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**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, August 17, 2020. Pursuant to public notice and the Governor's suspension of the statute that requires public meetings to have a physical location, this meeting was conducted by a Webex videoconference call.

**1. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

A. Chair Chaney called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

B. Commissioners Present (phone): Chair D. Edward Chaney, Vice Chair Myisha Williams, C. Hasaan Azam, C. E. Mercedes Krause, C. Melendrez, C. Amy Shaw, and C. Kathleen Taylor.

C. Commissioners Absent: none

D. Staff Present: Emily Ku, Management Analyst for the Commission on Minority Affairs

E. Public Attendance: Undersheriff Wayne Yarbrough, Chief Tim O'Connor, Janet Serial

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

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

**A. Approval of July 20, 2020 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action)**

C. Krause moved to approve the minutes. C. Taylor seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

## **B. Presentation by Undersheriff Wayne Yarbrough, Washoe County**

Undersheriff Yarbrough started his presentation off with an overview of the Sheriff's Advisory Board. It is in the early stages, and they started off with creating the community engagement committee in June 2019. Their vision statement is similar to the Sheriff's Advisory Board. The Washoe County Sheriff's office is committed to building partnerships with diverse community leaders in order to strengthen transparency and relationships to maintain the highest level of public trust and culturally appropriate problem solving. It's important to have a diverse group within their committee. They started this in June 2019, long before of what is going on now, and it's a topic that needs to be discussed. How can we make our agency better, how can be trustworthy to the community, how can we address community concerns. They want a diverse group that sits on the committee because you need that feedback and input. Even in house, they held a diversity discussion with their employees and held that last month, and not just with deputies but also with civilian employees. They had a discussion on what is going on within their own agency and how can they make it better. It's good to hear feedback because it educates them as well, and members shared cultural sensitivity. There are three areas they want to target: hiring, retention, and recruitment. C. Krause asked if there was an avenue for anonymous feedback. Undersheriff Yarbrough said that mainly that comes through associations, but that she brings up a good point because sometimes people are afraid to speak up. That's why he wants the committee to be made up of all people, from every division. They are looking to add 10-12 members on the board. Chief O'Connor said that he hopes to get interested people of color within the department from all ranks. They are striving for breath of diverse backgrounds and diverse work assignments so they can be liaisons for us to share and give people the anonymity to address concerns they may be unaware of that can bring it to the members of the committee. Some of the deputies have reticence working with inmates of color, how they treat them in terms of familiarity, a difference in skin color can breed some lack of familiarity. They are looking at ways to address that as well. Undersheriff Yarbrough said they are also training employees on cultural competency. Last week they attended Reno Police Department's class led by Tiffany Young. They are putting their entire civilian officers through the training. It's a great class and great topics of discussion. They are also inviting Diaz Dizon into the agency and have him go on some ride-alongs or even tours of the jail so people get to know him. They plan to hold a training over a short period of time so that discussion continues with all of the employees and staff. C. Krause asked if there will be follow-up classes or recertification to retain what they learned. Undersheriff Yarbrough said he sees that as an ongoing process, and you have to keep it going. Training for police officers is always ongoing. Chief O'Connor said the cultural competency training is available for all commissioned employees as part of their continuing education. They have an immersive, live discussion, not an online class. They will be continuing that cultural competency every year. C. Krause asked if there's something in place for resistant attitudes, if they are just doing things because they have to. Also, with records, if they have displayed certain behaviors repeatedly, is there an action that take place. They have the office of integrity. Undersheriff Yarbrough said they have an Office of Professional Integrity, which is their internal affairs department. They have a new system which all employees have access to, called EIPRO, which is a program that tracks every single employee, from accidents to uses of force to disciplinary actions. Employees can look up their own record so they can see exactly where they're at, and issues can be flagged for the supervisor.

C. Krause asked what they are doing to recruit more officers of color. Undersheriff Yarbrough said that's an issue the committee will take up. Chief O'Connor said that in the past, they have sent their teams to churches located in the Hispanic community. The church would let them set up on the weekends, and the team would share any information they can provide for interested parties. They

have attended other community group functions, where they can offer information about their agencies. That committee will hopefully help them improve their recruitment and efforts in terms of how to relate this office to pockets of people of color. They have worked with their human resources department as well. They don't know who is applying because it is a blind process. The initial screening is based on pure background, and it is important to hire the best people. They are going to also reach out to community leaders and people of importance for their help. They stress having qualified people and the value of having a broad workforce both for interacting with the population of inmates but also the community. Undersheriff Yarbough said they have worked with human resources to test applicants on site, and that's something new. They do online testing as well. C. Krause asked if their outreach includes tribal communities as well? Undersheriff said that it's all communities.

