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Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

TERRY REYNOLDS
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, February 22, 2021. 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 9:31 am.

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

C. Commissioners Absent:

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

E. Public Attendance: Marcel Schaerer, Lu Ann Pillar

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

A. Approval of January 25, 2021 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action)

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

B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action)

1. Education

C. Krause said that Zitkala-Sa, a Lakota woman, is featured on Google today, and it would have been her 145th birthday. She set a path for speaking about education, and she was a music composer,

author, and an advocate for our community. C. Krause said Nevada Reading Week is next week, and encouraged Commissioners to be involved. Being involved in Nevada Reading week, putting ourselves out there, and being a part of the community is something special. She included some links from the 3 bargaining units for support professionals, educators and administrators to move into hybrid instruction that starts on Monday, March 1st. Another point of interest is that there will be daily testing and screening that will take place funded through a grant under the federal coronavirus aid relief and CARES. There will also be randomized COVID testing for CCSD staff. C. Melendrez said there's talk of reopening so that students can go back into the classroom, and the last he saw, it would still be at 20% of students in the classroom. Any frontline workers and faculty who are on campus or in the classroom are all getting their vaccinations done, so they are moving in a good direction, and they are talking about sports opening again.

2. Health

C. Melendrez said that the vaccines continue to roll out, and they are working to improve it. Because of what has happened, the numbers are trending in the right direction. There's good news there and Nevada's numbers are 437 cases on Friday, February 19th. There's still a lot of vaccine hesitancy and folks not willing to get the vaccine. You are going to see a lot of messaging and a lot of work on that. The Governor is not very happy with the lack of diversity on who was getting the vaccine shots. He immediately moved to create a new workgroup to look at the situation. The Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition and the School of Public Health is on that taskforce. They are having their second meeting this week to submit some recommendations to improve the diversity of who is getting the vaccine. He will probably reach out to everyone here to help spread the word on this work group. The big new is waiting for the Johnson & Johnson one shot to come out, and hopefully that will alleviate shortages and more people can get vaccinated. C. Chaney said it's very important to get the word out to our communities. There's tremendous hesitation in our communities on vaccination, and we have got to get our communities to respond properly, through forms, e-blasts, etc. C. Melendrez said as part of the Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition work they did in the fall, they came up with a COVID-19 tool chest, and it targets the 7 most vulnerable populations. Use them in your communities as you need to. There are flyers, information, other resources are included.

M. A. Ku. said that at Governor Sisolak's press conference, they released an update to the COVID data dashboard to include demographic information on who's getting vaccinated. C. Krause said that it's important to remember the historical reasons on why certain communities are not so keen to get the vaccine. If we find posts that encourages vaccination, maybe that's something that we can share with each other for positive messaging. C. Azam said being terms of being comfortable, or being uncomfortable, that has a lot to do with the information that's out there. At the airport authority, the administration asked for consent forms, but they cannot force the employees. There was a lot of hesitancy in the beginning, however, they brought in a couple of doctors and had an employee forum. There were a lot of questions answered and we should see if there any set videos that answer some of the frequently asked questions. That is one way we can get the information out there. C. Melendrez said the last webinar that they did was called Myths and Facts about the Vaccine, and they teamed up with KCEP Radio. That one is accessible, and we had medical doctors and community folks talking about what people are saying about the vaccine. C. Krause said that is one way that we can help our communities become immunized. She said she personally was hesitant, but after receiving the information and having her questions answered in the last Commission meeting was really helpful and not feeling forced. In her community, some people were didn't like the National Guard being used and took that as something threatening. C. Chaney said

that as a Commission, we need to be out front on this.

