



**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, May 20, 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 (phone), C. Hasaan Azam (phone), C. Donald Chaney (person), C. Janelle Conine (phone), C. Michael Flores (phone), C. Yolanda Flores (phone), C. Adleen Stidhum (phone), Counsel Gary Mathews, and Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs (person).
- B.1. Public Attendance: Chris Reynolds, Senta Robinson, Ender Austin, III
- C. Commissioners Absent: none

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

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

- A. Approval of April 15, 2019 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action) – C. Stidhum moved approval of the revised minutes for the April 15, 2019 meeting. C. Conine seconded. The motion carried.
- B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action).

1. Education

C. M. Flores said there is a lot going on in the legislative session pertaining to education, including raises for teachers, Millennium and Promise scholarship bills in higher education, and figuring out how to fund education initiatives. In June, NSHE is working with the NAACP to discuss the achievement gap with students of color, namely how they are not graduating at the same rate and how can we support students of color more.

C. Rhodes-Ford asked for a moment of silence to honor the late Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, who was a major proponent of education. He passed away on May 4th and funeralized on May 18th.

2. Health

C. Yolanda Flores attended the UNLV School of Medicine Community Engagement board meeting. They

discussed the new UNLV medical library building as part of the effort to grow the medical school. Also, they are requesting medical advisors and mentors for the students. The Student National Medical Association and the Latino Medical Student Association were recognized nationally, and those students are actively involved in recruiting minority students for medical school. They recently met and they are now developing mentoring opportunities. If there are any medical professionals that you know may be interested, she can forward that information. There are also matching professionals with pre-medical students. We are definitely reaching into the minority community to make this happen. They are also raising money for sponsorships, membership fees, and travel to the national meetings. Some of the students who are not sure about medicine but attends these trips will be inspired enough to do what they want to do. It is a wonderful experience for students. C. Y. Flores also volunteered for a week at the International Engineering and Science Fair in Phoenix. She mentioned this is a great opportunity for all of our kids in encouraging STEM topics. The state of Nevada automatically enters students to this fair, and it's the largest science fair in the world. Some people are now getting together to take what they learned at the fair to bring it back to Nevada.

M. A. Ku tabled at the UNLV Community Health Sciences job fair with the Minority Health Coalition and spoke with several of the agencies present. They said they were having a tough time filling some of their health related vacancies. She also attended the Immunize Nevada Silver Syringe awards on May 2nd. They are working towards increasing the state's immunization rates. They specifically focused on influenza and bringing awareness on how deadly that disease can be, even if someone is healthy. Nevada is 46th in the nation for immunization rates against influenza for children under 18, so we have some improvements to make.

3. Housing

C. Chaney highlighted a few bills, including SB448, which creates a program for affordable housing tax credits. Affordable housing is the number one housing issue in the state of Nevada. We need to get to the first part of that, of how can we present a tax credit program to the people if we don't have affordable housing laid out. The second bill is AB476, which revises the provisions regarding certain affordable housing. Both still need to be passed out of the Assembly Ways and Means. C. Chaney was invited to a roundtable with the White House Revitalization Council on May 8th, but he was unable to attend. President Trump approved Executive Order 13853 which created this council to assess how federal agencies can prioritize investments in qualified Opportunity Zones. How can we consult with local officials and members of the private sectors to come up with a strategic plan and remove burdens in order to create affordable housing. He has a call with Spencer Chretien, the Executive Director for that Opportunity Council to conduct follow up. As part of the ministerial community and not representing the Commission, C. Chaney has been in contact with presidential state directors to learn their positions concerning affordable housing. C. Chaney stressed that there is no commitments or supports, just gathering information. C. Rhodes-Ford reiterated that the Commission does not support political candidates.

4. Workforce Development

C. Stidhum has been attending the Workforce Connections job developers meeting, which gets together once a month to discuss the different job opportunities that are coming in to Nevada, specifically Clark County. She is still trying know beforehand when these events are happening and try to make an appearance and see how things are going. Last week was Careers in Motion, which is part of Infrastructure Week that was hosted by RTC Southern Nevada. There were 22+ construction companies, architect and engineer firms set up but a little slow. We are still trying to learn why people are not showing up at these events. There was Ward 5 Works which was headed by Councilman Crear at the World Market Center, and not the turnout that was expected. It's possible people are not interested in

construction. C. Stidhum plans to attend their next meeting and give feedback regarding those events. On Friday, she was at Suncoast with the final Infrastructure Week event in conjunction with RTC and Latin Chamber to talk to local businesses. C. Stidhum received an invite from the White House Initiative as well to speak on a panel and still waiting for more details. This may be only about the small business industry but anytime she has an opportunity, she will mention the Commission.