Undersheriff Yarbough they recently started a Public Accountability and Transparency Unit, consisting of a Captain and a Lieutenant. People want to know statistics on calls for service, officer initiated activity, subject stops, community activity, arrest by demographics, citations by demographics, crimes reported by demographics, victimology, use of force, pursuits, officer involved shooting, traffic subject stops, arrests per deputy, employee demographics. They want to put these statistics on their site to be transparent. This unit is tasked with putting this together. They are also looking at public resources for the entire agency to set deadlines for quality assurance and establish a major case review board. In case there is a major incident, they would have an in-house board, and he sees the advisory board being a part of that. Also they would look at what kind of training is needed as an agency, policy development, conduct public research, assisting with community outreach, so they have a lot of their place. They just started that unit three weeks ago, and they work with the entire agency. It's going to be a great unit.

C. Melendrez thanked the speakers for everything they are doing especially during these difficult times, and wanted to note with diversity and inclusion work, one of the things we want to keep in mind is the intentionality of it, and to really think about the language that's being used during recruiting and the experience they're looking for. C. Azam has been attending the outreach committee for a while now and what used to be a quarterly meeting is now a monthly meeting. There are certain things that are being massaged and fine tuned, and the Sheriff is taking input from every single person, anyone who is willing to share things. The first thing the Sheriff's office did was set a foundation for open communication, what the diverse community says, and how we must listen to the other side, what is the best way to approach it. C. Azam thanked them for everything they are doing. C. Taylor said it's very impressive what they are doing, and she is very pleased on how the sheriff's department is approaching how to be inclusive of the community and how to broaden outreach, putting together advisory boards as internal checks and balances to ensure that these processes are fair as well.

C. Krause asked if they had a task force for mental health crises. Undersheriff Yarbough said that is a topic they are looking at and they have mental health committee in house. In house, they have medical staff that concentrate on the inmates. They started a detention services unit last year, and they are tasked with helping them get assistance, so when they leave the facility, there's a handoff to try to reduce recidivism. They have been able to knock those numbers down. Before COVID, they were averaging 1,100 inmates in custody, but today it's around 900. Part of it is due to COVID, he also attributed it to the programs to reduce recidivism. They've started a veterans unit to get them access to VA benefits, and that continues when they are out. They have VA representatives that are

in the unit with them, meet with them, and it's been very successful. There's also an 18-24 unit so they can reach the younger population as well. Chief O'Connor said there's a medically assisted treatment program to help stabilize those with additions we also have opioid addictions, giving them an antidote to that, hopefully it will save their life. There are a lot of programs in the detention services unit, that is structured toward improving inmate's education and well-being while they are here and continuing that care and treatment upon their release. They work with quite a number of partners, some of their partners have provided some of their staff inside the facility to make this as seamless as possible. They will allow pickup or delivery to the program for the released individual instead of a bus ticket to get them the care they need. Also they are working on the mental health of our employees. The work affects both civilian and commissioned staff. They are working with the associations to assist on that work as well. C. Krause clarified her question about the mental health crisis response, what happens if someone needs mental health services in an emergency situation. Undersheriff Yarbough said are a few avenues. There is MOST (Mobile Outreach Safety Team), which has a licensed clinical social worker that rides with the law enforcement officer. They try to time it during peak times in the event there is a call, where there is a mental health type situation can either provide assistance. If a crime hasn't been committed yet, then they try divert the person to the appropriate resource and avoid an arrest. If the crime is someone minor, they can address it with treatment and leave it at that. There is also TIP (Trauma Intervention Program), and they will call that group out when a crime or traumatic death occurs. There is also an in-house support team that are trained in mental health, including a psychologist on their team. It is generally used for employees or family members of employees, but they provide support to outside agencies with any of their staff. Starting in January 20201, they will have a homeless unit to address people experiencing homelessness in Washoe County. They will be tasked with getting resources to the homeless. This is regional, so it's not just in Washoe County. Right now they are trying to fill those positions and hopefully get that filled in January. C. Chaney said it would be great to get some members of the public that are tuned in to the meeting to be involved in those committees. He thanked the presenters for helping to destigmatize policing and bridging the gap.

C. Taylor thanked C. Azam for the work he is doing with the Sheriff's Office, and what they are doing is a potential role model for other Sheriff departments. C. Krause said it was nice to have this opportunity to ask questions. With the framework they have in place, they can really make things happen, and she would welcome knowing what similar activities Clark County is doing. C. Chaney echoed the sentiment and would like to see a state plan on policing in our state. It's important to have the right people at the table to not keep the same status quo.

