

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, March 15, 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 9:33 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: none

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

E. Public Attendance: Nicholas Dunkle, Tava McGinty-Jimenez, Janet Serial

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. COMMISSION BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

A. Approval of February 22, 2021 meeting minutes (for discussion and possible action)

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

B. Subcommittee Updates (for discussion and possible action)

1. Education

C. Krause said teachers are preparing for students to come back to school. Between today and the 22nd are the dates for teachers to start being in class in preparation for teaching in their classrooms.

COMMISSIONERS: Chair D. Edward Chaney; Vice Chair Myisha Y. Williams; C. Hasaan Azam; C. Yerania De Luca, C. E. Mercedes Krause, C. Jose Melendrez, C. Amy Emiko Shaw, C. Kathleen Taylor, C. Angelica Villarta

Parents have the choice to remain in distance learning or begin in-person learning. C. Krause is teaching in the classroom and half of her students are distance learning. She is teaching the virtual students at the same time she is teaching her in-person students, so they will have their webcams on. The in-person students will be spaced out and will eat breakfast and lunch in the classrooms. A lot of people are really excited. There was a legislative hearing last week on AB88 that was presented by Assemblyman Watts. It has to do with race-based mascots and naming of public lands. There were many people testifying in support of getting rid of race-based mascots and inappropriate and racist names of public lands, and there was no opposition. There was a lot of support from the Native American community, and tribes themselves gave testimony. She will be looking forward to seeing what happens with that bill. C. Villarta asked with reopening the schools, will they be reopening Safekey? C. Krause will find out and report back. She will find out if they will be having those at schools or at satellite sites and what the days and hours will be. C. Melendrez said Vice President Harris will visit UNLV vaccine clinic today. C. Melendrez said the Nevada INBRE (IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence) with the National Institutes of Health is partnering with UNLV and UNR to promote biomedical research, which is a pretty big deal. Several institutions in Nevada are minority serving institutions with a Hispanic serving designation or an AANAPISI designation (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution). There are several national conferences that are coming up as well as opportunities for grants. Just in the last month, UNLV has submitted applications for 2 grants, as well as some other initiatives that we qualify for as minority serving institutions under Title III and Title V. C. De Luca said for K-8th grades, Carson City schools are going back 4 days a week and remote learning 1 day a week. The high school will remain hybrid for now.

2. Health

C. Melendrez said our numbers are going in a good direction, more people getting vaccinated but we still have to do our part. People are asking if they can still get sick if they are vaccinated. You can still catch it, you might not get sick but you can still spread it. Everyone is still being asked to wear mask and social distance. Some of the information that broke over the weekend, the state is opening to 50%. If you are vaccinated and other people are vaccinated, then you have the green light to gather without wearing a mask. As of March 12, there were 608 new positive tests reported, both Northern and Southern Nevada have reported having the UK variant are. There were 328,000 fully vaccinated in Nevada as of March 12. The Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition was requested to submit information about our work in Nevada to the Vice President's office, which includes collaboration across the state of Nevada. The Coalition in years past has done an Impact Summit where we were in Carson and would do a series of workshops, and the legislators would drop by during the day. This year the Coalition is hosting virtually, and there will be three sessions. This Friday at 9am, the lobbyists and government affairs will be doing presentations on what legislation they are following and what pertains to diversity and equity populations. We're not sure how this is going to work but the next Friday is Legislator Day and invite them to talk to us about the bills they are trying to push forward. Then on April 30th, we'll be holding a townhall forum with legislators and lobbyists on what bills have survived and we're at with that. C. Taylor asked how long is the window of time from getting vaccinated to when you are fully protected? Also, does the vaccine protect against other variants? C. Melendrez said after the first shot, you get your second shot at 22 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna. The Johnson and Johnson, which has been approved in the United States, is one shot. Both the Pfizer and Moderna are 94-95% effective against the current version, and they are doing some testing against the new variant. He said Moderna is doing some testing now. The J&J was tested against the new variants, so there is some effectiveness there, but they don't know for sure how it will hold up against the new variants. Dr.

Fauci said the more people that get the vaccination, the less opportunity that the new variants will have to spread. Other conversations that is coming out now--is the COVID-19 similar to the flu where every year there will be new strains and will we have to get new COVID shots every year? He hasn't heard one way or the other. C. Taylor asked if you heard anything about if you are vaccinated and you have risk factors, does that increase your risk of getting COVID? C. Melendrez said the having the vaccination will protect you even with the other risk factors.

