



**Chicano Latino
Affairs Council**
State of Minnesota

CLAC 4th Quarter Meeting Minutes
Location: 60 Empire Dr. St. Paul, MN 55103
Date: May 16, 2009
Time: 9:00am-1:20pm

In attendance

Council Members: Nicholas Juárez (Chairman), Edgardo Rodríguez (Treasurer), Mario Vargas (Secretary), Sonia Mayo Hohnadel, Teresa Dawson, Antonio Lizano, Adriana O'Meara, Maricruz Hill, Alma Garay-Lehn, Michael Rosario.

Absent: Council Member, Elia Bruggeman (Vice-Chairwoman); 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.

Community members: Juan Carlos Alanis, La Prensa de Minnesota; and Maita Maggi, Saint Paul Public Schools and Latino Child Care Providers Association.

Meeting convenes at 9:10 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. He also conveyed that packets were sent electronically per the request of the board and if that worked for everybody; Members replied yes. Council Chairman Juarez continued to ask if anyone had any issues to discuss under 'New Business'. Council Secretary Vargas asked to discuss a pending issue with Latino Communications Network (LCN). Council Chairman Juarez asked for a motion to approve the agenda as amended. A motion was made by Council Member Hohnadel to approve agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Council Treasurer Rodriguez. The motion passed unanimously with an all in favor vote.

Board Member Complaint Investigation: The next item on the agenda is to review a Council Member complaint. In February 2008, the Council adapted its Policies and Procedures and made some changes to the complaint process which brought everything to the Board to review and determine merits on the case. Council Members should have received in the mail the letter stating the complaint and the complaint by Council Member Lizano along with the copy of the emails which are the subject of the complaint, the process to address the formal complaint, and a letter from Council Chairman Juarez detailing the purpose of the meeting and the process that has been established to review the complaint.

The process to review the complaint will be started by Chairman Juarez reviewing the complaint, then a complaint summary by Council Member Lizano, response to the complaint by Council Member Garay-Lehn, staff input, discussion by the Board, and final decision if complaint has merit. If the complaint does not have merit, discussion will be over. If the complaint is valid then the Board will determine a resolution.

Council Member Lizano addresses the Board by stating that the complaint is not against Council Member Garay-Lehn but rather the process. The Council has a mission, very specific, and we need to do what we need to do. Council Members are here to do great work for the community and to give advice to the governor on Latino issues and we are here to present ideas to take to the Governor. Council Members need to keep comments and distributions of personal comments outside the email process. We should have respect for one another. The complaint is that Council members stick to the procedures, do what we are here to do, and that no one goes out of the channels of distribution to create a personal agenda.

Question is asked to Council Member Lizano to clarify his concern on the issue. Whether his concern is about the content of the e-mail sent by Council Member Garay-Lehn in regards to *past* Council Member Dr. Lou Gonzales or rather about the process of how it was done, or if he is concerned with both.

Council Member Lizano clarifies that he is concerned with both. Council Member Lizano states that Council members should have respect for one another making reference to Council Member Garay-Lehn's referred email.

Council Member Garay-Lehn responds to the complaint saying that she exercised her right to the First Amendment [of the United States Constitution] which is the right to free speech. When the email was sent out, it was sent to the Council members so that they were aware who this person, Dr. Lou Gonzales [Ex-CLAC Board member], that was sitting on the Council board really was. According to Council Member Garay-Lehn she had known Dr. Gonzales for a long time and knew from the first day she walked into the CLAC Board room that he was not going to make things easy for her and wanted all the board members to know who this person was in reality. She stated that if someone felt insulted by my comments, not to blame her but to blame Dr. Gonzales for embezzling 2.8 million dollars. Unfortunately, Dr. Lou is one of us and he brought shame to the community and to the board. Sometimes the best therapy is to get it out and then move on from there.

Chairman Juarez states that the final decision is on the Board; however, he provided time for staff to provide input on this issue.

Executive Director Muñoz states that not only staff was included in the email from Council Member Garay-Lehn, but also the Council's consultant and members of the legislature that sit on this board. Executive Director Muñoz addressed the email with Council Member Garay-Lehn through a phone conversation and addressed it in a sense that all communication like this should be refrained from being transmitted to staff. Member Garay-Lehn recognized that she didn't intend to send it to staff. No other comments were made by other staff members.

Next was the discussion from the Board on the issue. Every member had a chance to express their opinion.

Council Member Hohnadel felt the email from Council Member Garay-Lehn was more personal than business and felt offended because there was no purpose behind the email, but a personal attack. Council Member Lizano, again states that council members should have respect for one another even if this person is going through a judicial process.