3. Housing

C. Krause said she compiled some information with links to Census data on housing. C. Taylor attended a meeting with the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority program coordination committee. It was basically a great opportunity for people to come together and share resources on different programs and services for housing needs. Also, she shared that there is new group called the Las Vegas Coalition to Make Homes Possible. Their mission is to help 25,000 families close the Black homeownership gap. They have a virtual masterclass webinar series that is basically educating people on homeownership, how to access up to \$25,000 for a down payment, free one-on-one coaching, and also information on how to improve their credit and savings. They have a class on Saturday, February 27th. They are in partnership with Homie, Nevada Partners, Urban Chamber of Commerce, and Las Vegas Raider receiver Nelson Aguilar. They working collaboratively as a coalition to fulfill the objectives. The website is <https://www.makehomespossible.org/>.

C. Chaney asked if anyone knew about the rent moratorium. C. Taylor said there's still a bit of flux going on, some landlords are complying with the CDC moratorium and some that are actually evicting. In Nevada, there is a process that a renter can go through and arrange some type of agreement with their landlord to try to pay back their rent eventually. It is an issue that has gone to the court regardless of the CDC's position. M. A. Ku said that the Governor's moratorium has been extended through March and there is now more rental assistance with additional CARES funding. It takes several weeks for applications to get processed so households should apply as soon as possible. C. Azam wanted to comment on housing overall. He said there are a lot of new housing permits in Northern Nevada this year. We are seeing a lot of homeowners primarily from California, and 60% of new homebuyers are non-Nevadans. The pandemic has increased the rate of the growth, demand for housing and rent are increasing, everything is heading upwards. There is also a lot of commercial development as well.

4. Workforce Development

C. De Luca said in regard to new opportunities in Northern Nevada for emerging industries, one of the things that worries her is that we will do these things and not focus on the minority communities. She believes that there is a direct correlation of what we have faced through COVID, and the disparities across our minority groups, and how we engage those displaced young adults and engaging them in these new opportunities. She is meeting with Economic Development of Western Nevada and other groups. She said we need to do more focused marketing to ensure that we capture our students. We need to get students to really believe in themselves having faced these challenging COVID times. How do we reenergize them to engage in all these upcoming opportunities, particularly companies and innovation zones coming to Northern Nevada and needed skilled employees. The Washoe County Equity Taskforce is moving ahead to ensure there are anti-racism policies in place at the school district. It's definitely needed as their populations continue to grow.

C. Taylor said the most current numbers she can find on unemployment for Nevada is 9.2% compared to 10.4% last month. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the national employment rate in January is 6.3%, so we are still outpacing the national employment rate. According to Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), the unemployment rate for Clark County is 10.4% and White Pine County is 3%. The Governor's Office of Economic

Development (GOED) has several programs for workforce development. One program is called LEAD – Learn and Earn Advanced Career Pathways, and it integrate education, government and industry in a standardized process to ensure that workers have the skills they need to succeed in both the short and long term employment opportunities. GOED also has the WINN program, which stands for Workforce Innovations for a New Nevada. The program is administered by GOED in coordination with Nevada System of Higher Education, the Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovations, the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, and the Nevada Department of Education. Since its inception, WINN has made more than \$8 million in strategic investments to enable accelerated on-ramps to high-skill and high wage jobs. Lastly, as a result of CARES Act funding, the Governor’s office created an online software skills program called Nevada Skillsmatch, to help people identify which employment skills they have and what they need to help them become more employable in today’s job market. Within Nevada, we have a couple of workforce boards. In Southern Nevada, we have Workforce Connections, and in Northern Nevada, it’s Nevada Works. They are responsible for providing employer and worker services: adult, dislocated worker, and youth activities. C. De Luca said it’s a traditional plan, and that concerns her because some communities need special messaging. There’s a sense of that too, because there’s a sense of marketing. C. De Luca said she is not currently working with Nevada Works but is working with some private entities that are wanting to expand their opportunities. What she has seen in that work is that the traditional marketing plan is limited and not really targeting the message for our population. She is working with the private entities to figure out how the marketing will work. helping to identify community groups to engage them in the activities and action of that. There are a large number of resources but sometimes the connections doesn’t necessarily equate.