3. Housing

C. Taylor said she is planning to attend the webinar series provided by the Nevada Housing Coalition. They have a lunch and learn series from March to September this year on various topics like affordable housing solutions and ideas. An update on the state rental eviction moratorium issued by Governor Sisolak, it is going to expire at the end of March, so hopefully we'll have an update from the state and federal government regarding the moratorium. There have been a number of evictions--in Henderson, from December-January there were 403 evictions, and in North Las Vegas there were more than 2,800 evictions. There have been a lot of evictions in Clark County too.

C. Williams attended a presentation with Nevada Partners on March 1st. They hosted a webinar called the Hundred Plan In Action: Equitable Development in the Historic Westside, where a lot of strong information was shared by community partners around some of the plans for development in that area. She thinks there were a hundred people in attendance, so there were a lot of people who were interested in both zoning and development. It was more focused on an audience from the banking and investment communities, and they are looking for people interested in supporting some of those projects financially. C. Villarta said there was a press release on February 18th from the City of Las Vegas Neighborhood Partners Fund program. It's a grant application helping to improve the quality of their neighborhood, so associations can apply for \$5,000. And they are offering webinars on that. Applicants are walked through for how to submit and what it's going to cover. It covers landscaping, murals, or other proposals related to community improvement.

4. Workforce Development

C. De Luca met with the Economic Development (EDAWN) to talk about a project that had been proposed about 2 years ago and has to do with geomarketing. Her concern is how do we attract young adults and how do we get to their career path early on to fulfill the need with in-demand occupations? This marketing strategy will hit their social media and phones and show a quick video in terms of what their careers are about and spark interest that way. C. De Luca said that Truckee Meadows Community College is offering free virtual citizenship classes. They need to have a good Internet connection and understand basic English because the class is in English. C. Taylor has a very successful meeting with Nevada Workforce Connections and had a Zoom call with Executive Director Jamie Cruz, Deputy Director and Chief Strategy Officer Irene Bustamante Adams, and External Relations Manager Stavan Corbett. It was basically reconnecting with Workforce Connections and how we can collaborate. Stavan Corbett invited C. Taylor to participate in the fellowship program that is sponsored by Workforce Connections in partnership with Clark County School District, where they are developing the knowledge base for high schoolers to prepare them for post-secondary education opportunities and will address the group next Wednesday.

5. Economic & Business Development

C. Shaw said February 24th, she participated in a web presentation called "Meet your Business

Service Ambassadors” by the Employ NV Business Hub that opened in mid-September. It’s a resource for employers and services are provided at no cost. They have partnered with Workforce Connections to create business hubs to provide services to businesses. It’s a one-stop access to business resources, The Employ Nevada business team talked about their business goals to assist their business to grow, provide services on talent recruitment, financial services, and connections other resources. It is open to small and large businesses. The website is <http://employnvbusinesshub.org>. They recruit and train new employees at no cost to the employer. Silver State Works provides financial incentives, incentive-based employment for 32 hours, and on the job training hires at 40 hours. They provide training and referral assistance for employees who are laid off and provides assistance for unemployment benefits. The on-the-job training provides up to 90% of the salary, so they don’t pay 100% and it’s an agreed-upon amount with the employer. Employer pays the salaries and then the program reimburses. They also provide additional resources, such as short-term vocation training, certification, purchasing work tools, uniform, and access to child care. They employees have to be a W-2 and can be full time, seasonal, or part time. They have two locations – Symphony Park and Sahara West library. She also attended the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) listening session, which she will let C. Williams describe in more detail.

C. Villarta said there are two visual improvement business incentives on <http://lasvegasnevada.gov>. It is designed to help reduce urban blight, serves as a catalyst for improvement for other nearby properties, and helps brings properties up to city code standards. They offer 50% rebates up to \$25,000 for project renovations and upgrade costs. Funding is available annually on a first-come, first-served basis. The businesses have to be located in one of the city’s redevelopment areas and be zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed-use properties. The second one is the Downtown Business Assistance Program. The program is intended to provide a small business owner project coordination and/or financial assistance for undertaking the rehabilitation and renovation of a vacant commercial or industrial property located in a Las Vegas redevelopment area. The goals are really help our small businesses investments in Las Vegas and the ongoing redevelopment of RDA (Redevelopment Agency).

