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STATE OF NEVADA

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Director



**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 21, 2021. Pursuant to public notice, this meeting was conducted by a Webex videoconference call.

1. COMMISSION BUSINESS

- A. Chair Chaney called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.
- B. Commissioners Present (phone): Chair D. Edward Chaney, Vice Chair Myisha Boyce, C. Hasaan Azam, C. E. Mercedes Krause, C. Jose Melendrez, and C. Amy Shaw.
- C. Commissioners Absent: C. Yerania De Luca, C. Kathleen Taylor, C. Angelica Villarta.
- D. Staff Present: Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs
- E. Public Attendance: Nicholas Dunkle, Nikki Bailey-Lundahl, Marcel Schaerer, Janet Serial

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

- A. **Approval of May 17, 2021 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action)**
C. Melendrez moved to approve the minutes. C. Krause seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. **Receive presentation from Nikki Bailey-Lundahl, Government Affairs Manager, Nevada Mining Association**

M. A. Ku introduced guest speaker Ms. Nikki Bailey-Lundahl, Government Affairs Manager from the Nevada Mining Association. C. Boyce and M. A. Ku met her in Carson City during the legislative session, and we had a great conversation about how we can help with their efforts on recruiting more minorities and learning more about their association.

Ms. Nikki Bailey-Lundahl said that the Nevada Mining Association's mission is to unite, advocate, and serve as the public voice of Nevada's modern mining industry. They have over 500 member companies representing every part of the mining supply chain – operators, explorations, suppliers, and individuals. That's not just in the rurals, a lot of the supply chains exist at the two urban cores in Nevada as well. Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said 9.5% of all U.S. non-fuel mineral production comes from Nevada. The state produces 20 essential minerals critical to our daily lives; mining supply chain has a presence in all 17 countries; 15 of Nevada's 17 counties have an active mine operation; the mining supply chain has a presence in all 17 counties; Nevada mines operate on only .3% of Nevada's 71 million acres. Most people when they think of mining, they think of it being one of Nevada's largest industries in the state, but it's actually the 12th largest in the state. We're home to 20 essential minerals, and everything from silver and gold, limestone, turquoise, salt, and lithium. There is one active lithium mine in the state and at least 2 more getting closer. Other minerals vital for the green economy is copper and silver for batteries and solar panels. There are 37,000 direct and indirect careers, not jobs, in the industry, and the average direct salary is \$90,000. Ms. Bailey-Lundahl went over a slide on the industry employment by county in 2019. Eureka County is 89.5% of their employment is based in the mining industry, down to Elko County at 11.3% and Mineral County at 8.6%. Eureka County holds most of our gold mines.

Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said Tyre Gray, President of the Nevada Mining Association, has been with the organization about a year, and she started between the two special sessions in July. Much of the conversations have been around taxes, but workforce development efforts have been key. They've been building partnerships in Southern Nevada, expanding awareness, and working with Project 354 and the Nevada Careers pilot program. Core mining had its first job fair in Las Vegas last year, and they previously only had job fairs in northern and rural Nevada. There are opportunities for everyone for high paying jobs. There are people who come straight from high school, but also Associates, vocational, and technical certifications, and all the way up to Bachelor's, Master's, PhDs. You have a little bit of everyone working there with good paying jobs with full health care benefits for their families.

Mining schools in the Nevada include the University of Nevada, Reno and Great Basin College in Elko. There's been a slowdown of getting people through those programs. Ms. Bailey-Lundahl showed a slide of all different careers in mining – administration, safety, environmental, and corporate and social responsibility. In 2019, Nevada mining had 227 active mines and 28.5 million work hours. An active mine is usually as 24-hour, 7 day a week mine. The reportable injuries are 89% better than the national rate. Mining is an essential Nevada industry. The mining industry is 1% Nevadan employment, 2.3% Nevada GDP, 2.4% wages and salaries, and 2.5% of the state general fund. The mining industry was the largest contributor to the Nevada COVID taskforce, and they funded the I-80 Fund and Storefront Business Benefit providing grants and loans to small businesses. The Nevada Mining Associate hosted a virtual food drive with Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

Mining works closely with federal, state, and local regulators to create a robust environmental stewardship program. The mines submit reclamation plans and pay a bond before any operations begins. Normally, when you think of a mine and when you start working, it could be 7-10 years before you put the first shovel in the ground because there are many regulations before you start. The State holds \$2.3 billion in bonds, so the minute the mine is closed, funds are there and guaranteed to be put back the way it was. Mines monitor air and water quality to insure compliance, and there are inspections daily, if not more than daily when you look at the entirety of the state.

