

Chicano Latino AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Board Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2007

Present

Board Members: Lalo Zavala, Teresa Dawson, Sonia Hohnadel, Edgardo Rodriguez, Elia Bruggeman, Adriana O'Meara, Dr. Lou Gonzáles, Maricruz Hill

CLAC Staff: Rogelio L. Muñoz, Jr., Gladys Rodriguez, Oscar Echandi, Rosa Tock

Community Members: Gary Gorman, Dept. of Human Rights

Meeting

Board Chair Lalo Zavala called meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. with attendance of full board.

Chair Zavala asked for a motion to approve the agenda with introductions of CLAC's new employees before continuing with the approval of minutes. **A motion was made by Teresa Dawson and seconded by Sonia Hohnadel**, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Zavala welcomes new employees and asks them to introduce to the board.

Oscar Echandi is the new Community Liaison and Rosa Tock is the new Legislative Director.

Chair Zavala asked for a round of introductions from Board members.

Chair Zavala asked for a motion to approve the board meeting minutes for the February 17, meeting. Hohnadel asked for a correction to the minutes noting proper title for Annie Paruccini, Director of Board and Commission Appointments Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty and correct spelling of last name for Mateo Guajardo, City of Bloomington. Also for future minutes, city of residence should be noted when a community member attends a board meeting. Adriana O'Meara updates that the community relations committee will wait on the business card layout and guidelines of use until CLAC's logo has been established. **A motion was made by Teresa Dawson and seconded by Sonia Hohnadel**. The motion passed unanimously to accept the minutes with proposed changes.

Chair Zavala asked for a motion to approve minutes for the conference call meetings held by the executive committee. These meetings were held on March 2, 9, 15 and on April 3. Sonia Hohnadel gave a brief summary on the issues discussed during each conference call. **Sonia Hohnadel makes motion to approve conference call minutes for March 2, 9, 15 and on April 3, seconded by Edgardo Rodriguez**. The motion passed unanimously to accept the conference call minutes.

Chair Zavala would like to make a note that Rep. Al Juhnke responded he would not be able to attend this meeting due to legislative reasons.

Board Chair Report

Chair Zavala began his report by sharing information about an investigation conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) for the reason that an anonymous person called with concerns regarding the several trips made by the executive director to San Antonio, Texas, particularly since he is from that area and has family that still resides there. Muñoz was attending conference planning meetings for the 2007 MAFO conference. Other issues were that council members were double-dipping as they received per-diems for their attendance at board meetings or other functions, yet the council provided meals at some of these same meetings, council's hiring practices and council expenditures etc.

An assessment was conducted to determine whether these concerns needed further investigation but based on the information the OLA obtained, they found insufficient evidence of financial wrongdoing involving state funds to demand further investigation. From the information they obtained, they were able to determine that all of the travel was approved in advance by the board chair, had a business purpose and followed the proper approval channels.

In regards to the other concerns, board members are entitled to per diem to compensate for their time serving on the board. Meals can be provided as long as they comply with certain criteria and established procedures regarding special expenses. The council followed proper special expenses procedures in all instances where meals were provided. Furthermore, the OLA was unable to substantiate the allegations that there was any improper use of council funds.

Chair Zavala said that the procedure for traveling is the executive director gets approval from Chair of the board. The letter sent by the Office of the Legislative Auditor clearly states that there is no illegal activity by the council, but it raises the question of traveling procedures for director and board members.

Chair Zavala also informs that he talked to the Attorney General office in regards to the investigation by the Dept. of Human Rights, but that they are still waiting for the actual report with the findings. An amount of \$5,991 was billed to the council. This was a complaint filed by a former staff based on discrimination of age and national origin.

Chair Zavala also expressed that there should be a conflict of interest form signed by board members. Also, no position can be taken from board members only by the executive director.

Executive Director Report

See attached report- Executive Director's report, April 21, 2007

ED shared with the board that he was called to testify before the committee on behalf of the governor's budget recommendations for the council and met with the state council executive directors. ED also attended the MAFO conference in San Antonio, TX and presented on a panel of state Hispanic/Latino agencies of their role in state government. He then informed the board he had met with several graphic designers and entered into contract with The Design Company whom had already submitted several logo options. The logo options were emailed to board members and were also presented at the meeting.