C. Taylor attended the Southern Nevada Strategic Infrastructure Developing working group at C. Williams sits on. C. Williams said she attended the Urban Chamber of Commerce’s Black history celebration on February 28th. They highlighted the various stages of an entrepreneur’s journey and had entrepreneurs in the early stages, emerging businesses that had some mid-level success, and a panel for established businesses about how they had gone through that journey. There were an emphasis on social, educational and legislative inputs necessary at all those levels. She hosted one of those panels. On March 8th, the RTC of Southern Nevada hosted a webinar for their RiSE program for community partners. It was an informational session for the new certification program. They went over what the program was. Their goal is to award 8% of construction and 2% of professional services contracts to local small businesses (LSB) or local diverse businesses (LDB). They have created new certifications to identify businesses as such, LSB or LDB. They are providing resources for them, including connecting them to resource partners such as PTAC (Procurement Technical Assistance Center), B&I (Business and Industry), SBA (Small Business Administration), SBDC (Small Business Development Center), SCORE, Nevada Contractors Association, NDOT (Nevada Department of Transportation) Small Business Resource Center, and the SBOP (Small Business Opportunity Program) of Clark County. C. Williams said that C. Taylor already mentioned the Infrastructure working group, but added that they heard 3 presentations – Norm Anderson who presented on the national infrastructure development and opportunities for the region, Dr. Roland Stephens who presented on defining Southern Nevada’s opportunity, and John Restrepo added to that on overcoming the scarcity of land and Southern Nevada economic development. C. Krause said there

is a series of virtual business development empowerment workshops for Native American small business owners put on by Sister Sky Incorporated. It's a go at your own pace and gives assistance with starting your own businesses.

6. Legislative

C. Williams said the four BDRS the subcommittee is tracking are: BDR 18-245, the diversity and inclusion bill, which is now SB 222. BDR 18-244 is now SB 16, which formally moves the Commission under the Department of Business and Industry and passed out of the Senate and is now going to the Assembly. BDR 990 which would assign BDRs to the Commission, has not seen any movement at this time. The last one, BDR 34-672 is the textbook bill, which we have not seen movement but we did have a meeting with her February 23rd. We were able to ask additional questions and we are waiting for language to come out so we can share that with the Commission. On March 5th, we had a great meeting with Director Terry Reynolds to go over the legislative initiatives that the Commission would like to support. She wanted to give the Director kudos for giving us support and guidance. He was very helpful in providing additional strategies to move our initiatives forward and taking that time to meet with us. C. Chaney said there is some discussion on Thursday with bills from Senator Spearman and Watts.

7. Community Liaison

C. Azam continues to participate the monthly Sheriff outreach committees.

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

- a. Commission announcements - This year we do not anticipate any Commission vacancies. We have several Commissioners seeking reappointment and will update on when those are confirmed, likely in June or July when the Legislative Commission meets again. In anticipation of in-person events happening again, the new Commissioners have their business cards. If anyone needs more business cards, please let the Management Analyst know.
- b. The Management Analyst attended a virtual fraud prevention fair held by the Consumer Affairs Unit. The biggest takeaway from that is a lot of scams have been on the rise this past year, especially due to COVID. More people are buying goods online, and there are more scams related to COVID-19. Please be on the lookout for these scams, anyone can be a victim, young or old. It can affect anyone. M. A. Ku also attend the Esta en Tu Manos Taskforce meeting. They have a great group of community taskforce members that have been pushing for a lot of community engagement in terms getting the COVID information out to our communities. This group is specifically targeting the Hispanic and Latinx communities and organizing pop up vaccination sites. M. A. Ku said the Clark County Commission is meeting tomorrow and will discuss a resolution on condemning and combatting racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against Asian American and Pacific Islanders.
- c. Community announcements
 - i. The Vegas Chamber is having a webinar this Friday on the importance of diversity in the workforce at 10 am.
 - ii. Saturday, March 27, the Asian Community Resource Center is hosting Immigration 101 webinar called "Because of the pandemic, I overstayed my tourist visa. Now what?" We know a lot of people have been in limbo due to COVID-19, so they'll be

able to answer any questions. There will be an immigration attorney and an official from Customs and Immigration.

- iii. C. Chaney added that the Nevada Health Center is a vaccination site, located across from the Gritz Café in Las Vegas, and they are actively accepting appointments. We are having a problem with engagement with the minority community because of misinformation about COVID.

4. NEW BUSINESS

C. Taylor asked for a copy of the final Annual report. M. A. Ku will send it out.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 10:40 am
- Next Meeting: Monday, April 19, 2021 at 9:30 am