Council Member O'Meara was very upset for several days because she stated that she was a sympathizer of Dr. Lou and was more upset at the fact that in the email, Council Member Garay-Lehn states that she was treated like trash by everybody on the board and was very saddened because she has never treated Council Member Garay-Lehn in such a way. Council Member Rosario states that he did not receive this email because he has a block on unprofessional emails that Council Member Garay-Lehn sends out, but finds the tone of the message disrespectful and antagonistic. Council Member Rosario screened most of what was said in the email and was offended by it. Council Member Hill states that everything has been said and everybody has shared their sentiments. She recommended that Council Members should leave everything behind and move on.

Council Member Garay-Lehn shares that in a short period of time being a Council Member she has felt crucified accused of being inappropriate. She does not feel she was very inappropriate. She does not feel that in her short tenure she was doing something wrong. Council Member Garay-Lehn clarifies that her intention was never to fire the Executive Director and that was put is the argument. She continues to remind the Council Members that she was the one who resigned and moved on because the intention was to remove her as Chair. Council Member Dawson states that most people have already said what she has been thinking about this email. What she was most upset about was the tone of the email more than anything else.

Council Secretary Vargas states that he was not apart of the Board when Dr. Lou was on the Board; however he has heard about Dr. Lou in the community. The sentiment in the email is from an individual that is hurt. Whatever happened should be kept in the past but as a Board we should learn from it. Perhaps Council Member Garay-Lehn should have used the formal complaint process against the people within the Council she felt had disrespected her, and in fact treated her less than she needed to be treated, with respect as a Council Member.

Chairman Juarez expresses that most of what he wanted to say had already been said. He feels that this issue definitely split the Board and after receiving the email he received several calls from Board Members who were concerned. It did create division and conflict among the organization and does feel it was disrespectful because ultimately the Board makes the decisions for the Council. Executive Director Muñoz has already addressed the issue of sending it to staff; staff doesn't make the decisions, the Board does. Council Juarez stated that staff did not participate in the debate the Council had over the Chair position and even the State Legislature did not participate so as to be sent the message and bunching them into the "You all treated me like trash" statement. He felt it was unprofessional and disrespectful to those individuals.

With the discussion being completed, Board Members took a vote on the email which was the issue of the complaint.

Council Treasurer Rodríguez commented that if all Board Members felt this discussion was sufficient then he would like to move to drop the complaint and move forward to Council business. Council Treasurer Rodríguez makes a motion to dismiss the complaint on the basis that what has been discussed is sufficient. Motion seconded by Council Treasurer Vargas.

Discussion on the motion: Council Members would like to continue the process. Council Member Hill comments that this has been a discussion and discussions have results and outcomes. She would like to see a process of leadership and coaching for Council Member Garay-Lehn because this is a learning experience for all and this is a behavior that cannot be repetitive. There should be a process in place either coaching, just to let Council Member Garay-Lehn know, and for all Council Members to know that if you are having these sentiments what the right step to take is and then vote on it. But in just dropping the complaint, are we looking at the best interest of Council Member Garay-Lehn so she can have a clear picture and know what her expectations are and not only for Council Member Garay-Lehn but for everyone. There has to be something in place to actually resolve this in case this happens again and this is the role for Council Members: that we have a discussion but also an outcome.

Council Member Rosario agrees with Council Member Hill that the issue cannot be dropped and supports that the Council needs to have a system to follow up this type of cases. Council Member Rosario respects the feelings of Council Member Garay-Lehn but there is a grievance procedure. Council Member Hohnadel is not in favor of dropping the complaint not because she feels there needs to be an ending where it finalizes something about an individual, but because the bigger issue in the intent of Council Member Lizano's complaint. It was to talk about the process and what we are allowed to do and what not to do with email communications. We have a procedure but there needs to be some type of layout as to what institutes business and non-business and how we should use email communication. Guidelines need to be set-up from this process. Council Member O'Meara opposes to dropping the complaint because there needs to be guidelines for this type of situation. Council Member Garay-Lehn has the right to feel as she feels but she has caused some damage. Council Member Rodriguez answers to Council Member Rosario's question about him suggesting to dropping the complaint because he felt that there was the possibility that members felt the discussion was enough and just wanted to put it out for a vote.

Without any further discussion on the motion to dismiss the complaint, Chairman Juarez asked the Council Members to vote. All in favor in dismissing the complaint: Council Treasurer Rodriguez, Council Secretary Vargas, Council Member Garay-Lehn.

All opposed: Nicholas Juárez (Chairman), Council Member Sonia Hohnadel, Council Member Teresa Dawson, Council Member Antonio Lizano, Council Member Adriana O'Meara, Council Member Maricruz Hill and Council Member Michael Rosario.

