



***HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY-OF-LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES***

The HISPANIC LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION convened a REGULAR meeting on TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28th, 2023 at 5:40 P.M. CST, in AUSTIN CITY HALL, BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM 301 W. 2ND STREET, AUSTIN, TX 78701

Chair AMANDA AFIFI called the HISPANIC LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION Meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance:

Amanda Afifi (Chair)
Daniela Silva
Kevin M Jackson, Jr.
Leonor Vargas
Dulce Castañeda

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:

Jesus Perales

Commissioners Absent:

Vanessa Maldonado
Ivanna Neri (Vice-Chair)
Sharon Vigil
Eliza May

Staff in Attendance:

Equity Office, Community Services Program Coordinator – Alejandra Mireles
Equity Office, Business Process Consultant – Jeremy Garza
Chief of Staff - Susana Carbajal
Interim Director, Human Resources – Rebecca Kennedy
Project Manager, Parks and Recreation Department – Alyssa Tharrett
Program Management, Parks and Recreation Department – Steven Linnett
City Auditor, Office of City Auditor – Corrie Stokes
Assistant City Auditor, Office of City Auditor – Neha Sharma

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

The first ten speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

1. Mary Moran, from On Point Reentry Consortium, asks to return in January as a discussion item. On Point is the only reentry program that is nationally trained and works with clients, and families to make positive choices for their future.
2. Lupe Garcia, Santa Rita Courts resident, Woman's Minds at Ease, iMoms, President of Resident Council, asks to return in January to request funds to support families who would like to purchase new homes.
3. Gavino Fernandez, El Concilio, seeks funding to enhance the programs and reach out to more to constituents to the barriers; these are the organizations that are boots to the ground; as the purpose is to enhance and empower nonprofits in order; this is why this is commission is made for to identify and work with these nonprofits that do not receive funding from large government funding. Have all partnered with us.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve the minutes of the COMMISSION'S REGULAR MEETING on OCTOBER 17th, 2023.
Editing to correct that COMMISSIONER SHARON VIGIL was not in attendance; the minutes from the meeting on 10/17/2023 were approved on COMMISSIONER JESUS PERALES' motion, COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA's second on a 6-0 vote. (Absent: Commissioners Vanessa Maldonado, Ivanna Neri (Vice-Chair), Sharon Vigil, and Eliza May)

STAFF BRIEFINGS

2. Susana Carbajal, Chief of Staff. Briefing on Human Resources Updates
CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL AND INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES REBECCA KENNEDY gave an update to the Commission on which upcoming city leadership vacancies will include community engagement. The first is the city manager that the mayor, on approval on city council, will work with vendor MOSAIC. Specifically, as part of their [MOSAIC] design and process it will include developing and facilitating community engagement. At this time the process has not been disclosed, and in the upcoming months they [MOSAIC] will release [more information]. [The second leadership vacancy] is the deputy city manager that INTERIM CITY MANAGER JESUS GARZA is leading and is using a recruitment vendor SGR as the consultant. [As part of the recruitment process with SGR,] we [the City Executive Leadership Team] did include and invite the chairs of commissions to provide some input and feedback on the qualities for the deputy city manager. CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL shared, we [the City Executive Leadership Team] do foresee that this hiring process, will include some meet and greet with the QUALITY OF LIFE COMMISSIONS, who were included in the feedback process.

Follow up question, COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI asked about if there were other positions where the Commission and public could be included and involved in the process; and what other positions would not be involved; Afifi shared that she has been involved in the process in the past CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL answered that as a general rule, who ever is hiring for that position, the hiring manager for that position, would determine the design and the process. For executive leadership positions it would depend on who the city manager is and the deputy city manager. Frequently, if there is a position at a high leadership level, there is usually community engagement or some feedback from commissions. For example, the chief of police would have some community engagement (these are some examples of the past of the commissions participating. COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI asked if hiring the Deputy City Manager and the permanent City Manager would need to be hired first, before hiring everybody else, and CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL answered that COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI was – correct and that the public you may hear of more interim appointments being assigned so they can focus on the permanent appointments of those positions. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS asked if the values, principles, etc. were created for the city manager and CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL responded that the mayor is in charge and INTERIM DIRECTOR of HUMAN RESOURCES REBECCA KENNEDY said that the City already have those set and the details would be flushed out with the consultant, who would include those characteristics. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS explained that the community has feedback about the candidate, specifically that the candidate should have multicultural lens; and training; and that what she is hearing is that it is the job of the mayor. COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI asked if there would be an additional opportunity to participate for the deputy city manager position and CHIEF OF STAFF SUSANA CARBAJAL answered, yes that the City anticipates a meet and greet as the City narrows down the candidates.