M. A. Ku added that the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders roundtable is on May 31st at 8:30am at New Asian BBQ, 5150 Spring Mountain Rd. They are trying to have different levels of procurement departments represented on the federal, local, and private sector. There will be a big panel in celebration of Asian American heritage month. M. A. Ku also attend the same Latin Chamber event as C. Stidhum and had a joint Commission/Business and Industry booth at the Latin Chamber event.

5. Economic Development

C. Stidhum invited Commissioners to stop by the Clark County purchasing department's annual Small Business Expo on Thursday, May 23. Businesses, resource agencies, and Clark County decision makers will be at the Westgate Hotel, 3000 Paradise Road from 9 am-12 pm.

M. A. Ku had a joint Commission/Business and Industry booth at the SBA Matchmaker event on May 10. It was an all-day event with the Business of the Year awards in the evening, so the morning portion was lightly attended.

C. Williams wanted to provide an update on last month's report. The LVCVA awarded the contract to Martin-Harris for the convention center expansion. They have a 15% participation goal for small business and a good faith effort for diversity and inclusion. This is something we probably want to keep an eye on as it will bring new procurement opportunities and want to know how it's tracking.

6. Legislative

C. Stidhum would like to highlight AB86, put forth by Nevada Public Purchasing group, to help the small business industry by raising the dollar threshold to allow them to get more work. This includes businesses that are already certified as an Emerging Small Business, which would tie into SB494.

C. Williams recounted the different bills put forth by the Commission: SB494 preferences for Emerging Small Businesses, SB209 which came out of the previous Commission's legislative priorities, SB490 the statewide disparity study, SB211 for more Commission funding. They are all in Senate Finance, and there are no other updates at this time.

M. A. Ku and C. Azam attended the first Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Day at the legislature on May 8th, which is the first API day in Nevada legislative history. C. Azam met at lot of leaders in the API community and spoke to the Governor on Commission funding. A group of API groups, including the Management Analyst, met with Lieutenant Governor Kate Marshall to discuss the 2020 census with respect to the Asian community. She suggested that the Asian community form their own committee to make sure the community is counted. M. A. Ku said there are many discussions on the census right now, but not a collective effort yet. Once they create the Census Committee, they should be able help direct the path and disperse funds. C. Williams said there is a bid opportunity right now for census outreach programs specifically for communities of color.

M. A. Ku had a meeting with Francisco Morales, Director of Community Partnerships in the Governor's office to discuss the Office for New Americans. That bill is SB538 and it is moving through the process

quickly. This proposed bill will help new Americans and immigrants navigate through the different government agencies, especially getting the social services that they need. Their office will also conduct outreach and advocacy. We want to make sure that we do not have any duplications between our offices and also the Ombudsman for Consumer Affairs for Minorities, Miriam Hickerson.

On May 9th, the Commission had a video conference with the Commission for Women as a follow up meeting to our March 14th event. We had 12 people attend, 9 from Las Vegas and 3 in Carson City. The different non-profits gave status updates on where their bills stood, such as the family sick leave (SB312) which is getting heard on Wednesday. They were originally lobbying for 10 sick days and now it is five. The groups would like to meet again during the interim to discuss the bills that died and prepare for next session.

M. A. Ku attended a roundtable for the AAPI community with Senator Jacky Rosen. She talked about the legislation that she is moving through the US Senate. We covered topics that are important to the AAPI community, specifically immigration, education, and health care. Following that, there was a ribbon cutting at the new Shanghai Plaza on Spring Mountain and Arville, which is the newest Chinatown plaza.

C. Rhodes-Ford thanked everyone who participated in the legislative session, and every single aspect is very important. C. Rhodes-Ford asked if there is anything she needs to do to get the bills moving through. M. A. Ku said that all of our bills are exempt, so they are exempt from the house passage deadline. However, the chance of SB490 passing is slim due to the large fiscal note.

7. Community Liaison

C. Azam is meeting with Sheriff Balaam of Washoe County tomorrow for lunch to introduce the Commission on Minority Affairs and build a relationship. He plans to stay in touch with Sheriff Balaam and continue to work with him and his agency. In addition, he continues to work with Customs and Border Protection. He had breakfast with several officers and continued to strengthen the relationship.

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

M. A. Ku attended the Zapata statue unveiling at North Las Vegas City Hall on April 22nd. General Emiliano Zapata was a legendary Mexican revolutionary, and the event commemorated the 100-year anniversary of his death. That statue will be displayed permanently in their courtyard.