Chairman Juarez summarizes the purpose of the complaint and continues to the voting process. All in favor that the complaint does have merit: Nicholas Juárez (Chairman), Council Member Sonia Hohnadel, Council Member Teresa Dawson, Council Member Antonio Lizano, Council Member Adriana O'Meara, Council Member Maricruz Hill and Council Member Michael Rosario.

Abstain: Council Treasurer Rodriguez, Council Secretary Vargas, Council Member Garay-Lehn.

There being a majority of votes in favor the complaint does have merit. Board Members continue by determining a resolution for the situation.

Member Lizano leaves meeting at 10:00 a.m. due to prior commitment.

Chairman Juarez opens up the discussion for a resolution to the complaint. Council Member Hohnadel suggests to have two-three council members volunteer to be part of a committee to write, review and then bring to the board a policy about the usage of email and its distribution to include in the Policy and Procedures manual. Council Member Hill agrees with the idea, but maybe there is something already in place by the state. If so, let's obtain a copy of that policy, review it and move from there. Once it's voted on, then Board Members need to make a commitment that they are clear on the policy and sign a formal document as professionals. Council Secretary Vargas recommends to check with the Attorney General's office to make sure that the Council is not violating an individual's right to freedom of speech.

Resolution to complaint is to form a sub-committee of two-three board members to review existing e-mail communications policy whether through the State of Minnesota and to consult with the Attorney General's office in regards to e-mail communications and freedom of speech and to review our existing policy and procedure and to make recommendations to the entire board of any possible email communication policy for the board members.

Council Member Hohnadel makes a motion to form a sub-committee of two-three board members to review existing e-mail communications policy whether through the state of Minnesota and to consult with the Attorney General's office in regards to e-mail communications and freedom of speech and to review our existing policy and procedure and to make recommendations to the entire board of any possible email communication policy for the board members. Motion seconded by Council Member Dawson. The motion passed unanimously with an all in favor vote.

Council Secretary Vargas makes a recommendation to the sub-committee for the policy to be more specific and that people take personal accountability.

Volunteers to sit on sub-committee are Council Member Maricruz Hill, Council Member Sonia Hohnadel and Council Member Teresa Dawson.

March 2009 Special Meeting Minutes: Council Treasurer Rodriguez commented that he asked at the last meeting for someone to review and pull out the action items from the minutes, perhaps on a separate page at the end of the minutes or bold the action items within the minutes and he noticed that there was an attempt to do that but only the official action items were pointed out and there are some action items that were not bolded. His suggestion is for someone to review and point out action items within the discussions. Council Secretary Vargas comments that action items can be bolded within the minutes and at the same time write-up a list of action items.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez needs clarification on whether the Economic Development group was going to be a committee or a task force (page 5 of the minutes). Chairman Juarez clarifies that is a committee. Council Treasurer Rodriguez also comments that he thought committee had been established and that Council Member Lizano was the Chair of the committee, however the minutes do not state that.

Council Member Rosario asks Executive Director Muñoz to share information on the welcoming event with Marco Polo Advertising for Southwest Airlines and the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, USHLI (on page 3 of the minutes). Muñoz responds that USHLI is an organization the Council has been a part of and when Southwest announced that they were going to start flying to MSP they called the office to see if the Council could organize a small reunion with the folks from the community so that Lydia Martinez, their Community Relations Director, could meet Latinos in the Twin Cities and he asked Antonio Lizano if he could coordinate a small meeting to network and find a venue and work with people he knows that could sponsor the event.

Council Member Rosario questions if the board needs to be concerned with using Council Member Lizano's private business for certain aspects of what the Council is doing. Muñoz responds that there was no fee, Marco Polo did not charge the Council. It was for networking and to utilize other networks. It was very informal so there was no need to go through the funding scheme or approval through the state.

Council Member Garay-Lehn comments that rather than stating Marco Polo, because it's free advertising through the Council, it should say Council Member Lizano offered his services. Council Member Garay-Lehn shares that in the past there was a Council member who did that and the member created a lot of problems because she used the Council to promote her business. Council Secretary Vargas goes further saying that the conflict of interest policy needs to be analyzed and make sure that staff including the executive director is well trained on the conflict of interest policy. Executive Director Muñoz agrees with Council Member Garay-Lehn that the minutes should reflect Council Member Lizano's name rather than the business name. He states that in no sense he would ever compromise the integrity of the Council and certainly there is a process for sponsorships and things like that but want noted that the minutes should reflect the name instead of the business to protect the Council from scrutiny. Council Member Rosario comments that Council Member Lizano did a great job with the 30th Anniversary event, but his concern was that the Council is accountable to the people and when people come to see what we are doing, it needs to be very clear.