3. Corrie Stokes, City Auditor, Language Access Update
CITY AUDITOR CORRIE STOKES shares with the Commission background knowledge about how the City Auditor's office works and who it reports to. In regard to language access, the City did an audit in 2016 and in 2021 did another one in response to the Uri, in how we communicated effectively during the storm. For purposes of the briefing for the Commission, the 2021 investigation would be the update. ASSISTANT CITY AUDITOR NEHA HUMMA shares that not much has been done since the last meeting in March of 2023. Essentially the City Auditor made recommendations on how can the City improve language access, and CPIO/FEMA were in charge of implementing. City Auditor found that they made progress and what still needs to be done. [The presentation used during the meeting can be found here.](#) Recommendation 1, the city is in compliance with federal laws; but the city was not in compliance in regard to effectively providing services because the City was not collecting feedback. Recommendation 2 – language access coordinator. City appointed in 2018 and in 2023, the position did not have the authority to implement the program in a city-wide basis. The City Auditor found that the city's

departments need to be collecting data about the language access program and at this time, there isn't enough information to also update the performance measures in how the service is being provided city wide; and the language coordinator needs to have the appropriate authority so they can effectively manage the program. Also, the City Auditor found that regarding the City's bilingual stipend program, the HR dept does not have electronic records for all employees receiving the funds and the language access coordinator does not have the authority to then use information to see if the program is matching the needs of the community. CPIO and FEMA (recommendation 8) have not made any progress because there hasn't been hiring and the City needs to finalize the plan for emergency response (example, ensuring City documents/elements are translated.)

COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS asked if the City Auditor knew why the language access coordinator was not given authority. The answer shared was that the coordinator did not have access to other departments as the coordinator was seen as community engagement specialist and not an authority to ensure that departments were in compliance. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS shares that the City Auditor's presentation raises questions regarding equity, access to essentials; there is also concern from a common theme from other that the city is not communicating to all members of the community well. What is the priority for language access in the City?

COMMISSIONER DULCE CASTANEDA asked if there are other current language access investigations. The answer shared that the City Auditor does not have any currently right now because we are periodically following up on the progress on these recommendations. CITY AUDITOR CORRIE STOKES shares that on the City Auditor's website, all our audits are in are available, and the department is testing a new dashboard for reporting follow-ups. City Auditor shares that one of the most important things the City Auditor does talk with other departments, where does equity play and how can we utilize that lens in every audit. COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA asks if the City Auditor has a timeline available for improvement on the measures. Answer shared that the City Auditor does not have a timeline and the department periodically goes go back to council with the information that should be on the dashboard.

4. Alyssa Tharrett and Steven Linett, Parks and Recreation Department Update: **PROJECT MANAGERS ALYSSA THARRETT and STEVEN THARRETT** share with the Commission an update about the bond process, steps following a bond approval, and how the Commission can advocate for the next bond cycle. [The presentation they share can be found by clicking here.](#) Slide 3 shares how propositions B & C from 2018, the 66.5 million was used. Slide 4 provides background information from the 2018 program, the investment was to be given in the aging facilities; the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) started doing community engagement meetings; this is how it is going to work for most ballot proposals. Slides 6-10 describe how PARC is preparing for the possibility of a bond. Slide 10 shares what PARC is requesting, with slide 11, sharing what the identifiable needs are (need more recreation centers; we are average for basketball; we have more people per center than the national average which means we need more). Slide 12

shares the physical boundaries/barriers members of the community face with engaging with facilities. Slide 13, goal service areas (good range would be 2 miles – 6 miles would be poor). If PARD expands the Gus Garcia Recreational Center, it would reach out to extend the service center because as slide 14, a prioritizing tool, shows on the map that the biggest needs are the northeast and southeast. Slides 15 and 16 have PARD's equity priorities and the department's recommendations. COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA asks if Gus Garcia is dedicated as a senior center – would expanding the building be part of the plan because community feedback has been more building space. The answer shared that yes, that is what PARD is seeing that building expansion is what is needed. COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI asks about adding in southeast, because the Del Valle Community is often told to go to the Dove Springs recreation center. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS asks a follow up question about the City monitoring attendance in the recreation centers because of the sharing of facilities/movement in community; could this cause overcrowding in other areas? The answer shared is that yes, the City has noticed a concentration in central east Austin, and yes, the City can look at how it can equally distribute the facilities. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS asked if PARD is looking to collaborate with Capital Metro. The answer shared that PARD will come up in the planning process so that capital metro has routes for facilities. About the monitoring participation at the centers, the City uses the Rec Track Program.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Discussion on final JIC Budget Town Halls.
COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA shares that the community members who participated seem to already be involved in the city process; and wondered how the Commission could hear from other neighbors and that three meetings are not enough.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

