



**COMMISSION ON IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 12, 2011 6:30PM**

The Commission on Immigrant Affairs convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 12th, 2011, at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street, Room 2016, Austin, Texas.

Members in Attendance

Miguel Ancira
Thomas Esparza, Chair
Laura Hernandez, Vice-Chair
Sunny Ogunro
Donald Krupens
Syed Rahman
Christopher Cano

Members Absent

None

Presenters: None

Staff

Natalie Cuccia, HHSD

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Esparza called the Commission meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.
2. **CITIZEN'S COMMUNICATION:** Mike Manor with the Travis County Sheriff's Office spoke about the "Building Bridges: Brick by Brick" initiative, a monthly series meant to address immigrant issues including quality of life, public safety, crime prevention and victimization prevention. Mr. Manor provided handouts and invited the Commission to attend an upcoming meeting. Questions and discussion followed.
3. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes from the meeting of December 8th, 2010 were approved on Commissioner Hernandez's motion, Commissioner Ancira second on a 6-0 vote. Ogunro not present.
4. **PRESENTATION:** None
5. **REPORT: Immigrant Services Network:** Commissioner Esparza reported on the activities of the network and the last meeting. Commissioner Esparza noted an increased interest in membership.
6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Commissioner Ancira reported on the Hate Crimes Initiative Task Force meeting he attended. The meeting, organized by the Anti-Defamation League, Austin Chapter was in response to a recent assault of two gay men outside City Hall. Key decision makers, including local politicians and members of the law enforcement community, were invited engaged in a discussion to explore ideas on how to reduce hate in the community. He noted there were 50 to 60 people in attendance. Committees will be formed during the next meeting. Commission Ancira will attend and keep the Commission informed on the progress on this initiative. Questions and discussion followed.
- b. Commissioner Ancira reported on a police ride along he participated in over Halloween weekend. He noted that it was a great experience and encouraged other members to go on one. Questions and discussion followed.
- c. Commissioner Ancira reported on a meeting he had with Mel Waxler, General Council to Austin Independent School District (AISD). They discussed ways AISD, the City and other entities can collaborate to better address the issues faced by immigrant students.
- d. Commissioner Ancira reported on his experience with crimes against immigrants. He relayed a story of immigrants who were victims of robbery and had several thousand dollars of cash stolen from their homes. In his profession as a Banker, he has noted that undocumented immigrants have expressed fear of opening bank accounts. The Commission discussed what can be done to educate the immigrant community on the fact that they can open bank accounts and keep there money safe.
- e. Commissioner Hernandez engaged the Commission in a discussion of logistics and strategy for requesting funding for immigrant victim's of domestic violence. Commission Hernandez distributed a letter that she submitted to Council Member Bill Spelman whose office responded with additional questions. The Commission decided to work on revising the letter and answering Council questions, and then bring it back for a final vote before submitting the request to Council.
- f. The Commission tabled the discussion of strategies to engage City Council on issues important to the Commission on Commissioner Ancira's motion, Commissioner Rahman second on a 5-0 vote. Esparza and Ogunro not present.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Progress Report on "Take of Jobs" resolution. The Commission discussed how to formulate the resolution and how to get a Council Member to sponsor it.
- b. Commissioner Ancira reported on the progress of the emergency contact card for immigrants of limited English proficiency. Austin Fire Department has approved, and requests have been submitted to Austin Police Department and Austin/Travis County

Emergency Medical Services. Commissioner Cano agreed to get the card translated into Mandarin Chinese. Commissioner Hernandez will report back at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m. without objection on a 4-0 vote. Ogunro, Esparza and Krupens not present.