Council Secretary Vargas comments that the board needs to look into the conflict of interest policy within the board because even for the 30th Anniversary, the "Salute to Minnesota" presentation should have gone out as an RFP. The Council should have invited the rest of the community to put on a free presentation and get promotion. Council Member O'Meara responds that she chaired the committee for the 30th Anniversary and when Member Lizano offered his services the Board approved it on behalf of Marco Polo. Executive Director Muñoz feels that it is important that the Board explore the conflict of interest policy knowing that some of the board members have their own businesses and can really add value to the Council. During the 30th Anniversary the Council sought all the Latino media in the Twin Cities for gift-in-kind donations and Council Member Lizano was generous to donate gift-in-kind services and because he was a board member Director Muñoz consulted with the Department of Revenue as a gift-in-kind service and it was approved by the Assistant Commissioner as well as the Dept. of Administration and we followed all the procedures and we have all of that recorded; if it was to go over \$5,000.00 then the Council needs to follow the guidelines that the state has that we have to submit an RFP so that everyone is included because these are state funds.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez comments that on page 6 of the minutes, 4th paragraph down, it reads “Other than education people, what can CLAC do legislatively to oversee the discriminatory practices?” and he is not sure if “oversee” is the right word to use; the word should be “to highlight”.

Council Member Dawson made a motion to approve the March 2009 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Council Treasurer Rodriguez. The motion passed unanimously with an All in Favor vote.

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 \$331,857.34 that included a carry forward from last fiscal year. Through 10 months, until the end of April, the council has spent 83% from a 12 month budget leaving a remaining \$8,190.35 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 received a few years back.

For the next two fiscal years, the budget is \$298,000 from the general fund which includes a 5% reduction and if needed the Council will seek funding from Foundations to complement the current budget.

In addition, the Council received \$125,000 for each fiscal year under the Cultural Heritage Funding bill. Last November, there was a constitutional amendment that would invest funds into the environment, lakes and water system and also on cultural heritage. From that, CLAC was working at the House level to implement some language for the Councils of color to receive funds. The funding that was proposed is \$250,000 for the next biennium to work on community research needs and cultural preservation. Currently the Senate and the House are working together and meeting to discuss how much money they want to give the Councils.

Council Member Hohnadel asks what the funding is for or what can the Council do and cannot do with the funding. Executive Director Muñoz responds that the language that was approved is different for every Council of color; for CLAC it only said for Research and Community needs. The statement is too broad and the Council’s testimony before the Senate stated that this funding would be used for the Census 2010, also the Council would work on research and other community initiatives. The executive director made an amendment to the bill and had it sponsored by a House member so the actual language now states that per fiscal year, the Council would work on community and research needs as well as cultural preservation activities. It gives the Council a broader scheme of how to use this money. This still need to be discussed and staff will present a plan of how the Council will spend this money. The staff will provide recommendations to the board as far as the organizations that are already working on cultural preservation, the regions where they operate and how we can help supplement the work that they do.

Before continuing, Chairman Juarez welcomes the visitors that are present at the meeting and asks them to introduce themselves:

Juan Carlos Alanis works for Latino Communications Media including La Prensa trying to get more involved with the Council.

Maita Maggi is a member of the community and is attending the board meeting to learn more about the council and how she and her organization can get more involved with other Latino organizations. She works for the Saint Paul Public Schools and is a member of the Latino Child Care Providers Association.

Cheryl Mosley Ernst was asked by Council member Garay-Lehn to transcribe the notes from the first part of the meeting.

Executive Director's Report & 2008-09 Biennium Calendar & Action Plan Update: Executive Director Muñoz reported that CLAC is at the end of a two-year plan which the Council adapted. All of the work, this past quarter from April to May, has been working on the legislature. The Council has been collaborating with other partners. Legislative Director Tock has been instrumental in working with other policy makers who work on issues that impact Latinos in the state. There has been a lot of energy around health care, infrastructure and renewable energy, as well as items on social justice and education. In addition, the Council has also been monitoring legislation that will have direct impact on the Latino community.

Executive Director Muñoz reported on his activities for the months of March and April. In March, the staff was able to discuss and brainstorm on research for this summer and provide recommendations to the board. Another thing the Council is trying to do is develop a user interface on the website. Often people call the Council to compliment on the website and the content of information, but as the council continues to grow the template is not the best to accommodate all the information.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez asks if the Council should seek funding to incorporate a search engine into the website where people can type in what they are looking for and it would be easier to find the information. Executive Director Muñoz states that this is something that will be discussed with the design company to build the interface into the website and make it user friendly.

