



**Chicano Latino
Affairs Council**
State of Minnesota

CLAC 3rd Quarter Meeting Minutes
Location: 60 Empire Dr. St. Paul, MN 55103
Date: March 14, 2009
Time: 10:00am-1:30pm

In attendance

Council Members: Nicholas Juárez (Chairman), Edgardo Rodriguez (Treasurer), Sonia Mayo Hohnadel, Teresa Dawson, Antonio Lizano, Adriana O'Meara, Mario Vargas (Secretary)

Absent: Council Member, Maricruz Hill; Council Member, Alma Garay-Lehn; Council Member, Elia Bruggeman (Vice-Chairwoman); Council Member, Michael Rosario; State Representative, Al Juhnke; State Representative, Linda Slocum; State Representative, Jim Vickerman; State Senator, Joe Gimse

Staff: Executive Director, Rogelio Munoz; Legislative Director, Rosa Tock; Community Liaison, Oscar Echandi; Administrative Assistant, Gladys Rodriguez; Intern, David Echeverry

Meeting convenes at 10:10 am

Call to order and agenda consensus: Meeting called to order by Council Chairman Juarez. Council Chairman Juarez continued by reading the purpose of the meeting and the expected outcomes. Council Chairman Juarez asked if anyone had any issues to discuss under 'New Business'. Council Chairman Juarez asked to discuss committee structure and to address a formal complaint. Council Member O'Meara asked to discuss New Business before noon due to that she needed to leave the meeting early. Council Chairman Juarez asked for a motion to approve the agenda as amended. A motion was made by Council Treasurer Rodriguez to approve agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hohnadel. The motion passed unanimously with an all in favor vote.

As an announcement, Executive Director Muñoz introduced David Echeverry, CLAC Community and Research Fellow, to the Council Members; he will leave the Council in April.

November 2008 Meeting Minutes: Council Treasurer Rodriguez commented that on the Treasurer's report it is stated that in "2009 some expenses were duplicated" and asked to remove sentence. Council Member Dawson asked to clarify sentence on Executive Director's report that read that "he has been busy with replacing Administrative Assistant Gladys Rodriguez" to state that "he has been busy finding a temporary replacement for Gladys Rodriguez, CLAC Administrative Assistant".

Council Treasurer Rodriguez made a motion to approve the November 2008 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hohnadel. The motion passed unanimously with an All in Favor vote.

An observation was made that during meetings there are suggestions for actions. Perhaps, the person writing minutes can make a list of the action items and attach as a separate sheet to the meeting minutes. Council Member Hohnadel suggests that such action items could be bolded in the minutes instead of adding them as a new document.

Treasurer's Report: Council Treasurer Rodriguez presented an up to date financial status of the council expenses. The council is currently operating on a budget of \$314,000 that included a carry forward from last fiscal year. Through 8 months, the council has spent 67% from a 12 month budget leaving a remaining \$9,396 available to use until the end of the fiscal year which is June 30th. In addition, the council continues to have available \$9,000 gift fund it receive a few years back. The importance of knowing the remainder balance is that staff can plan accordingly and spend the funds in a responsible and reasonable manner before the end of the fiscal year.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez informed that the CLAC Finance Committee met prior to the meeting and instructed the executive director to see ways this money could be spent.

Executive Director Muñoz informed the members that Governor Pawlenty originally proposed a 10% cut on the budget and then a 5% cut. The Council was asked to testify before the budget committee on how a 5% cut would affect the council's operation. Furthermore, the council was informed that the Senate proposed a 7% cut and so the council will need to restructure its activities and other expenses. Council Member Lizano inquires if the money in the gift account can be incorporated into the operational budget to cover for expenses since some of the costs for the 30th Anniversary came out of the general budget. Council Member Hohnadel states that the gift account is on reserve for an emergency situation and could be tapped into only if needed. Instead, she suggests for the council to purchase a few supplies in advance to cover for the next fiscal year.

Executive Director Muñoz states that the council has to be creative and see ways to cut expenses. Other than salaries the biggest expense is the lease agreement. A possibility would be to compare rental prices on other locations and see if it's best to move. CLAC staff would like to stay close to the Capitol and State Office Building because that's where the primary stakeholders are located. The lease expires in 2010, but there is a clause that the council can end the contract based on not receiving an appropriate budget or for fiscal shortcomings but we need to negotiate with the building's management.