Also, Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said they fund projects to clean up the mistakes in the past. In Ely, there are ongoing reclamation projects from mines back in the 1920s even though they didn't own the mine at that time. She showed a slide of all the government agencies with federal oversight.

C. Krause thanked Ms. Bailey-Lundahl for the presentation. C. Krause asked what part her organization is playing regarding the situation between Thacker Pass mine and the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone tribe, where the mine sits on. Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said the association has been reaching out to those members, talking about what they are actually doing, getting a full list of communications of the different tribes, and understanding where everyone is coming from. She said since the end of the legislative session, that is at the top of their list as well of workforce development. She can give an update in the next couple of weeks.

C. Boyce also thanked Ms. Bailey-Lundahl for coming today. C. Boyce wanted to highlight the job opportunities that hold a relatively low barrier to entry that have a decent earning wage and notifying more people that those opportunities are available. It's not always something that we are aware of in Southern Nevada. The sharing of information is the first step to being able to open to conversation and how minorities can get more involved in those conversations. C. Boyce asked if there are also opportunities for subcontracting? Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said the industry does do some subcontracting, but contract with primarily mining-focused groups due to the strong regulations. She said they continue to spread the word in Southern Nevada and in Washoe County, she would love to keep in contact with the Commission and update the Commission with their efforts as new things and opportunities arise. C. Boyce said that only we see progress is through conversation, and this is a great first start and great information to have

C. Chaney asked what is the work schedule like for the workforce? Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said it varies between mine sites, but they have a unique schedule. A lot of the times it's 5 days on 5 days off, which enables some of our workers to live out of state or out of the community. You will see lots of people live in Reno and travel to Elko. Some live in Las Vegas and commute. Robinson Coppermine is quite close to Ely, so they have a more regular work schedule. However, sometimes that commute is 2 hours and bussed from larger communities. C. Chaney asked so there are jobs leaving our state? Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said that was one of the first questions they asked internally, why are people leaving the state? Why can't we get people from Southern Nevada to Northern Nevada to work? If they are commuting the same amount of time from Salt Lake City or other areas, why can't we pull from our state workforce? C. Chaney said we look forward to concerted efforts and bridging that gap. Anything we can do as a Commission would be greatly appreciative to be a part of that. There are other entities and agencies that can help assist, especially when it comes to jobs and careers. C. Chaney said we would love to have further dialogue. Diversity needs to happen in all industries.

C. Azam said staffing has been an issue of everything in Nevada, and we're seeing a lot of people moving to the Northern Nevada region. A lot of folks coming from California and Texas, and the net is still very high. We're getting a lot of more jobs in Northern Nevada, but when the population is growing more than the number of jobs available, that becomes an issue. Hopefully if that will be fixed in the future. It's good to hear some of the positive things. Ms. Bailey-Lundahl said she was just at the Elko Mine Expo 2 weeks ago, and they are trying to hire right now. They always have 300 jobs within the industry looking to be filled at any given time. The more they can share opportunities, the more it helps. They are working on a project so that their members have the ability to see more of the jobs available in the industry.

C. Elections for Chair and Vice-Chair

M. A. Ku said the two-year terms for Chair and Vice-Chair are up at the end of the month. The Commission needs to hold elections to vote in a new Chair and Vice-Chair or reelect the Chair and Vice-Chair.

C. Chaney yielded the chair to C. Melendrez.

C. Shaw nominated C. Chaney for Chair and C. Boyce for Vice Chair. C. Chaney and C. Boyce accepted the nomination. M. A. stated that they would only serve for one year because they would term out of the Commission on June 30, 2022. A Commissioner can only serve 4 years total, and they will be entering their 4th year. We would elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair again next June. C. Shaw made the motion to retain Chair Chaney and Vice Chair Boyce until June 2022. C. Krause seconded. Motion carried unanimously. C. Melendrez yielded the chair back to C. Chaney.

D. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action)

1. Community Liaison

C. Azam continues to meet with the outreach committee with Sheriff Balaam. It's mostly faith-based but he represents the Commission. Mostly likely they will start meeting every other month.

C. Krause asked if something could be in place so that this is happening in the North and the South.

C. Azam said the Sheriff's group spoke to the group around 6-7 months back and maybe it's time to bring them back for an update and what their plans are for the future. We can take that offline and coordinate the next time they should come to the meeting. C. Chaney brought up expanding the role of Community Liaison as we grow the Commission's voice and vision in the state. There are lots of community groups we meet with like the NAACP, so we need to make sure we're inclusive of that. C. Azam said we can have a future discussion to discuss next steps.