C. Taylor chaired the meeting from this point forward.

### **C. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action)**

#### **1. Education**

C. Krause said that there are members of the community who are very nervous about what the upcoming school year looks like with the distance learning because in Clark County, it was in crisis mode and very difficult for parents. The other concern was that when we go back to in-person school, parents would want to enroll their students but if students were not enrolled at the beginning of the school year, then the per student funding would not be there. She shared two graphic organizers; she shared them with one of the trustees but have not received any feedback. For Clark County School District (CCSD), it is estimated that distance learning continue at least until after winter break then reevaluated. For Washoe County School District, elementary schools are in

person with distancing and face coverings, except that first day of school was canceled today due to a major fire. The middle and high schools have hybrid schedules. The digital divide is the biggest problem with the distance learning, and C. Krause shared some of the programs that CCSD is implementing to help bridge the digital divide and assist our students. UNLV and UNR will both have in-person classes, but they created more remote learning opportunities to allow for greater social distancing.

## 2. Health

C. Taylor said as of yesterday, there are 61,374 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Nevada and 1,074 deaths. Nationally, there are 5.41 million confirmed cases and 170 thousand deaths. Worldwide there are 21.6 million confirmed cases, 13.6 million recovered, and 774 thousand deaths. She said that hopefully as a state, people will continue with social distancing and wearing our masks to address this public health crisis. On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, she tuned into a webinar with Opportunity Alliance Nevada, which featured data about health and wealth as part of their Pathways to Racial and Economic Justice series. It was really interesting to see how both were correlated with health disparities and generational wealth gaps. Also, on July 29<sup>th</sup>, she attended a webinar provided by SYNchronicity on “SYNCing the ‘End of the HIV Epidemic’ and Social Justice: COVID-19, HIV, and the African American community”.

M. A. Ku added that following the second special session, Governor Sisolak signed a proclamation declaring racism as a public health crisis and look forward to how the legislature and the state will tackle this issue. M. A. Ku reported that C. Melendrez and her attended a roundtable discussion with Congresswoman Susie Lee on the effects of COVID-19 on the minority community. One takeaway from the discussion was the fact that local hospitals are still struggling to acquire PPE and negatively affecting our frontline workers.

## 3. Housing

C. Taylor shared that the Governor signed Senate Bill 1, allowing for alternative dispute resolution for rental eviction cases. This particular law would stay evictions for 30 days, and this will facilitate alternative dispute resolutions between tenants and landlords. The law applies to evictions of any tenant in any type of dwelling unit, including apartments, mobile homes, recreational homes, or any low rent housing that fall under public housing programs. This is significant because the eviction moratorium will be lifted September 1<sup>st</sup>. According to a written report by the Guinn Center, it's projected that 118,000 to 142,000 Nevadan households could face evictions in September.

C. Krause asked for some support at providing information on housing and get some guidance. C. Chaney said he understands that everyone on the Commission has busy lives, so information to our monthly meetings is really what you were able to be engaged in during the month. Even if you may chair a particular subcommittee, that doesn't mean anyone is locked into that subcommittee. Something may come across your desk and do not to feel pressured to have a protocol about having a report. This body's primary purpose is ensuring that the minority community is being represented and being heard. C. Chaney thanked everyone for their hard work and the reports have been really outstanding. C. Melendrez asked when the new chair assignments were taking place. C. Chaney said normally it would happen after the new Commissioners are appointed, and the pandemic has extended our timeline a little bit.

C. Williams said that the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority is having their next public meeting on Thursday, August 20th. They will be providing updates on some of the initiatives they have and some of the redevelopments that impacts the Historic Westside.

#### 4. Workforce Development

No report

#### 5. Economic & Business Development

C. Shaw said that they continue to work with the airport businesses. They have been trying to figure out how to share accurate information but they are struggling a bit to get the airlines to provide that information. HMS Host, the master concessionaire for food and beverage, are laying off a significant number of employees both here and nationwide. They did continue to keep all of their full-time employees through the end of July, unable to sustain that. The chambers and other organizations have had webinars to provide helpful information to the small businesses. C. Shaw said the businesses she has been talking to are not really engaged, but she is continually working with them to obtain funding but it is a struggle for them to figure out how to sustain their operations.

C. Williams was featured as a panelist on August 5<sup>th</sup> as part of UNR's Innevation Center 2020 Speaker Series. They hosted this panel in recognition of Black business month, which is August, and they were able to speak about issues that they were experiencing as owners in Nevada. It was featured in the Northern Nevada Business Weekly. They highlighted work that was done on the Commission as well. C. Taylor was part of the monthly Small Business Roundtable discussion hosted by the Department of Business and Industry. Jaime Cruz with Workforce Connections shared information with resource partners with information about the upcoming launch of EmployNV Business Hub, where businesses will get resources such as connections to employees and resources to help their business infrastructure as employers. Hopefully that can address the needs of some small business owners impacted by COVID-19.

