

STEVE SISOLAK
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, January 25, 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. Vice Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

B. Commissioners Present (phone): 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: Chair D. Edward Chaney

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

E. Public Attendance: Dr. Eddy Akbar, Gabriela Wyett, Eric Moreno, Jeanette Belz, Andrea Gregg, Marcel Schaerer, Janet Serial

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

A. Approval of November 16, 2020 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action)

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

B. Receive presentation by Dr. Eddy Akbar, Division Chief Hospital Medicine, Renown Health

Dr. Akbar said that we saw the first cases in Wuhan, China, and the coronavirus belongs to the same family that causes colds. Somewhere along the line, it made a jump towards the human host. We are almost one year into the pandemic, and based on the most recent numbers from Johns Hopkins, we are 99.1 million positive cases worldwide and unfortunately a mortality of 2.13 million deaths worldwide. Talking about numbers in the United States, 1 out of 4 cases are in the United States. Based on yesterday's numbers, we are looking at 419,000 deaths. Further looking at Nevada, we have 271,000 positive cases with 4,027 deaths. One other aspect from the numbers perspective, based on the data from CDC, this disease has had a higher fatality and risk of hospitalization among minorities – African American or Black, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic or Latino. Compared to white Non-Hispanics, American Indian or Alaskan Native, there has been 1.8 times increased incidence, and risk of hospitalization is 4 times higher, and the risk of mortality is 2.6 times than the white American population. In the Asian population, the cases have been lower but there has still been a 1.2 times increased risk of hospitalization and 1.1 times increased risk of mortality. For the African American population, we have seen 1.4 times more cases than the white population, and a 3.7 times increased risk of hospitalizations and 2.8 times increased risk of mortality. For Hispanic or Latino population, we have seen 1.7 times infection compared to white non-Hispanic population, 4.1 times higher risk of hospitalization, and 2.8 times more risk of mortality. Why do we see such differences for minorities? One of the key factors is the lack of access to testing, timely testing, social economic factors playing a part. The disparity is not only in the number of cases but also increased hospitalization and mortality among minorities.

C. Azam said the new cases have decreased over the last 4 or 5 weeks, but if we had another spike in cases, would Northern Nevada be ready to accommodate that? Also what are your thoughts on the two different vaccines out there? Dr. Akbar said that we look at different aspects, and one indicator is the positivity rate, how many patients are retesting and how many of those patients' tests come back positive. Approximately 2 weeks ago, more than 20 percent of tests conducted at Renown Health were positive. Last week, we were around 14-15% mark. We want it either less than 10 or less than 5 percent positive. We are still seeing a lot of tests come back positive. Overall the cases have decreased in Northern Nevada, and we continue to have good resources for COVID-19 cases, we had the Renown parking garage that was transitioned into an alternative care facility was open and could take care of 600 patients, at the worse surge, we were taking care of approximately 40-60 patients at the alternative care site. In addition of taking care patients who were critically ill within the hospital system, which was around 200 patients. At this time the numbers have receded, we have closed the alternative care site, and we are monitoring the situation. We have a strong alliance with other facilities. Renown is committed to the community and during the surge, we accepted patients from outside the area and rural communities, even as far as Las Vegas.

Regarding vaccines, there are 2 vaccines which are approved in the US. The first vaccine was the Pfizer vaccine, and then Moderna. Both are RNA vaccines, which means the vaccines gives your body a signal to build a part of the virus protein, and then your body develops an immunity and if you are exposed to the virus in the future, your body will immediately recognize the virus as foreign and attack before the virus can cause damage to the body or infection itself. The efficacy of these vaccines have proven to be 95% in preventing disease. There is also a high efficacy in preventing severity. Your chance of getting a severe case is going to be very low. Overall both these vaccines have very tolerable short term side effects. We haven't seen a high ratio of adverse complications. Based on the scientific body and what this vaccine does, we believe long term these are safe

options. C. Taylor asked how robust is someone's immune system if they have already contracted COVID-19 and can they contract it again? Dr. Akbar said there is good data that says chances of reinfection of the first 3 months are low. What we see the amount of antibody the human body produces in response to the vaccine is higher than the actual infection itself. Within a 3 month window, there is good immunity to the virus. We do not have much evidence past that. The scientific community still recommends immunizations for people who had recovered from COVID-19. Some of these vaccinations may vary by person to person by future risk and age. C. Krause asked the difference between the two vaccines. Also, thinking about parents with young kids, how can we keep them safe? Dr. Akbar said based on the initial virus when it hadn't mutated, the evidence suggested that children have less likelihood of infection compared to adults and less likely to transmit. That has changed with the new variance of the new coronavirus, which suggests increased transmission. We need to remember hygiene, face masks and social distancing. He said to please reach out to your neighbors and family more than 70+ years of age. They are eligible for vaccination, free of cost, insured or uninsured. We have to protect the ones at the highest risk.

