



**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, June 17, 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 9:33 am.
- B. Present: Chair Berna Rhodes-Ford Esq. (person), Vice Chair Williams (person), C. Hasaan Azam (phone), C. Donald Chaney (phone), C. Michael Flores (phone), C. Adleen Stidhum (phone), Counsel Gary Mathews, Deputy Director Marcel Schaerer, and Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs (person).
- B.1. Public Attendance: Mercedes Krause, Margie Gonzales, Grace Baldisseri, Kathleen Taylor
- C. Commissioners Absent: C. Yolanda Flores, C. Janelle Conine

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Margie Gonzales (Asian Community Resource Center) introduced herself.

Grace Baldisseri (Asian Community Resource Center and BRAIN Foundation) introduced herself.

Mercedes Krause (Nevada Department of Education, Superintendent's Advisory Cabinet and Native American Caucus of National Education Association of Southern Nevada) introduced herself.

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

- A. Approval of May 20, 2019 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action) – C. Chaney moved approval of the revised minutes for the May 20, 2019 meeting. C. Williams seconded. The motion carried.
- B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action).

1. Education

C. M. Flores said that several Commissioners (Chaney, M. Flores, and Rhodes-Ford) attended the NAACP meeting this past weekend where they held a forum on higher education concerning graduation rates and different issues concerning African-American students and what higher education institutions are doing to address those issues. They hope to have similar forums in the future. K-12 is in the news a lot, there are a lot of safety issue concerns in the upcoming school year. He has not heard of any public

forums coming up for us to be engaged in.

2. Health

M. A. Ku helped organize a listening session on personalized medicine on Wednesday, May 29 with the Office of Minority Health and the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition. There were eight participants discussing why they weren't enrolling in clinical trials and received some really good feedback about barriers minorities face when enrolling in clinical trials.

3. Housing

none

4. Workforce Development

C. Stidhum is continuing to collaborate with partners. There has been a slowdown in job fairs / career engagement. Clark County is still on the rise of companies wanting to hold job hiring events.

5. Economic Development

C. Williams attended the Las Vegas Stadium Board Authority meeting on May 23 and provided written testimony on behalf of the Commission, specifically around request for data on minority participation. There are construction opportunities, concession opportunities, and operation opportunities coming up, and we want them to make sure that they know we are monitoring participation.

C. Stidhum is working on to get AB86 and AB126 implemented by July 1, which are procurement bills that ultimately affect the workforce. They relate to construction and prevailing wages. Also, SB494 did not pass but she will continue to work in the procurement arena and try to assist those businesses the best she can.

M. A. Ku attended the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders procurement roundtable on May 31, coinciding with Asian American heritage month. Commissioner Stidhum was a panelist at the roundtable. There were over a dozen local and state procurement specialists on the panel, and each spoke for a few minutes about procurement opportunities. There was a lot of good networking taking place.

6. Legislative

C. Williams announced that two of our bills moved forward. A few of the Commissioners (Commissioners Chaney, Rhodes-Ford, Stidhum, and Williams and the Management Analyst) attended for the signing of SB211, which increased funding for the Commission for the next biennium. It was very exciting to see the Commissioners there. In addition, SB209 passed in this legislative session, which the previous Commission spearheaded. Unfortunately, SB494 on ESB incentives and SB490, which was the statewide disparity study did not pass out of the Senate Finance. The Commission is still interested in finding ways to move those concepts forward. There are still ways to have those conversations even if it is not legislatively at this time.

M. A. Ku added that SB11 was introduced in Assembly Ways and Means on the last day of session and they proposed increased funding from ten thousand to fifteen thousand in the second year. They were able to get an amendment passed and pass the bill at 11:30pm. C. Rhodes-Ford will send thank yous to Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson and Senator Harris for moving everything forward for us. She also thanked the Commissioners to attending the last minute bill signing, and a thank you to Commissioners for attending all events.

7. Community Liaison

C. Azam had lunch with Sheriff Balaam to introduce the Commission. Sheriff Balaam shared his plan with minorities and planning to create a “Sheriff’s outreach committee.” Originally, he wanted to have a faith-based group, but he decided to expand it and include representation from all minorities to help bridge the gap between minorities and law enforcement. The initial focus is for minorities to become comfortable interacting with law enforcement. The Sheriff had a meeting on June 5 in Reno, but unfortunately, C. Azam could not attend. The idea is to be in contact with him again and learn about the progress. C. Azam asked if it is appropriate for the Commission to participate in that outreach committee. C. Rhodes-Ford said it is completely appropriate for the Commission to have a seat at the table, because you can become more involved.