Board members expressed that they were not too pleased with the logos submitted by The Design Company. Maricruz Hill expressed that a logo should be eye-catching and should connect to the eye of the audience.

Community Relations committee will work with ED in the creation or redesigning of logo.

Sonia Hohnadel would like to make a formal motion to recognize Chair Zavala on his appointment to CEO/Chair of the MAFO Organization, seconded by Edgardo Rodriguez. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Edgardo Rodriguez when reviewing the budget noticed that there was money available only until the end of Fiscal year 07 which ends June 30. Actual year to date expenses have been \$146,296.08. Of the \$207,703.92 unexpended budget, the council has committed an amount of \$112,354.00 leaving a balance of available money to encumber of \$95,349.92. These financial expenses are as of March 31, 2007.

There is money that can be spent, but responsibly. There was an estimate to remodel CLAC office but it was extremely expensive and CLAC has a short-term lease. CLAC has purchased some equipment such as: projector, laptop, office supplies, etc.

A suggestion made by the Community Relations committee is to have a meet-and-greet event after Cinco de Mayo to have key leaders and legislative members meet with CLAC and organize forums and events in greater MN with staff and board members to hear the concerns of the community.

CLAC is in contract with Rita Garcia, Business Partners Plus. Inc, until June 30. Board wants to schedule a meeting for May 19, to have Rita Garcia present to the board on her findings.

(Break 11:46)

Committee Reports

Community Relations

The committee met to develop a strategic plan to make partners with the community. CLAC needs to know what is out there, who is in the database and expand that list. The goal is to centralize the information and for that reason the database needs to be defined.

Committee members Hill and O'Meara shared interest in reviewing the database.

Hohnadel suggests that the list needs to be broken down to partner with agencies and to also inform the citizens what the government entities are doing.

Elia Bruggeman questions if this is a job a board member should be doing or the staff?

Committee Chair would like to work together with staff to review and break down this list.

Member Bruggeman states that the board cannot do the work of the staff. The board role is to decide what issues the council needs to address and ED would take it to the staff for execution.

Committee also suggested a meet and greet event which if the board agrees to do then the planning should start. What would be the purpose? To engage the community?.

Edgardo Rodriguez questions how the council can justify the expenses and how does that fall into the statutes. It can be justified as the council responsibility to bring the agencies together being that it is currently fragmented out there. This event could be open to the community organizations to know more about CLAC and to meet the board of directors, staff and invite them to share information with the council. We should give the opportunity to Rita Garcia to deliver all the information and ideas to the ED and come to the board for help and know that there are individuals that have committed to aggressively work on this.

Chair Zavala stated that Rita Garcia is in charge to give the board and staff a work plan. She presented to the board on her findings of the board retreat and has been working with the staff to develop a strategic plan. ED is currently working closely with Mrs. Garcia in terms of creating and developing a work plan in terms of strategic.

Another suggestion of the committee is to market CLAC with lapelled pins which would have to be contingent with the graphic design. Also recommends having a section included in the *¡El Minnesotano!* newsletter of questions from the reader to the executive director. It could be called "Tu Opinion" and/or have a guest column. This section could be added to the council's website as well.

Chair Zavala expresses that in doing this the council needs to be careful of what people write and what is printed on the newsletter. The council needs to make sure there is a disclaimer.

Adriana O'Meara wants to note to delete Juan Lazo from the newsletter.

Edgardo Rodriguez recommends ED to visit key persons at key agencies to establish a top level relationship and explain what CLAC does and how CLAC can help and then share the information with the board.

Governance committee

The committee is still waiting for Rita's findings. A conflict of interest form and information needs to be added to the manual.

New Bussiness

Gary Gorman, representing Dept. of Human Rights, offers to help and be present for any events with information on Dept. Human Rights.

Sonia Hohnadel will be attending an event for Cinco de Mayo and will have CLAC's information to hand out. The council will also have a booth at the Cinco de Mayo event held on the West Side of St. Paul.

Chair Zavala then asked non board members to exit the meeting for a close session.

Motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by Sonia Mayo Hohnadel, CLAC Board Secretary