6. Discussion and possible action to pass a recommendation to City Council on hiring for interim and vacant leadership positions.
No action taken for a recommendation.
7. Discussion and possible action to establish an Arts & Culture Working Group, after hosting November 16th meeting.
COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI shares the general themes from the meeting. Application difficulties, space deficiencies, health insurance for artists.
COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS shares that the meeting feedback are parallel to the staff briefing from the City Auditors and the impact it is having on the community of arts. Requesting assistance, funding. Again, the audit and the lack of follow-up from the City, is truly impacted. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS shares that the community feels marginalized, disrespected; and asks the Commission if the HLQOL should host their own town hall on budgets, because we

are listening to us. COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS shares that the Economic Development Department has hired a consultant to analyze language access across the department and that perhaps the commission could recommend that the consultant should work with the group. Commission requests STAFF LIAISON ALEJANDRA MIRELES to email the notes from the November 16th meeting to the EDD office.

The motion to create an Arts & Culture Workgroup [to end in six (6) months with a presentation on what type of action the Commission should take for council as the end product] DOES PASS on COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS'S motion, COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA'S second on a 6-0 unanimous vote.

8. Discussion on commissioner joining [Austin Resource Planning Group](#) (Sponsored by Commissioner Silva)
COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA shares that there is an Austin Energy Resource planning group that meets once a month and were intentionally looking for Latine community members to be included in the conversation about energy policy for the city. Interested Commissioners or members of the community can let COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA know.
No action taken.
9. Review and discuss the scope of all current working groups and possible action to update membership.

WORKING GROUPS/COMMITTEE UPDATES

10. Budget & Policy Priorities Workgroup – updates from the last workgroup meeting on issues related to the FY23-24 and policy matters pertaining to their assignment (Budget & Policy Priorities Workgroup Members: *Commissioners Amanda Afifi, Sharon Vigil, Jesus Perales, Dulce Castañeda, and Leonor Vargas*).
Group has not met. COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI returns to COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS sharing of having a HLQOL budget town hall to hear feedback from the community in February. COMMISSIONER DANIELA SILVA agrees, and the Commission can advertise in January meeting for organizations to come to the meeting and speak to the commission. STAFF LIAISON ALEJANDRA MIRELES will follow up with Commission chairs for promotional materials, food, and interpretation services.
11. Language Access Workgroup – Updates on the newly formed workgroup on issues pertaining to their assignment (Language Access Workgroup Members: *Amanda Afifi, Dulce Castaneda, Vanessa Maldonado, Daniela Silva, & Hector Ordaz*)
No updates. COMMISSIONER AMANDA AFIFI would like to schedule a meeting before January.
12. Public Safety & Immigrant Affairs Workgroup – Updates from the workgroup on issues pertaining to their assignment (Public Safety & Immigrant Affairs Workgroup Members: *Dulce Castaneda, Leonor Vargas, & Sharon Vigil*).

Has not met.

13. Joint Inclusion Committee (JIC) – General update and discussion on the coalition building work of the Committee. (*JIC Primary & Alternate Representatives: Amanda Afifi & Ivanna Neri*)
General updates from the staff liaison who presented in the JIC meeting in October and information from equity action from the Community Investment Budget.

WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

See item 10.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mary Moran, *On Point Reentry Consortium*

Lupe Garcia, *Women's Mind at Ease & Resident of Santa Rita Courts*

Gavino Fernandez, *El Concilio*

Commission and community members on the Arts and Culture Workgroup

Ceasefire recommendation

Office of intergovernmental affairs staff briefing about proactive measures to SB4

APD staff briefing about proactive measures to SB4.

Equity Office staff briefing about proactive measures to SB4.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:56

The minutes were approved at the DECEMBER 19th, 2023 meeting on COMMISSIONER LEONOR VARGAS' motion, COMMISSIONER DULCE CASTANEDA's second on a 6-0 vote.