M. A. Ku said the state has a new Commercial Rental Assistance Program (CRAG), and the applications are only open for a week from Monday, August 24 to Monday, August 31. It is a very short window, so we need to make sure that the minority businesses are aware of this program. It is similar to the county program, but this is administered by the state, and the requirements are slightly different. They can receive funds for rent for up to \$10,000. She is working with GOED to help identify minority community groups and make sure they are aware of the program. Also, on Tuesday, July 28, C. Williams and M. A. Ku attended the LVGEA Perspectives, which was online this year. Jeremy Aguero from Applied Analysis showed a lot of statistics on the state of our economy. He predicts that it could be 18-36 months before we get back to normal again.

C. Williams attended the Creating Equitable Communities: A Conversation Connecting Social Justice and Economic Development public forum on July 23<sup>rd</sup> hosted by the Vegas Chamber, Urban Chamber, and LVGEA where they acknowledged and discussed the disparities. It was a really great forum, and commitment that's been made locally from the business leaders to acknowledge the disparities and do something about them.

#### 6. Legislative

C. Williams was invited to be a panelist on the Congressional Start Up Day on Friday, August 14 with

Senator Cortez Masto and was able to talk about the small business struggles, including access to capital issues. It went well, and she was asked to follow-up with one of the Senator's policy team in DC this week. They are going to be focusing on issues impacting small businesses, specifically access to capital issues. She is also working with M. A. Ku to put together some summary information from Census data, specifically around statistics around microbusinesses. C. Krause said she has spoken to the Nevada Indian Commission and the Department of Education about the Nevada Ready Report. It lists all the groups of students except for Native American students. She would like to see if they cannot provide the data, then at least provide an asterisk to explain why, since visibility is one of the big issues for their community. C. Williams proposed that C. Krause write up a summary with the background information that we need to start talking to the legislators about it and where we can find support, or do research to see if there are existing bills or if this could be resolved through direct connections. C. Williams asked to look into whether this is a recurring issue where we have to create policy or if it is an isolated incident that can be addressed with the person in charge of the report.

## 7. Community Liaison

(Report covered during the guest presentation)

C. Chaney resumed position as chair and chaired the rest of the meeting.

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

- a. M. A. Ku met with the Treasurer's Office and GOED (Governor's Office of Economic Development) to discuss a BDR that has already been submitted on establishing diversity liaisons at state agencies. She spoke a little about the work she has been doing already with state agencies, and they also brainstormed what other issues should be addressed. She appreciated that the Treasurer's Office reached out to ask for input.
- b. Community events - The Department of Business and Industry is having a Small Business Roundtable tomorrow at 9am, and GOED will present on the Commercial Rental Assistance Program earlier.

### **E. Update on Commissioner vacancy appointments and subcommittee chair interest submissions**

C. Williams talked about how vacancy appointments are going happen moving forward. She wants to make the subcommittee chair changes more transparent so everyone knows how to interact the system and find a fair way to express interest. The Commission has always done this but has communicated this in different ways. Moving forward, when new Commissioners are appointed, we are not assigning new subcommittees before the new Commissioners arrives. At that time, we are completely vacating all subcommittee chairs, and when new Commissioners come on, then we reassign those roles. Even if a Commissioner is leading a specific subcommittee, it will be an actual vote and actual appointment. There are two vacancies currently is expected to be filled by the next Commission meeting. We will be officially vacating all subcommittee chairs as of our next meeting. For the September meeting, there won't be anyone assigned to a subcommittee. At that time, everyone will be officially vacated from their current role. During that meeting with the new Commissioners present, everyone will be voted officially to the subcommittee chair roles. If a Commissioner wants to continue chairing their subcommittee, they are allowed make that case to continue in that role. We're asking all Commissioners to please forward your top 2 or 3 interests to

the chair and Management Analyst in advance. Please have a report for the September meeting. M. A. Ku said the Legislative Commission will meet August 25<sup>th</sup> so they will appoint the new Commissioners them, so we will be swearing them virtually in at the September meeting.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS**

C. Melendrez said in response to raising awareness and education with the COVID-19 impact diversity and equity populations, the Nevada Minority Equity and Health Coalition hosted 2 webinars so far, one was on multiple diverse communities, which touched on the Latino, Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, Native American, and LGBTQ. They are collaborating with United Way to conduct a webinar in Spanish. Commissioner Kirkpatrick and some of the city councilmembers are doing another one, where they are specifically targeting the Spanish speaking community around COVID-19. The Coalition and UNLV School of Public Health is involved with those, and they are virtual Zoom/Facebook webinars. There will be another webinar on mental health and COVID-19 for the Spanish speaking community on August 26<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm. The Coalition will also continue the webinar series on diversity and equity populations. There will be webinars specific to African Americans, LBGTQ, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Native American. The first Coalition meeting since the pandemic will be Wednesday, August 26 from 12-1pm on Zoom.

#### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting adjourned at 11:11 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, September 21, 2020 at 9:30 am