Another suggestion is to cut on printing copies of the board packet for the meetings. Council Member Hohnadel states that she always downloads and prints her own copy of the documents that are sent electronically and does not need a hardcopy provided at the meeting. She suggests for council members to print their own electronic copies or save on personal computers and bring to meetings instead of staff providing copies. These options would aid the office costs for paper and copier overcharge for maintenance.

Executive Director's Report: Executive Director Muñoz reported on his activities for the past month where there has been a lot of work at the legislature. He thanked the members who attended CLAC's Latino Legislative Day at the Capitol. The event was well attended, almost 200 community members, and had several media coverage. The staff provided three training days to

the team leaders and provided information on talking points and what issues to deliver to the members of the legislature. CLAC staff organized a policy briefing with Commissioner Sanne Mangan, Department of Health on the CLAC Issues Brief on Health and the newly published health report. This was a follow up meeting with the commissioner to present the health report and bring a Latino health service provider and health leader to the Department of Health. Jesse Bethke Gomez, CLUES President provided Commissioner Mangan with some best practices of health services for communities of color and addressing the health disparities issue. The briefing also addressed the department's funding priorities on grants to health service organizations meeting the needs of the uninsured and underserved. In addition, CLAC connected Academia Cesar Chavez with Commissioner Alice Seagren of the Department of Education and CLUES with Brian Augsburg, the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Human Services.

Further, the Council also provided leadership to the Census 2010 on two fronts: (1) jointly with the other state councils and (2) in assisting to launch the Census 2010 Minnesota Latino Complete Count Committee (MLCCC) acting as a convener. The Census kick-off event brought together over 60 individuals from the community. Mario Duarte is the Federal Census Bureau's official Latino Census 2010 representative for Minnesota.

CLAC also testified before senate and house committees at the Minnesota Legislature on council activities and the governor's budget recommendation for the 2010-2011 Biennium.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez suggests a convening with the other ethnic Councils including their Board Members. The purpose would be to meet and share experiences.

Council Member Hohnadel questions how the State of Minnesota's Departments of Education, Human Services and Health have acknowledged the Council. Executive Director Muñoz answered that most of the Departments knew of the existence of the Council, but didn't have much information. Executive Director Muñoz also informs that he is trying to set up a meeting with the Board of Education to discuss the criteria to be certified and teach in Minnesota, especially among Latino teachers from Latin America.

Executive Director Muñoz also informs that CLAC assisted with organizing a welcome event with Marco Polo Advertising for Southwest Airlines and the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute. Minnesota Latino community leaders helped welcome Lidia Martinez, Director of Community Relations for Southwest Airlines and Dr. Juan Andrade, USHLI President. Southwest Airlines is the corporate flying sponsor for USHLI and is committed to investing and developing the state's Latino community leadership. Southwest Airlines is sponsoring the airfare to the USHLI Conference in Chicago on March 18, 2009. During this conference, the directors from the other state Latino council's nationwide get together and share best practices, legislative affairs and other public policy. On this occasion, Executive Director Muñoz will present on CLAC's work on the health report and the focus groups.

Council Chairman Juarez pointed out that included in the packet was an article by John Croman, KARE 11, in regards to CLAC's Legislative Day at the Capitol. Executive Director Muñoz informed the Board that Council Secretary Vargas and Council Member Lizano were interviewed by KARE 11 Reporter Croman. He was interviewed by MPR and Fox News and Legislative Director Tock was interviewed by Kathryn Glover, of Minnpost.

Council Member Hohnadel asked if there had been a staff meetings to reflect on the outcomes of CLAC's Legislative Day at the Capitol and what could be improved for next year. Legislative

Director Tock informed that after the event, staff met to discuss possible improvements for next year. Legislative Director Tock drafted an event evaluation summary based on the comments of the team leaders and Intern Echeverry drafted a feedback summary on the legislative meetings with follow-up recommendations.

Action Item: *Email CLAC's Legislative Day at the Capitol event summary feedback and the legislative meetings feedback to council members.*

2008-09 Biennium Calendar & Action Plan Update: Executive Director Muñoz reported that CLAC is on its Second year of the biennium calendar. The legislative session began in February and the Legislative Director Tock has been monitoring legislation that will have direct impact on the Latino community. One of the major issues is the federal funds coming to Minnesota. This funding requires that 25% go to people with disadvantage and small minority owned businesses.