C. Receive presentation by Gabriela Wyett, Assistant Vice-President and Eric Moreno, Assistant Vice-President, US Bank

Ms. Wyett said that they are conducting a grassroots effort to make sure the business community knows their options in terms of PPP. During the first round last year, they were very much focused on getting the information out to the Latino, African American, and Asian communities. We did several webinars with the SBDC, UNR Cooperative Extension, and SBA in both English and Spanish. Whether through US Bank or Prestamos or Dreamspring, we just wanted to them to know what their options are and where to go. We have a digital platform for anybody to apply. The beauty of our digital platform is not only is it a DIY option, but also we can interface while the customer is looking to apply. If they prefer a different language, we can accommodate for that, and we can help with how to navigate through questions and help translate if they are having any kind of issues. The chat is down but there are a couple of different options where they can contact locally at the time of application. We had several business owners who only spoke Spanish and we were able to translate the application for them. Mr. Moreno said we do have customers who are not computer savvy and not familiar, so the platform lets us remotely see what they are doing and make it easier to them. Additionally, if they want to put their 2019 and 2020 information in, it will calculate if they are down 25% or more automatically and make them easier for them. They are already overwhelmed as it is, so anything that we can do to help. Ms. Wyett said she has customers who are very well educated but still need help, so she thinks it's just the nervousness of the application process and certification questions. We just want to let them know if they need assistance, they can help with whichever language they are comfortable with. It's an extremely fast process, and if they applied with us the first round of PPP, then they can use prior application to the calculate PPP loan. It takes all of 10 minutes. For PPP, our platform will accept clients and non-clients. It's about how can we help you with your business and stay afloat. Whichever way we can help, we are available. C. Taylor asked what is the turnaround time for PPP applications? Ms. Wyett said as long as the paperwork is submitted correctly, the turnaround time is typically between 48-72 hours. Last round, the quickest turnaround time was 24 hours.

D. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action)

1. Education

C. Krause said today is the first day staff are allowed to return to buildings, including maintenance, grounds, custodial, and any additional staff asked to return. The distance education is still ongoing, but they are moving toward a hybrid model for K-3. There's no set date and will continue to monitor

the health crisis and allow for administration the needed time to prepare and plan. Vaccination has started for educators, and they have been listed as part of the NSHE organization portion. However, there is a limited amount of vaccines and space so they are encouraging educators to get their vaccine at other places if they are able to. Indian Health Services does have access to immunizations. If you are a current patient, you can get immunizations there. Also getting the vaccination is voluntary but it's also the key element to reopening to serve our students. Interest forms to parent have been distributed. She included an attachment as part of the recap of the last CCSD Board of School Trustees meeting, which is a copy of the MOA (memorandum of agreement) between CCSE and the bargaining unit for teachers. C. Melendrez says UNLV classes are still online, but because the Governor's extended stay at home orders to February 15, everything remains online, but if things improve, at least 20% students will be going live again. That is still on hold.

2. Health

C. Melendrez said the vaccinations have started at multiple places. The challenge is that people are struggling to get appointments. In the last two weeks, the Governor changed priority status to different groups, they changed it from 75 to 70 years old, and they are dropping the age to 65 soon. Public health workers are still a priority group. What puts you in a vulnerable population, what kind of proof do you have to provide is still an issue, and they are still working that out. The reporting of the new strain is still coming out. The current vaccinations should be able to handle those, but that is still out for debate. In Nevada, there is still a lot of hesitation just getting the vaccine, and that's even with public health workers. You won't be able to knock out COVID until you get a majority of the population vaccinated. Messaging is going to play a big part on why getting the vaccine is critical for folks to get it when it's their time. C. Melendrez said the NYTimes had a big report on the rise of suicide and unfortunately, Nevada was spotlighted with youth and teenage suicide, one as young as 9 years old. The Clark County school district and Dr. Jara was interviewed for that. It's an unfortunate outcome of the emotional and mental health stress from COVID-19 and the isolation. Kids going to school is critical to their development and is having a huge impact. C. Krause said suicide has been a continuing problem. There are issues on highlighting it before we return back to school. C. Melendrez said there are a lot of resources and different programs, such as Hope Means Nevada, JED foundation, and the GoGuardian Beacon alert. We are learning a lot during this time, and unfortunately there will be another virus and public health crises in the futures. The lessons we learned from this one will help us be more proactive the next time we have to deal with a public health emergency. C. Villarta said she has heard some private companies that are offering transportation services for the elderly that don't have the ability to get their vaccinations. It is going outside the normal bus routes and going to the harder to reach areas. Second, Nevada Health Link is still accepting applications for ACA (Affordable Care Act). Enrollment closed but they still have the special 60-day enrollment period. If anyone needs assistance with translation services, there are two organizations that have navigators that speak multiple languages: Asian Community Development Council and Asian Community Resource Center. They can help in Tagalog, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Thai, Visayan, Spanish, and Korean.