C. Krause said if you are reaching out to students, then it would be worthwhile to create some relationships with educators who are teaching related classes. They don’t have someone who can really walk them through it. The path the complete the needed paperwork may be a lot, so they can help identify students. The comfort level is preventing young people from participating. C. De Luca said our young adults need that guidance from mentors. She thinks we are going to see a lot of negative effects from COVID and many of our students became disengaged, so we have a lot of work to do to connect all the opportunities that we have in our young adults. C. Villarta said CSN (College of Southern Nevada) offers a mentorship program through Nevada Promise Scholarship. The students are walked through what to expect and doing a lot of workforce development. The website is csn.edu/promise. C. Taylor said if we look at Nevada Works and Workforce Connections and connect with them, we may find that a significant portion of their clients is reflective of minority groups that we are trying to target, perhaps we could from that perspective. She will connect with Workforce Connections.

5. Economic & Business Development

C. Shaw said on January 26th, the Urban Chamber hosted a COVID-19 vaccine discussion on diversity safety, efficacy, and distribution. GOED Director Michael Brown was the co-moderator and Dr. Fermin Leguen, Acting Chief Health Officer at the Southern Nevada Health District and Sharon Lamberton from PrRMA made presentations. The discussion was about an overview of vaccine cases in Clark County. Two additional vaccines are being tested, and there was hope that they will be released in the next few weeks. 18 clinical trials are being conducted in Nevada, including a clinical trial on 2,000 patients under the age of 16. Once the trial is complete, then it’s up to the FDA to determine if the vaccine is safe for the pediatric population. Currently the FDA has approved Pfizer for 16+ and Moderna for 18+. The state’s major challenge pertains to logistics of systems and processes of the phased rollout for high priority population. Moderna is coming out with a booster for the new variance. On February 11, the IRS hosted an All Voices Session, and the discussion was

about overview of small businesses and self-employment, taxpayer act and customer service strategies, small business essential initiatives to combat phishing and scams, how to interact with the IRS, the collection process and payments, and employee versus contractor on 1099 issuance. On February 18th, the Vegas Chamber hosted a program called Facebook Career Connections, which is a partnership with Facebook to foster economic growth. Many businesses don't know how to access resources or how to find local talent. Facebook will train, mentor, and connect businesses with other businesses that need help. Workforce Connections will cover salaries and Facebook will cover training costs. The goal is to provide local talent to local businesses. They are talking about the importance of collaborating with chambers and regional advisory councils since they really are the boots on the ground and understand what their members need and resources they need to recover and grow. The goal is to create jobs, train jobseekers, and support small businesses with special focus on Latinx and Black owned businesses. The schedule for the program is December to February for recruitment and selection, April to mid-May for matchmaking and pairing, mid-May to mid-August for fellowship. Benefits for interns are lower barriers to entry for these positions. They are anticipating 30% higher salaries, and to provide support for the local businesses by vetting trained talent, and the businesses get \$500 advertising through Facebook. There's still time to apply. There's 4 week training period matched with a Facebook mentor and will continue to receive training, assistance and guidance. Once the business applies for it, it's about a 4-5 week notification wait. They are anticipating that the interns may start on May 24. The criteria for the business is that it has to be a business in good standing, need a valid business license, and if you know students that are interested, they can go to careerconnections.fb.com and fill out the application, and they will email you the second part of application. The best news is that Facebook intends to stay in Las Vegas area to continue to expand the program.

C. Williams attended the January 28 Community Benefits Plan meeting with the Las Vega Stadium Authority. They continued to provide update on small and diverse business inclusion. Two committee members vacated their positions on the committee and will be replaced. She also attended the Urban Chamber of Commerce State of the Chamber. The keynote speaker was Director Michael Brown and spoke about the disparities that are apparent now and what GOED is doing to address those and look for opportunities in the future for small and diverse businesses to participate. C. Williams attended LVGEA's event on February 9th called State of Economic Development, where they had various financial analyst and community leaders go over the state of where we are and where we are headed.