The Council also worked with the Minnesota Immigrant Freedom Network and Sen. Sandy Pappas who chairs the Education committee to ensure dollars as part of the money that subsidizes the tuition for immigrant students who attend metro colleges in the twin cities. Staff also met with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce President, David Olson, who is very interested in working with the Council to identify members of the Latino community and sit on the MN Chamber of Commerce board. He is also the Board Chair for the Board of Trustees for the MSCU system. He is a supporter of the non-resident tuition for the metro schools in the twin cities.

CLAC staff members attended the Hispanic U.S. Leadership Institute (USHLI) conference and shared best practices and inform each other on legislative affairs and what policy issues are impacting Latino across the country. In addition, while at the conference, Executive Director Muñoz shared with the other State Council Directors CLAC's civic engagement model and the research model.

In April, both the Legislative Director and Executive Director attended the 2009 National Latino Education Summit in Washington, DC. Staff was able to meet with officials from the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers to work on issues that impact Latinos such as the achievement gap, graduation rate and its drop-out rate.

CLAC also joined the other Councils in a press conference about the Census 2010. CLAC was able to share what it is doing along with the MN Latino Complete Count Committee to keep Latinos informed about the Census.

Council Secretary Vargas asked how this expense specifically ties to the Council business with its agenda, working with the MN Legislature and pushing for policy changes. In addition, he asked who within the Council approves out-of-state travel for the Executive Director. Executive Director Muñoz responded that he approves out-of-state travel for the staff and Council Chairman Juarez approves his out-of-state travel. Additionally, the air travel was sponsored by Southwest Airlines and the National American Federation of Teachers paid for the hotel accommodations for all state council's and commissions that attended; the only cost that the Council paid for was the 2-night hotel accommodation for Legislative Director Tock.

Council Secretary Vargas questions if there is a conflict of interest with a major airline sponsoring a state agency to a national conference. Executive Director Muñoz reminds the Board that two years ago the Council signed a Memorandum of Collaboration between CLAC and USHLI and based on the memorandum the Council continues to develop the partnership and honor the agreement with attending these meetings. The Council does not interact directly with the airline therefore not receiving any funds directly for traveling. The National Federation of Teachers and the U.S. Education Association came together to organize this Education Latino Summit and searched for an airline to sponsor and help bring together this group.

Council Member Hohnadel states that she brought this conversation to the table about three years ago of the importance of these collaborations with the other states and that's because of her involvement with NALEO. Council Member Hohnadel has been engaging in these national conversations which are very important to find out what other Latino organizations are doing in other parts of the country because sometimes we are not able to influence policy within our own state or within our communities but maybe in being involved at the national level we can influence these conversations.

Council Member Garay-Lehn also expresses the importance of being involved at the national level and with organizations such as the National Conference of La Raza (NCLR). In the past, CLAC was an affiliate of NCLR and staff and council members were able to attend its conference.

Council Member Rosario questions Council Chairman Juarez if in approving these travels they have merit and if this is something the entire board needs to be included in or open for discussion. Council Treasurer Rodriguez responds that the way the board has addressed it is that there is a budget and the Council needs to be very diligent in how that gets spent, however there is money allocated for travel. The board decided that they didn't have to be involved on the details of how that line item was going to be spent.

Council Secretary Vargas comments that the Council can have conferencing as an effective way to share information, however, the partnerships need to be more strategic and with common goals, common objectives and common outcomes.

Council member Rosario states that maybe in the future the Chairman can send an F.Y.I. email to the board stating his support for the executive director's travel and sharing information of the travel such as the purpose of the event, dates and open it up to the Council members to submit questions or issues that the executive director can ask or share during the event. Council

Secretary Vargas goes further in saying that he would like to amend this and have the Chairman at least send the email to the Executive Committee.

Executive Director Muñoz also shares that staff met with Council Chairman Juarez to discuss partnerships and collaborations. During the Legislative session, the Council received many requests from other organizations that are working on issues similar to the Council to support their legislative agendas. An internal process will be established so that when the Council receives a request from a certain organization then we'll compare to if it aligns to our core legislative agenda and Council priorities.

In addition, the Community Research Fellow, David Echeverry, completed his term with the Council. His term was supposed to end in December, but fortunately the Council was able to extend his appointment date until June. Echeverry added value to the work of the Council especially around the legislative agenda. He also added perspective to the Health report that was published this past January.