Census Update: Minnesota Latino Complete Count Committee: Back in the Summer of 2008, the U.S. Census visited Minnesota to plant the seed of the Census 2010 outreach and CLAC was the first entity they approached to act as the convening body. Prior to his appointment to CLAC, Mario Vargas gave a presentation shortly thereafter to CLAC encouraging involvement from the Council. Since then, Executive Director Muñoz has been collaborating with Mario Hernandez of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights and Council Secretary Vargas to engage Latinos to be part of the Census 2010 and promote awareness. Together, Executive Director Muñoz, Mr. Hernandez and Council Secretary Vargas have created a strategic framework for community involvement by way of the Minnesota Latino Complete Count Committee. The Census 2010 Minnesota Latino Complete Count Committee had its kick-off event in February and is now convening the community for a follow up meeting to structure into five working groups to execute the plan. The Census 2010 will make a huge difference and it is important that the Council participate at any level. Council Secretary Vargas encouraged CLAC to continue supporting the Latino complete count initiative to capitalize on the process which can be useful to CLAC in its efforts organize Latino constituent input and engagement in our legislative efforts. Executive Director Muñoz met with Federal Census Bureau Latino Partnership Specialist, Mario Duarte, Mario Hernandez, Council Secretary Vargas, State of Minnesota Demographer Office staff and representatives from the Federal Census Bureau assigned folks to ensure that roles are not overlapped and efforts are not being duplicated.

One important thing when educating the community about the Census 2010 count is to convey the message that immigration status is not requested on the form. This time around the Census form is easier to fill out and it has fewer questions than before.

New Business: Council Chairman Juarez sought discussion on the formation and structure of board committees. This matter was discussed during an executive meeting on how the committees were formed. The executive committee wishes at least one person from the board to work with staff and other community members to be involved and help develop, plan and brainstorm on issues for the next legislative agenda. The current standing committees are executive; finance; legislative committee; education and public relations. A new committee would be formed to focus on economic development. Interested members to participate in this committee are more than welcomed. The committee members would create their own meeting schedules and then report on its activities during the council meetings.

Action Item: Member Sonia Hohnadel requested a list of the current standing committees and its members. Members should bring a list of community members that could possibly be part of these committees.

Council Members will evaluate the current standing committees during the next CLAC Board meeting in May. In the mean time, staff will direct inquiries to the executive committee if CLAC is presented with an opportunity to be involved in some areas such as economic development to cooperate and participate in coalitions. Furthermore, the CLAC Legislative Committee will need to work with staff to develop a policy to authorize CLAC to endorse other agencies.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez expressed interest creating and joining the CLAC Economic Development Committee but not as Committee Chairperson. Council Members Lizano and O'Meara also expressed interest in joining the Committee. Council Member Lizano expressed interesting Chairing the committee.

Another issue that needs to be addressed by the executive committee is the stimulus package and they will need to draft a plan.

Break... Meeting convenes at 12:10 p.m.

Legislative Update: Executive Director Muñoz stated that CLAC staff has been very busy monitoring the legislative sessions and the proposed bills. Executive Director Muñoz has been monitoring Pre-K; Intern Echeverry has monitored Higher Education; and Legislative Director Tock monitors health and immigration issues. The three meet every Friday to discuss the week in session and inform one another on the different collaborations at the State Capitol and what is going on. Legislative Director Tock has been working with several groups, one of them the Immigrant Freedom Network on the flat tuition rate. In addition, she recently distributed the Click-CLAC to update the community on what's happening in the Capitol.

Legislative Director Tock comments that she is monitoring bills that reflect CLAC's legislative agenda. Currently there are two health issues on the floor; the immigration issue is very low at the moment. Most of all, people are waiting to see how the budget is going to move forward. Another important issue currently standing is the federal stimulus package and how it will be allocated.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez comments that there are many Latino owned businesses that are closing in the Lake Street area due to the two-year construction following the economic recession. Currently, LCN is advocating and looking for some funding for gap finances for the business that are going out.

Summer 2009: CLAC staff is getting ready to begin the summer civic engagement series and need to decide what issues to work on. Based on a survey distributed to the board two years ago, the issue of education and health was brought up. This time, the staff identified two possible issues to bring to the table, economic development and housing. Staff has researched the root causes and has recommended research methodologies. For economic development, the recommendation is to research resources for community and state, develop focus groups composed of unemployed Latinos, and identify current resources and services provided in workforce centers. In the area of housing, the recommendation is to research resources in the community and state, create focus groups composed of Latino homebuyers, and identify Latino resources in state housing.