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

1. Upcoming events –
 - a. Juneteenth festival on Wednesday, June 19th at 6pm at the park next to Doolittle Community Center.
2. Budget – the new fiscal year starts July 1. Continuing the conversation from last meeting, we will have funds for a laptop with our budget. There is also an outstanding donation offer from a non-profit to donate a tablet, and M. A. Ku will check with legal counsel on accepting the donation. M. A. Ku said that Constant Contact will be our mailing list vendor after conducting research on several vendors. Now that we have Commission news and updates, we can include those in our newsletter as well.
3. M. A. Ku plans to add data that groups have been requesting to the Commission website so it is more readily available.

D. Commissioner vacancies

Chair Rhodes-Ford said that she and Commissioner Y. Flores are terming out, and Commissioner Patel resigned earlier this year, so there are three vacancies. She reached out to all the Commissioners to make sure they want to continue their terms. We will be submitting names to the Legislative Commission very soon, which meets next week.

E. Chair/subcommittee chair elections

C. Rhodes-Ford gave a glowing recommendation of C. Williams. C. Williams thanked C. Rhodes-Ford for her exemplary leadership and the progress the Commission has been able to do with her at the helm. C. Williams appreciated the opportunity to serve as Vice-Chair under C. Rhodes-Ford and learned from her quite a bit. C. Rhodes-Ford said that the Commission will hold elections for Chair and subcommittee

chairs at the next meeting. C. Williams has another year in her role as Vice-Chair. M. A. Ku said Commissioners should let her know in advance if they want to change subcommittees. The Health and Economic/Business Development subcommittee chairs are open. C. Chaney said he would offer himself as possible chair for consideration. C. Rhodes-Ford said that she knows the Commission is in capable hands and looks forward to the progress of the Commission in the coming years.

F. Farewell to Commissioners Rhodes-Ford and Y. Flores

C. Williams said the Commission is so grateful for Chair Rhodes-Ford's leadership and for all the work she does both behind the scenes and here to keep the Commission organized. To see the movement we have seen has been unprecedented for this Commission: the growth in the number of events attended, moving forward in legislative activities, and funding. Bringing on a Management Analyst was a big part of her tenure as well. C. Rhodes-Ford thanked all the Commissioners and said they have contributed so much in the last year. The Commission has made leaps and bounds in progress in terms of the Commission and their activities they are attending, and even putting forth legislation. Even for the bills that did not pass, the Commission was at the table. She thanked staff for all their support and being a huge champion (Management Analyst Emily Ku, legal counsel Gary Mathews, and Deputy Director Marcel Schaerer). C. Rhodes-Ford said it was an honor to have served as chair.

Chair Rhodes-Ford said that Commissioner Y. Flores has been a champion of health care. She knows the Commission will move forward but thinks there will be a big void without her because she really was a voice for the education of minority community. We will definitely miss her.

4. NEW BUSINESS

none

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marcel Schaerer (Deputy Director, Department of Business and Industry) thanked Chair Rhodes-Ford (and Commissioner Y. Flores if she were here) for being a champion in advocating for minorities and the small business sector. We are so grateful for Commissioner Rhodes-Ford's leadership following the footsteps of Anna Siefert and Jane Lee to get us here and for furthering this organization. All of you have done such an outstanding job. He thinks being a hub for data makes sense for the Commission.

Mercedes Krause thanked C. Rhodes-Ford for all her work in creating this space with great people who are going to carry on what was established. She met Commissioner Williams when she was speaking about an issue very important to her, and the fact that there was someone from the Commission really meant a lot. She shared an event will take place on July 25 and 26 at College of Southern Nevada, sponsored by the Women's Alliance and League of Women Voters. It is called Leading with Heart: Global Women's Summit. There will be elected officials, educators, experts, thought leaders, non-profits. Ms. Krause will be speaking at the event. It will be a very inclusive event.

Margie Gonzales (CEO, Asian Community Resource Center) announced that the NBA Summer League is coming up in mid-July. Teams from China and Croatia are coming here to join the summer league. She wanted to bring up teachers who teach special education, specifically from the Philippines hired by Clark County School District. They hired around a hundred of them in 2017, and also another hundred the year after, and a few more coming this year. They are only here for three years. Even with them here, we still have a teacher shortage. They will start having to go home next year. The children will be losing their teacher who they are used to and trust. She is currently hosting two teachers in her home.

C Rhodes-Ford asked what is the next step?

Ms. Gonzales said this is a concern of many groups. They are only given a J1 visa, which is temporary and not an H1B for professionals. Some of them even have doctorate degrees. Because of that, they cannot stay longer than 3 years. She also learned that Clark County helped them to stay one more year but they have to go through qualifications/requirements.

Management Analyst will reach out to CCSD.

Kathleen Taylor (Nevada Women's Business Center) is so pleased to have the opportunity to see the progress the Commission has made. She thanked the Chair for her leadership.

5. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 10:22 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, July 15, 2019 at 9:30 am