C. Taylor on February 13th, she was a part of a webinar on behalf of the Nevada Women's Business Center and collaborated with Marcel Schaerer at Nevada Department of Business and Industry and Dino Brown at the Las Vegas Urban League. We collaborated to provide an engaging webinar on entrepreneurial digital resources, such as the recently launched Nevada Entrepreneur Network. There was also a representative from University of Nevada, Reno and shared the benefits of online marketplace that is specifically for Nevada businesses. It's called Shop Made in Nevada and features Nevadan businesses and was a really good way of showcasing different digital platforms.

C. Villarta also attended the LVGEA event, and her key takeaways was that the state and LVGEA are really looking for more opportunities in the green and tech sectors, and there are a lot of manufacturing companies coming from overseas. We are going to see growth in opportunities there. She had a meeting with NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) and EDA (Economic Development Administration), and they are defederalizing their revolving loan funds, which is really important for a lot of our large companies. It's basically putting money and control into the local hands. If any businesses are interested, they can request a grant and have it forgiven. That information is found on eda.gov. Funds are used for something like building roads, and the last

time Nevada used it in 2018 or 2019 for UNLV. C. Villarta also attended a webinar where a lot of business owners were asking whether they can market that their businesses that all their employees have been vaccinated. They may get into a lot of trouble if they promote their business that their staff has been vaccinated and someone goes to that business and gets COVID. Companies think they can market it, but also leaving a lot of room for risk management to come in. They have to understand the full risks associated with that. C. Villarta said on national news, there has been an increase in hate crimes against Asian Americans. According to the Metro police report, we didn't see an increase in hate crimes in Nevada. However, she has spoken to several business owners who have been victims of hate crimes. There was a boba shop, karaoke shop, and a ramen shop that had rocks thrown through their window, messages saying "go back to your country" outside their businesses. They are not reporting it to the authorities because: 1) they don't think authorities will care, 2) they don't want to be singled out further, and 3) they are really afraid. They like to keep low profiles, so some community members have been going out to these businesses and empower them to let them know that they have a voice and they need to speak up, but a lot of them are afraid. They can go to social media if they don't know what to do and reports through social media eventually get to where they need to be. C. Krause thanked C. Villarta for sharing the information and said that we need to stand up for each other. If it's happening to anyone in our community, it's happening to all of us.

6. Legislative

C. Williams said she was invited by GOED to be a part of Southern Nevada Strategic Infrastructure Development working group, and she will be representing the Commission. They have regular public meetings and typically the last Thursday of every month at 10am, but March will be the 3rd Thursday. The first one is this Thursday the 25th. Legislative bills are starting to move forward, the subcommittee has identified 4 BDRS for a formal vote of support. We know that BDR language can also shift by the time it reaches the bill. If we pledge the support today, that doesn't keep us from not supporting it if the language shifts and makes us uncomfortable. M. A. Ku has a tracking sheet on legislative bills so we can monitor those and update it on a regular basis to make sure we're still comfortable with them all moving forward. The first initiative is BDR 18-245 sponsored by Senator Scheible. This is a bill to create diversity and inclusion liaisons for state agencies. This initiative was started through the Treasurer's Office and the Management Analyst was invited to sit in a working group on that. C. Villarta asked which minorities would be represented. C. Williams said the categories are: a racial or ethnic minority group, a group of persons with disabilities, a group of persons that share the same sexual orientation, and a group of persons whose gender-related identity, appearance, expression or behavior is different than that assigned at birth. C. Williams said the second is BDR 34-672 and the sponsor is Assemblywoman Natha Anderson. This bill would introduce requirements for diversity and inclusion in the academic standards and curriculum. C. Williams said she worked closely with C. Krause and C. De Luca on this initiative. C. Krause said it's extremely important. When we look at legislation that has passed before by Assemblyman Munford, it never trickled down to her classroom, making sure legislation that has passed is enforced and spirit of inclusion continues. C. De Luca wanted to highlight an example, we saw at the Governor's State of the State that a mariachi band played to highlight diversity and inclusion, which started a local high school. If we contrast that to Northern Nevada, at Carson High School which has over 2,000 students and 47% are Hispanic. We do not have one group that represents Hispanics or a Latino Club or a mariachi band. It really needs to trickle down to the schools, and it needs to be a requirement in the curriculum. C. Villarta asked if they could elaborate on getting it enforced. What steps of enforcement are they looking at? C. Williams said the BDR is still in discussion, and they have not seen the language yet. One of their suggestions that Assemblywomen Anderson pulled from another state was to put together an advisory committee to bring in diverse opinions to make