The Council has also been working on the Census initiative. Lastly, Director Muñoz was approached by Marnie Warner, Research Associate from the Center for Rural Policy and Development, because they are interested in picking up that report again and really examining the root causes of disparities in education between the Latino students and other students. Director Muñoz was frank with Ms. Warner regarding budgeting for this, but they were still interested in negotiating how staff can help research those items or how we can work with other organizations that are committed in finding out the root causes. In the past there was some sentiment from the board that the report was very basic, very dry and that it was very informational. It didn't talk about what we need to do, what intervention needs to be done in changing the system.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez shares that the night before, he and staff from the Council attended the Asian Pacific Council Annual Heritage Dinner. Rodriguez attended in representation of MEDA. The main speaker was a representative from Wells Fargo who is now doing social community development and the Council should probably contact him. He talked about the Itasca project which was addressing racial gap and the dropout rate. The report places the state of Minnesota as being on the average nationwide in efficiency in education but when you break it down into "zip codes" which follows ethnicities then it's a different story.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez would like staff to contact him and get copies of those reports and see what information is already there on Latinos. Council Member Hohnadel shares that those reports are on the Department of Education website and on the national level it was reported a couple of years ago. What the Center for Rural Policy did last time with the report was that they took the school districts with 10% of the student population and analyze the status of Latino students in these districts. What the Center for Rural Policy needs to do is change their methodology to go with school districts that have a large number of Latino students by count not by 10%. Council Treasurer Rodriguez adds that if the Council is looking at doing another report to complement the first one then probably this gentleman from Wells Fargo might be able to fund it.

Executive Director Muñoz states that he would like to have this conversation with the board about what do we want from the report and its outline. Board members express that they would like to see the report first and then submit ideas/comments to the director.

Council Secretary Vargas makes a recommendation on staff reports, although they are very informative, he would like to see a section on specific bills that the Council has supported, specific legislation that we followed so we can track year-round what tangibles, what outcomes we can celebrate and also how can the board be more engaged in helping staff.

Executive Director Muñoz shares that the Click-CLAC is a way in which CLAC communicates and provides updates of current bills that the Council is monitoring.

Council Treasurer Rodriguez makes an observation that the board needs to always go back to the charter and CLAC's role is to advice. The Council will not be measured by what happened, that is good for the community point of view, but we have to advice on positive and/or negative and CLAC needs to represent all of the opinions all the time.

Council Member Hill adds that Rita Garcia, Business Partners Plus, helped the Board Members with a straight focus and a frame work. The Council is staying on track and what we need to be focused based on the Biennium calendar. Council Member Hill commends Legislative Director Tock for her work and keeping board members informed through Click-CLAC.

The process the way it stands right now is for the Council to work on a bill, there is a time line, then the board comes back and sees if it went through or not and what the results are. To include that in minutes and/or in reports is a lot of work. The bills are very complex and consider that we are staying on target on to when staff needs to report these.

Council Secretary Vargas shares that the board needs to be informed on a month to month basis if they are going to be effective and supporting the staff. The staff report template can easily be changed to include the legislative bill tracking information.

Council Member Garay-Lehn agrees with Council Secretary Vargas in reporting on the bills. A final report from the legislature does not end until June 30th which is the end of the fiscal year. Perhaps during the board retreat staff can provide information on what happened during the legislative session, what was accomplished and what was not and why.

Council Member O'Meara is satisfied with the Council action plan. She considers that staff has done a wonderful job and if a board member wants to have more information they can call the staff. Personally, she is satisfied with the amount of information she is receiving from the staff.

Executive Director Muñoz shares that the staff has implemented an internal document that perhaps could be added to the Legislative Director's report during the legislative session. This document includes all the legislative tracking by area, what worked and what committees have been doing on a weekly basis.

Council Chairman Juarez gears the discussion back to the Center for Rural Policy report. Director Muñoz shares that he can set up a follow-up meeting with Ms. Warner but before he would like to get feedback from the Council members.

Council Treasurer suggests establishing an education committee to work with the executive director and provide feedback. There is already an education committee on place and the members are Council Member Elia Bruggeman, Council Member Sonia Hohnadel and Council Member Teresa Dawson. **Director Muñoz will contact Council member Bruggeman to see if she is willing to continue and be part of the committee.**

This education committee is charged to work and meet with the executive director to review and have a conversation with the Center for Rural Policy & Development and look at the education report.

Break... Meeting convenes at 11:50 a.m.

Executive Director Muñoz shares that Community Liaison Oscar Echandi and Legislative Director Rosa Tock have been with the Council for two years and wants to recognize their contribution to the Council. In the past week Muñoz was able to do staff assessment and they both ranked outstanding. Legislative Director Rosa Tock has contributed on the field of legislative affairs and Community Liaison Oscar Echandi has contributed in the civic engagement and community relations. They were both presented with a certificate of appreciation.

