clark County Small Business program. C. Rhodes-Ford just needs to know what is going to happen. A script or bullet points would be helpful for us to know, so we are in sync.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, March 18, 2019 at 9:30 am