sure there are good ideas at the table and that they are held accountable. We know that fiscal notes during this legislative session has a potential to kill bills, so they are trying to take a stepped approach. C. Krause said that Assemblywoman Anderson is an educator so she understands it trickling to classrooms. C. Villarta offered to send some BDRs concerning Pacific Islanders in California. C. Melendrez asked when issues and discussions dealing with diversity come up at the state level, should we not be at the table?

C. Chaney said for us to get to this point has been monumental. What we are trying to do is to keep building. Eventually when there is an issue, they will think about bringing it to the Commission. C. Williams confirmed it is where we are trying to go. The Commission was created with no budget and no staff. Now we are at the point that we are invited to working groups, and we are becoming more and more effective. Because we were underfunded and understaffed, people didn't know about us. Everyone on the Commission has influence. The next BDR is 990, and this is an initiative coming out of the Legislative Subcommittee and sponsored by Assemblywoman Shonda Summers-Armstrong. It would be to create BDRs for the Commission, so we don't have to seek sponsors for future legislative session. The minority community has its own voice and should have BDRs set aside for us. This is something that is done for other groups and Commissions. C. Taylor said this would be a fantastic platform for us to operate on. Last one is an administrative bill, BDR 18-244, also known as Senate Bill 16. The department oversight for the Commission on Minority Affairs is incorrectly assigned to the Department of Administration and changes it to the Department of Business and Industry. M. A. Ku said that the bill was heard on February 3rd. We prepared a presentation for them, but it was such a straightforward bill that they decided to skip it. C. Melendrez made a motion to support the 4 BDRs – 18-245, 34-672, 990, and 18-244, also known as SB 16. C. Krause seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Community Liaison

M. A. Ku. said that C. Azam had to drop off the meeting, but he said he will be attending the Sheriff's Outreach Committee later today. C. Krause said she enjoyed the presentation by the Washoe County Police Department and would like to know if we could have a follow-up to hear how their community-based outreach efforts have been going. C. Chaney said it would be good to reconnect with them, but we are trying to connect with our Sheriff on the Southern end and to hear both perspectives.

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

- a. The Annual Report to Governor has been turned in. Thanks to everyone for their contributions and recommendations to make it a solid report. M. A. Ku has been asked to join an RTC working group on the transportation impact on health equity. They aim to integrate health outcomes with future RTC projects.
- b. Community announcements
 - i. Anyone who need health care coverage, the Nevada Health Link is now accepting applications from February 15-May 15.
 - ii. There are changes to PPP (Paycheck Protection Program). Starting Wednesday, the SBA (Small Business Administration) said that small businesses with fewer than 20 employees will have a two-week window to apply for funding. Self-employed, sole proprietors, and independent contractors can now qualify for more money. Also, green card holders and any other visa holders can apply.
 - iii. There are a couple of organizations hosting legislative updates – Latin Chamber has their Straight Talk every other Friday with their lobbyists that are tracking legislation

pertinent to small businesses, the Vegas Chamber has a similar one that is once a month, and the Children's Advocacy Alliance has one every Tuesday at 11:30 am. They track issues concerning the education, health and welfare of children.

4. NEW BUSINESS

C. Taylor asked for a roster of Commissioners with their term dates. M. A. Ku will send it out.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 11:06 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, March 15, 2021 at 9:30 am