Legislative Update and Collaboration with Stakeholders: Legislative Director Tock comments that this is the first Legislative session that she has followed and it has been a learning curve in terms of understanding the legislative process and making relationships with key legislators.

To answer to Council Secretary Vargas request to inform on a permanent basis of bill tracking, staff uses an internal document to track the status of each bill and where it is leading to. To better inform about the accomplishments of each bill, legislative director Tock prepared a preliminary summary to inform about the current standing bills which the Council has been advocating for based on the legislative agenda approved by the board.

In terms of Higher Education ([SF2083](#)), this was one of the topics the Council was advocating for during the Latino Legislative Day at the Capitol. The House voted 103-31 to re-pass the bill as amended by conference; the Senate re-passed it 54-12. The same language to keep non-resident tuition rates in several MNsCU institutions has not been kept in the Higher Education Omnibus Bill. However, CLAC's conversation with MNsCU authorities and Senator Pappas indicated that there will be money available to fund the institutions previously listed. As of May 13, 2009, the conference committee report does not include the language originally included in the Senate bill. Bill still waiting for Governor's signature.

Council Member Garay-Lehn comments that Governor Pawlenty vetoed the Health Care bill. A great number of people will be un-insured and it is affecting the poorest people that need the most. Therefore Hennepin county Medical center is going to layoff a lot of employees, Park Nicollett has already started because of the Governor's decision to veto.

Another bill that was still waiting for the Governor to be signed was the K-12 Education bill ([HF2](#)) that was passed 85-49 by the House and 49-16 by the Senate. There is new language regarding integration revenue dependent upon a school district plan identifying integration issues, especially to close the achievement gap. The plan includes implementing innovative and practical strategies and programs such as magnet schools, transportation, research-based programs to improve the performance of protected students with lower measured achievement on state or local assessments, staff development for teachers in cultural competency, formative assessments, and increased numbers of teachers of color that enable the district to achieve annual progress in realizing the goals in its plan. CLAC has been advocating for similar policies in the last two years with some positive results.

In regards to the Access to Health Care and closing health disparities, CLAC is part of the advisory board of the eliminating Health disparities Initiative. The Governor supports the EHDI as well as the House & Senate. CLAC has strengthened the working relationships with EHDI Advisory Board and with the commissioner of health.

The Council was able to seize an opportunity in regards to stimulus funds and convene a meeting with MEDA and the Council directors. Language to include minorities and women in training and job opportunities in the weatherization bill was successfully introduced. CLAC worked with HIRE MN. The Weatherization Bill [HF680/SF657*](#), uses federal stimulus funds for weatherizing low- to moderate-income homes and rental properties, establishes a window replacement option and a residential revolving loan program. The conference committee provides \$1 million in funding for training of low-income people for weatherization jobs, \$1 million for training of low-income people for other renewable energy jobs and \$500,000 for energy efficiency outreach programs.

In terms of health and Human Services it has been very painful; cuts would come from up to 25 percent additional rate reductions to long-term care facilities, nursing homes and inpatient hospital reimbursement rates; cuts health and human services by \$500 million. Omnibus bill passed 80-51 by the House and 47-18 by the Senate, and awaits action by the governor.

The Health care bill still awaits action by the Governor. The bill calls for a 3 percent cut to Medical Assistance and other programs, but it does not cut primary care fields. Specialists are cut by about 5 percent. This adds up to more than \$1 billion hit (Gov. Tim Pawlenty sought a \$1.5 billion cut). Hospitals would receive about a 3 percent cut, which is 1/17th of what the governor wanted. Nursing homes are not cut too bad, and long-term care is reduced by 2.58 percent.

Regarding the anti-immigrant provisions that were part in some of the bills, the REAL-ID prohibition passed both the house and the senate and was signed by the Governor. Basically, the bill prevents the Department of Public Safety from taking any steps to implement or plan for implementation of the federal REAL ID Act of 2005. E-Verify was taken out of the government and operations budget.

Senator Gimse who is appointed by the legislature to sit on CLAC's board was the only one who voted against this bill. Director Muñoz states that members of the legislature that sit on the board are invited to attend the meetings and all the reports and information are also sent to them. Senator Gimse was part of the Council meeting when the board was discussing the immigration position statement; however, at that time staff didn't know that he would support Gov. Pawlenty's executive order in January 2008, which included language like E-Verify.

Council Secretary Vargas questions if the Council had not had a discussion with Senator Gimse about the Read ID. He suggests that the Executive Director have a conversation with Senator Gimse and get his position and explain CLAC's position; maybe this is something the legislative committee needs to do. Executive Director Muñoz states that he has discussed this with the Legislative Director being that it also has some implications on the Council. A few weeks ago, CLAC received a letter from students of the U of Minnesota who wanted to meet with CLAC staff because they felt it was very concerning that Senator Gimse sits on CLAC's board. Executive Director Muñoz indicated that he wrote back to the students explaining that Sen. Gimse, who seats on the board, knows what the Council's position is on immigration and that we would welcome an opportunity to work and talk with Senator Gimse in the near future.