3. Housing

C. Krause has been gathering and sharing Census participation for Native communities, and also accessed information that would be useful for all communities regarding housing and will report back at the next meeting. C. Taylor attended a statewide webinar provided by the Nevada Housing Coalition on the 2021 preview of legislative housing bills. They reviewed several BDRs (bill draft requests) in two categories, one related to production and preservation. These BDRs are looking at options to support and preserve the quality of affordable housing. The second category of BDRs are access and equity, and they are looking at promoting solutions that strengthen residential stability through improved access and equity. The Nevada Housing Coalition is working with members and partners with these BDRs to present during the legislative session. C. Williams said the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority Board meets every month and those are in person without any virtual capabilities, but they do post recordings of all the meetings to their YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfaCHv7TZyJXY9q7OojhT7Q/videos>

4. Workforce Development

C. Taylor said that the Nevada unemployment rate fell to 9.2% in December, that's a 2.4% drop from November. Keep in mind that in April 2020, our unemployment rate was 30.1%. Although it's still higher than the national unemployment rate of 6.7%, it is a significant drop from the peak. The good news is that JP Morgan Chase recently invested \$225,000 to support workforce training for displaced workers. They provided this philanthropy investment to the College of Southern Nevada, Division of Workforce and Economic Development, to address critical workforce training. Lastly, C. Taylor received an email from Stacey Bostwick from the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). GOED partnered with the Office of Workforce Innovation to create a customized tool by Emsi called Skillsmatch. This tool helps individuals understand career and education opportunities that may be a good fit using past experience and also helps identify training opportunities.

5. Economic & Business Development

C. Shaw has nothing to report this month. C. Villarta said that sba.gov has increased their translated services for coronavirus recovery, from 12 to now 17 languages. C. Williams attended the December and January Stadium Board Authority meetings and C. Taylor was also in attendance. The master concessionaire provided updates on their efforts to engage with the local community. If anyone is looking to share info with constituents, they can reach out to C. Williams.

6. Legislative

C. Williams said she welcomes any Commissioner who wants to engage with legislative actions that we can either support or champion and has spoken with a few Commissioners already to find ways to collaborate and put strategies together. C. Krause said we spoke in support of Indigenous People's Day, this will likely come up in the Legislative session.

7. Community Liaison

C. Azam has been a part of Washoe County's Outreach Committees, which has been meeting every month. Major case review has been brought back after 10 years in Washoe County. A lot of input that went into the decision making came from the Outreach Committee, and minority voices were heard. C. Azam said late last year, Sheriff Balaam pulled the \$280 bodycam review fee, and they are currently not charging for the review. There's still a lot of parameters they must check and the manhours associated to fulfilling those requests. Anyone who wants to review a video can watch it in a room and highlight the sections they want. The Outreach Committee played a big part in convincing Sheriff Balaam about this. C. Villarta said that according to LVMPD (Las Vegas Metro Police Department), our murder rate is up 200% and hate crimes are up. Las Vegas Metro Police Department has also created the Vegas SafeCam, which is a community video surveillance program to enhance partnership with the community. You can go also check it to lvmpd.com and go to community relations. (<https://www.lvmpd.com/en-us/Pages/VegasSafeCam.aspx>)

E. Receive the Annual Report to the Governor (for discussion and possible action)

C. Williams said our Annual Report to the Governor is the summary of all activity reports and advocacy efforts. Due to the pandemic, several Commissioners have asked for an extension to get their activity reports in. Because we received an extension, the final due date to turn in activity reports and any edits to the report is February 5th. C. Azam moved to approve the Annual Report with any Commissioner additions between now and February 5th. C. Villarta seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

a. Community announcements

- i. The Governor gave State of the State address last week, and one notable announcement he made was calling on the legislature to approve an additional \$50 million to the PETS (Pandemic Emergency Technical Support) grant for small businesses. We had more small business applications that available money, so this would help with the businesses with a qualified application that did not receive a grant in the first round.
- ii. Upcoming webinars – Wednesday is the Northern Nevada Development Authority State of the Counties webinar, Friday is State of the Urban Chamber – Director Brown from GOED (Governor's Office of Economic Development) will be speaking. GOED recently published a report called Nevada's Plan for Recovery and Resilience, so he'll likely cover the findings from that report and how to move Nevada forward. Also, February 9th, the LVGEA (Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance) will be having their State of Economic Development. Lastly, February 11th, the Henderson Chamber will be hosting their State of the City address with Mayor March.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 10:47 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, February 22, 2021 at 9:30 am