Council Members expressed that there are obstacles to rural employment because of the crime box on work application. In addition, workforce centers do not hire staff and current employees remain on top of seniority list and there is no turnover. There are two core areas, business development and unemployment. We can make sure there are funds for grassroots business development and training. The state demographer has publically insisted on Latino training. This data can be used for employment of Latinos; correlate state economy with retirement with Latino workforce.

In reference to housing, clerking at the Tax Court, Intern Echeverry mentioned that he has witnessed people who are losing their homes. Intern Echeverry mentioned that people don't know the tax consequences of losing their house. Council Member Hohnadel shared that HSBC and Wells Fargo are in the middle of a racial profiling lawsuit by the NAACP due to charging a higher interest rate to people of color. Council Member Lizano expresses that interest rates on loans are based on the credit report of an individual and part of their score reflects how long someone has lived in a residence and most of the Latino community move around a lot and live in a residence two years or less; that affects their credit score.

Council Secretary Vargas shared that the City of Minneapolis along with the Neighborhood Development Association (NeDA) is hosting a series of Council Member forums in the community and perhaps a staff should be part or collaborate on the planning process. Council Treasurer Rodriguez feels that Mexican Consulate, the honorable Consul Ana Luisa Fajer, could be a part of the education for housing.

Council Chairman Juarez shares that there is a huge increase for affordable housing for seniors; counties are starting to build senior affordable housing. Council Member Hohnadel suggests surveying the constituents during the focus groups to identify concerns including what are motives for housing? Is it due to work, children, price, short term housing, and unemployed? Council Member Hohnadel asked what will come out of this. Other than educating people, what can CLAC do legislatively to oversee the discriminatory practices? Council Member Hohnadel added that it seemed that this work is concentrated in two areas; 1-Addressing immediate needs of foreclosure, identifying support services, and 2-Protecting and educating consumer.

To close the discussion, Executive Director Muñoz informed that staff will recollect the information and feedback provided and will propose an issue to work on for the summer civic engagement.

New business: Council Member Lizano presented two issues for discussion. The first issue is the possibility of CLAC creating an account with Facebook to create a blog where community members can leave their ideas and provide input on issues. Council Member Lizano recommended that his advertising agency Marco Polo Advertising could design the account. Council Members expressed their concerns about having a blog where people can leave any sorts of comments good or bad. Several Council Members rejected the proposal and will not be pursued any further by the Board. Council Member Hohnadel expressed the need of seeking legal advice in order to do this. Council Chairman Juarez clarified that the authority should come from the full CLAC Board, not from an individual Board Member and secondly, CLAC is a public entity. If the council wants to publicize things then it should be on in the content of its website.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez reported that he and Legislative Director Tock had the opportunity to attend the Minnesota forum led by Hector Garcia and others to inform of the media cut backs and encourage people to contribute with stories and be assisted by journalists. Legislative Director Tock stated that she felt that this is a great opportunity for policy and impact, and would be a good venue to reach non-Latino audience. She added that op-eds can be written, submitted and will be distributed among the mainstream media.

The second issue on the table is a formal complaint letter presented by Council Member Lizano to Council Chairman Juarez for a call to action to reprehend Council Member Garay-Lehn for her comments and alleged repetitive improper use of official communication correspondence. Council Member Lizano read out loud from the letter his formal complaint to the Board and handed the written document containing the complaint to Council Chairman Juarez.

Council Chairman Juarez acknowledged receipt of complaint letter dated March 14, 2009, from Council Member Lizano. Council Chairman Juarez stated that according to CLAC's complaint procedure that was established in the Policies and Procedures Manual in February 2008, the Executive Committee is tasked with discussing and deciding the appropriate course of action on the case and will bring a recommendation back to the Board for discussion and any possible consequences.

Council Members Rodriguez and Hohnadel stated that this was a good way to present the complaint and proper procedure was followed.

Council Member Hohnadel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Edgardo Rodriguez. The motion passed unanimously with an All in Favor vote.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Recorded and Typed by Gladys Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by Rogelio Munoz, Jr., Executive Director

Reviewed and Submitted by Mario Vargas, Council Secretary