2. Legislative

C. Boyce said the Commission voted on four bills, and all of them passed. That's a huge accomplishment for the Commission. The first one SB 16, this was our housekeeping bill which moved the Commission on Minority Affairs into the Department of Business and Industry and that has gone through. AB 261, which was the textbook bill and that has passed, making more equitable topics covered in the education system. AB 302 passed, which means Commission now has 2 BDRs (Bill Draft Requests) every legislative session and will allow the Commission to influence legislation in the future. The next wave of Commissioners will be responsible for submitting BDRs, but C. Boyce said we may want to put more request additional staff, because now that several bills have passed, the Commission has more additional responsibility in future legislative sessions. Specifically, we are listed in AB 335, which we did not vote to support, but we are listed in the bill where the Commission will be responsible for an analysis of employment plans and progress reports for certain redevelopment projects. The Commission is responsible for reviewing the reports at the initial stage when they put the plan together and at the midpoint to see what progress has been made. SB 222, which is our last bill that we supported. This brings diversity and inclusion liaisons into state agencies. C. Boyce and M. A. Ku attended the bill signing with the Governor, Congresswoman Dina Titus, and state legislators. C. Boyce is really excited to see what's in the future and gave kudos to the entire Commission.

3. Economic and Business Development

C. Shaw said the good news is as of June this year, the number of domestic passengers flying through McCarran is the same level as 2019, so we just need our international to come back. The airport allowed the shops to close during the pandemic, and now they are focusing on making sure concessions are open, but the businesses are facing the same challenges businesses are facing statewide of bringing back employees. When you see the long lines at the airport, they are trying but there's a staffing shortage. McCarran has been getting a lot women and minority-owned businesses applying for certification, and as they get vetted, they are making introductions to other organizations like the Raiders. The Raiders are very receptive to meeting with them and talking to them about potential business opportunities. Travelers are shopping differently now and a lot of people more comfortable buying a sandwich from a touchless machine. The month of June has been opening up the airport, working with the business, and making introductions to minority chambers.

C. Boyce attended a Las Vegas Stadium Board Authority meeting on May 20 to continue to monitor activities within food and beverage and master operations. They are moving to in-person meetings moving forward and are occurring every 2-3 months. Their public meeting agendas are on their website.

4. Workforce Development

None

5. Housing

C. Krause attended a meeting on fair housing with PLAN of Southern Nevada. She heard from some community members and they talked about the situation where a lot out-of-state and out-of-country buyers are coming in and creating a shortage of affordable housing. C. Boyce attended the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority Meeting on the 17th which was this past Thursday. The Interim Executive Director Jon Gresley provided an update on the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant that they might be putting forward for plans to develop the Historic Westside. Their public meetings are every 3rd Thursday of every month and available to everyone in the Commission.

6. Health

C. Melendrez said with COVID-19, Nevada is still going in a good direction and the state had 296 positive COVID tests on Friday, June 18th. There were 1,233,520 fully vaccinated as of June 18th. That turns out to be 40% of the population, and the Governor's goal is 60%, so we're not quite there yet. A high percentage of Nevadans are missing the 2nd dose. The Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition is working with Immunize Nevada to figure out why people aren't getting vaccinated and identify new strategies for getting folks vaccinated. They are working with community organizations that are traditionally on the political side and adopting some of those strategies. They are literally going door to door to identify people who have not been vaccinated, and that work is being supported by the Health District, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), and the US Office of Minority Health. FEMA has allocated several mobile units to Nevada, and they are coordinating efforts to canvass in the neighborhood with the mobile units. That's a strategy that is being adopted by national political groups.

C. Melendrez said it looks like NSHE (Nevada System of Higher Education) is going to move to require students to be vaccinated in order to be back in the classroom for the fall semester. There is that conversation, but C. Melendrez is not sure if that has been officially voted on. For UNLV, everyone is back on campus on July 1st and classrooms are opening in the fall. In Northern Nevada, there was an agreement with University of Nevada, Reno medical school and Renown Health, which will establish the first fully integrated health system in Nevada.

C. Melendrez said the Southern Nevada Health District is providing pop-up vaccination clinics. The Henderson Equality Center hosts a food pantry every Tuesday and Thursday for those who need that. A group that has been really active lately called Puente has been doing a lot of pop of centers, dinners for people getting vaccinated, and getting creative on how they are reaching out to the community. C. Melendrez also mentioned that public health in Nevada has been severely underfunded until now. As a result of the impact of COVID is the issue of mental health and suicide prevention is going to be huge. The School of Public Health of Nevada and the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition was just funded to address those issues in a culturally competent manner. If the work of a community group aligns with the community that they serve, the School of Public Health and Coalition can award the financial resources to provide the work in the community.