After all, Senator Gimse is appointed by the minority leadership in the Senate, as bi-partisan legislators are appointed to the council by legislative mandate (see CLAC's statute).

In addition, the working group on Ethnic Heritage and New Americans was extended for another biennium.

Lastly, CLAC and other councils of color got funds for culture and heritage preservation. Bill HF1231 would provide that new sales tax revenues be deposited in four dedicated funds, under the legacy amendment adopted onto the state's constitution last year.

Council Member Rosario comments that the legislative report was very precise.

New Business:

Council Chairman Juarez reported that in the last couple of weeks there has been a conversation with Alberto Monserrate in regards to outreach and communications on a press release that CLAC sent out in regards to the H1N1 flu. The Executive Committee met via teleconference on some of the issues and concerns that were raised. There were some threats against CLAC, its Executive Director and some argumentative things towards CLAC. The Executive Committee tried to schedule a meeting with Mr. Monserrate before this board meeting. However, due to a conflict of schedules, it did not happen. A meeting has been scheduled for Friday, May 22, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. in the board room. At this time, the issue is brought to the board to discuss items for the agenda and how the board should precede with this issue.

Alberto Monserrate is one of the owners of LCN networks; Juan Carlos Alanis, who attended today's meeting, is another owner. They are probably the main Latino media in Minnesota because La Prensa, who was owned by Mario Duarte, merged with LCN about two years ago.

The idea of the meeting would be to exclusively talk about CLAC and the press. There hasn't been a formal complaint or filing so executive committee will try to establish a relationship with LCN. Council Chairman Juarez states that in the email conversation, Mr. Monserrate states that he has assigned a reporter to do a story about CLAC but he is not sure if Council Members will be interviewed or how this is going to work. Maybe this will be a great opportunity for them to know what CLAC has been doing regarding community outreach.

Council members express that this exchange of emails need to be taken more seriously and the Executive Committee need to be prepared to talk about the email communications between Executive Director Muñoz and Mr. Monserrate. Council Member Hohnadel reviews chronological order of e-communication events between Executive Director Muñoz and Mr. Monserrate.

At the time that the press release went out only two media outlets were reporting Swine Flu cases in Minnesota. The staff checked La Prensa's website for information and they only had national news, so they were not intentionally left out of the press release. After Mr. Monserrate's first email, Executive Director Muñoz communicated with Council Chairman Juarez to inquire about how to address this situation and he was directed to address it professionally. Executive Director Muñoz called Mr. Monserrate and at some point in the conversation, according to Executive Director Muñoz, Mr. Monserrate started raising his voice and so Muñoz told him to lower his voice and if not then he was going to have to disengage from the conversation.

Council Secretary Vargas states that CLAC's relationship with this entity is very important and the Council must rebuild that relationship because at the moment it is non-existent.

Council Member Hohnadel shares the sentiment that the Council needs the support and relationship with Mr. Monserrate, however, during this meeting the Executive Committee needs to let Mr. Monserrate know that the Board also supports its Executive Director.

Council Members also express to the executive director to trust and to reach out to other members of the board when he needs help or feels the need to disengage from a situation.

Council Member Vargas advises that before the staff engages other offices within the state government on this issue we need to try to resolve this issue through CLAC first. There should be a level of trust and confidence in the ability to help the Executive Director in solving this case so there is no need to go outside of CLAC. He raised concern that Executive Director Muñoz had engaged the Attorney General's office and the Department of Human Resources primarily for his own protection. He added that these issues needed to be contained within the Council. Council members question how these agencies were engaged.

Executive Director Muñoz clarifies that he engaged the Department of Human Resources to inquire how to deal with this kind of situation because there was a threat made against the Council and against his persona. The first advice from the Department of Human Resources was to contact the Governor's office because he is our primary stakeholder to inform their office that there might be a story in the press.

Council Secretary Vargas encourages Council Chairman Juarez that the next time staff informs him that they are going to engage other stakeholders including the Attorney General's office to let the Executive Committee know first.

Council Chairman Juarez calls a special meeting for Friday, May 22, 2009 at 2:30 p.m.

Council Member Rodriguez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Garay-Lehn. The motion passes unanimously with an All in favor Vote.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Recorded and Typed by Gladys Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by Rosa Tock, Interim Executive Director

Reviewed and Submitted by Mario Vargas, Council Secretary