The Management Analyst received data requests from three separate non-profits to help with their grant writing, testimony, and news articles. Data requests are for number of Asian businesses in the community, projected Asian population, etc. There is an article today in the Las Vegas Review Journal about the growing Asian American community but the data M. A. Ku provided did not make it in. If anyone knows of any non-profit that needs data, the Management Analyst is more than happy to provide it. Many of the non-profits out there do not know where to get this kind of information.

M. A. Ku attended several other events for Asian American heritage month, including the U.S. – Chinese tourism festival in Downtown Summerlin from May 10-12. There is a lot of information about the different provinces in China and trying to create a stronger link between U.S.-China relations. She also attended the Asian Culture Day dinner on May 18 organized by the Asian American Group. Asian Culture Day was a bill passed during the last legislative session commemorating the Asian community.

M. A. Ku wanted to highlight an internal meeting at Business and Industry. One issue that we identified here was that all the complaints and forms that the public has to fill out, like worker's

comp, everything has to be submitted in English. Several departments have to turn away non-English speakers when they come to the office, requesting that they come back with a translator. We are looking into how we can make the department friendlier for minorities because they have taken the time to visit the office to file a complaint. Coincidentally, right after that meeting, someone called our Consumer Affairs Division asking to speak to someone who spoke Mandarin Chinese. We have never had a request for Chinese before but luckily the Management Analyst was in the office and able to take her call. This might be something the Office for New Americans can help with.

Deputy Director Schaerer and M. A. Ku had a phone call with Ed Vento, who is a former Commission chair who is now working at Prestamos, a CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution). We updated him on what the Commission is currently working on this past year and our goals moving forward. We discussed the budget, and he offered to donate a Microsoft Surface tablet that was in our original budget request. However, we are requesting additional money for that purpose. C. Rhodes-Ford would like to wait to see what happens with our budget bill.

M. A. Ku is working with the Finance Department on moving our mailing list to Mailchimp.

1. Upcoming events –

- a. May 29 – M. A. Ku is helping the Office of Minority Health with their focus group. We did one in Northern Nevada and now looking to conduct one in Las Vegas. We are looking for minorities who have either participated in a clinical trial or who have declined a clinical trial to understand how we can encourage more minorities to participate in clinical trials. C. Rhodes-Ford commented that black people have had a history of being an experiment like lab rats. She does not know how to overcome that, but the problem is that if we do not participate, and if there is something unique to that population, then they lose out. M. A. Ku said it is important to understand if there are certain side effects that are more pronounced in certain communities, they will not know about it because they are not included during the clinical trials. It is important to understand where people are coming from, like if the syphilis study affects their views on clinical trials, then we want their input.
- b. June 19 – the Juneteenth Festival will be held next to the Doolittle Community Center from 6-9pm.

4. NEW BUSINESS

C. Rhodes-Ford mentioned that her and C. Y. Flores will end their terms on June 30, so they have one last meeting. She said she will be happy to continue providing support for the Commission. She will also be reaching out to all of the Commissioners to make sure we know how many vacancies we have.

C. Chaney would like to highlight the importance of the census. As we gather data and information, it would be best if the communities can work together. He has heard that the biggest issues is accuracy, making sure everyone in the household is counted. The census count is important because that helps us get the resources for the community.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ender Austin, III, from U.S. Congressman Steven Horsford's office – As a former Commissioner, he is very proud to have served on the Commission on Minority Affairs. He wanted to come by in support of the Commission's work and highlight the work in Congressman Horsford's office that is pertinent to the mission of the Commission. The new Congress has been active and passed H.R. 1 out of the House of

Representatives, which impacts a lot of people in the minority community by making sure we have equal voting rights and restoring the Voting Rights Act. Also, H.R. 5, which makes sure the LGBTQ community is protected when it comes to issues of employment discrimination. When the Congressman was the state Senate Majority Leader, he supported a similar state bill. Congressman Horsford also signed onto the Black Men and Boys Commission, which was introduced by Congresswoman Frederica Wilson, who has done amazing work in Florida mentoring young men. This goes further to study the disparities of black men and boys. This will be a bipartisan commission out of the Office of Civil Rights. We also reached out to the Office of Budget and Management Director about the proposed changes in poverty measures and new metrics that the current administration seeks to use as it disseminates money for Medicaid, SNAP, and Headstart. We are concerned that these numbers do not adequately reflect the concerns of communities of color and that these numbers can easily be manipulated to decimate these programs. Mr. Austin said he would share the letter from the Congressman's office. C. Rhodes-Ford said that we stand ready, willing, and able to help however we can. We appreciate the Congressman's work in the minority community.

5. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 10:26 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, June 17, 2019 at 9:30 am