C. Shaw asked why people are getting one shot but not getting the second one? C. Melendrez said he can only report what he is seeing and hearing. When the Johnson & Johnson vaccine came out, that was a one-shot deal, but when that got suspended, that hurt us in terms of reaching out to those folks who could only do one shot based on transportation issues. We know there is a struggle with the two-shot vaccine, and one of biggest things to combat is the unfortunate amount of misinformation. The other challenges are where they are financially, where they live, and the challenges of getting to the site. There is a bunch research being done to try to identify those existing challenges.

C. Krause said with regards to mental health, Commissioner McCurdy came by to speak at the grand opening of the United Natives Health Services at the Las Vegas Indian Center. It is Native run for Native people. The medical professionals are from tribal communities, and they will be able to provide culturally competent direct services to community members. A lot of times, tribal members might hesitate seeking medical help because they don't have medical providers who have an awareness of special situations of our community and culture. C. Melendrez said he has been working with tribal communities on COVID-19 efforts, and he is still looking for Native American representation for the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Leadership Council.

M. A. Ku said the Governor announced Vax Nevada Days, which is his incentives to get vaccinated. There is going to be \$5 million in prizes, and the top prize is \$1 million in cash. Nevadans getting at least one dose and are ages 12 and older are automatically entered into the raffle.

7. Education

C. Melendrez said on the education side for higher education, he is grateful for some bills that passed to support higher education. Governor Sisolak signed 5 bills that boosted education funding and safety. C. Melendrez was recently appointed to chair NSHE's Equity Diversity and Inclusion Council.

C. Krause traveled up to the Stewart Indian School in Northern Nevada for the signing of Assembly Bills 88, 262, and 270, which were really great wins for the Native American community, it was a wonderful experience. There was a recognition of the history of the location they were on, and orange tablecloth to recognize the survivors of residential schools, of which Stewart is one of them. In light of the recent finding of the 215 children found in the mass grave at the Canadian Indian School, there was a moment of silence for that. There was a lot of celebration in the community for these bills. There were dignitaries from several of the tribes, alumni and descendants of alumni, community members and the Assemblypersons did the hard work of carrying it through.

C. Krause has been keeping informed of both Clark County and Washoe County School Board meetings. Of importance since the last meeting, the grading is important and affects all students. It takes into account the non-academic factors that can influence students' grades. July 8th is the final date for approval. Also, of importance there have been some difficulties with Teachers Health Trust Insurance. There is some reassurance that their health insurance would be protected as they sort out the situation. In Washoe County, allocation of funds for safe, secure and welcoming schools and engaging with family and community members. There was also a vote for a task force to provide direction to the superintendent focused on discussions shared experiences, stories, cultural histories, and deepening cultural understanding. The agendas and minutes will be posted, and everyone can monitor cultural competence in our schools. The school board said all curriculum will be presented for final approval, so it will be a very transparent process. It's part of a larger nationwide conversation that is going on. C. Krause suggested we invite someone who can present these issues to the Commission. C. Melendrez suggested representatives from NSHE as future speakers. C. Chaney agreed.

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

- a. Commission updates – After the Commission voted on Monday on the budget, M. A. Ku got the printing order approved on Friday, and it is now going to print. She also sent a letter to the Legislative Commission for the three Commissioners seeking reappointments. She will provide an update after they meet.

M. A. Ku is working with several state agencies to conduct some listening sessions on the Every Nevada Recovery Framework. They are trying to get more feedback from community groups that are providing direct services to the minority communities. They need more organizations fill out the form from the framework on how to allocate the ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds. Those sessions will likely be in the summer. If there are any stakeholders that are providing direct services that should be invited, please send the names to M. A. Ku. Other agencies may also be conducting their own sessions, but this group is particularly focused on the minority community.

On June 10th, C. Villarta and M. A. Ku attended an event hosted by the Sri Lankan American Association of Las Vegas with Sri Lankan Consul General Dr. Lilith Chandradasa, Steven Horsford, and members of the community. We learned about their COVID campaign and needs within that particular community.

M. A. Ku said the videoconferencing equipment is currently on backorder and will inform everyone when the Commission will start hybrid meetings.

- b. Community announcements – C. Chaney said the 1st annual NAACP banquet chapter 1111 in Las Vegas at the Cosmopolitan was sold out and a great event.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 11:10 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, July 19, 2021 at 9:30 am