



**MINUTES OF THE BOARD
9 DECEMBER 2008**

Riffe Center #1932, 77 South High Street, Columbus

Attendance

Commissioners - Present

Richard Romero
Mary Santiago
Michael G. Florez
V. Anthony Simms-Howell
Lupe Williams

Commissioners - Absent

Blanche Aviles Casey
Phillip R. Barbosa
Humberto Gonzalez
Chris Rodriguez
Simon Rodriguez
Baldemar Velasquez

Staff - Present

Ezra C. Escudero
Florentina Staigers
Lilleana Cavanaugh

Call to Order

Chair Romero called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Call of the Roll

There were five commissioners present. No quorum.

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Chair's Commentary

Chair Romero thanked everybody for being at the meeting and wished all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He also acknowledged the complaint from Commissioner Simms-Howell about the minutes.

Chair Romero expressed that the Commission will have a great year, keep growing, be more connected with the Legislators and earn the respect of all people in the State of Ohio.

Director's Reports

Director Escudero asked the Commissioners indulgence about the Director's Reports for this month due to the presentations for the day. He will present his reports at the January 2009 Board meeting.

Director Escudero introduced James Manuel from the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Manuel thanked the Board Chair. He gave a presentation about a program of their organization called Tech Columbus. He also invited the Board to visit Tech Columbus and held a meeting at their offices.

Commissioner Simms-Howell asked Mr. Manuel if their company gets federal funding and about the global impact of what they are doing, since it requires some risks that dollars would be lost.

Mr. Manuel explained to Commissioner Simms-Howell that they have a program Impact Columbus that has a resident entrepreneur program, that they are serial entrepreneur individuals that started many companies that are still up and running. He expressed that they are kind of the rock stars in the entrepreneurial world.

Commissioner Simms-Howell expressed to the Chair that it would be good that they include Latinos and minorities into that program.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

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Chair Romero informed that the committee met this morning and Commissioners Mary Santiago, Flores and Director Escudero attended. He expressed most of the conversation centered on getting ready for next year, the retreat and this year's creation of the committees on Education, Economic Development and Workforce and Ohio's Emerging Diversity. He also informed that they talked about creating a committee to address immigration issues and he appointed Commissioner Baldemar Velasquez to lead that effort. In addition to that, they talked about the need that all the Commissioners get a full understanding of everybody's work, the work of the committees and the office. He plans to visit the Commission's office next Friday after lunch, to spend some time with the staff and to prepare for the retreat.

Workforce & Economic Development - No report.

Ohio's Emerging Diversity - No report.

Finance - No report.

Chair Romero expressed that they are waiting on the re-appointment or new appointment of the Commissioner that chairs this committee.

Director Escudero reported that they had an excellent statewide meeting, a summit of the Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and the Hispanic Business Associations at The Columbus Renaissance on Friday and Saturday, December 5 and 6. This event was possible thanks to the financial support of State Farm Insurance, Key Bank Foundation and the Hispanic Roundtable of Cleveland. More than thirty persons representing the key organizations attended. The meeting had an open agenda with the purpose of bringing these organizations together to begin dialogue about creating a statewide economic development agenda for Ohio Latino business community. He expressed that the meeting was a great success, not only because of the dialogue, but each of these individual organizations came together and at the last week's meeting decided to recognize one single umbrella organization, the Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, an organization that was founded with that intention. He informed that every group represented recognized the OHCC as their umbrella organization. Each of these participating groups committed to an ongoing dialogue and action to develop a statewide Latino economic development agenda, to work together on projects where there is common ground and begin a new day of increase communication and shared dialogue together. The role of our agency and specifically the office will be to offer full logistical support to the Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. We facilitated that dialogue, activated a new list-serve called Latino Business@Ohio.gov and hopefully before Christmas we will be launching a webpage in our site that is devoted to

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the Hispanic Chambers and Hispanic Business Associations and this new ongoing partnership.

Chair Romero wanted to thank the participation of the Department of Development through Michelle Abraham. He wants his comment in these minutes. He also commented that this is very exciting and this is the purpose of this Commission.

Education - No report.

Commissioner Simms-Howell expressed his concern about the kids that go to kindergarten and first grade and has to deal with the language barrier. After all he had studied over the years, finally concluded that it is important to pay

attention to pre-school; that the kids should be better prepare in knowing the language if they are taught since pre-school. He likes that the Commission pays attention to that education process.

Chair Romero expressed that they skipped the Education Report because the Chair is not present, but that he know that the staff went out to get feedback from the community and he is waiting for the retreat to have the opportunity to bring all Commissioners up-to date. He appreciated the comments from Commissioner Simms-Howell.

Vice Chair Santiago recommended that since the Commission is still waiting for the re-appointments of Board members, they should start going on Commissioner Simms-Howell suggestions to start on something regarding education.

Chair Romero agreed with Vice Chair Santiago that they should not wait for the re-appointments, but at the same time, he wants to wait for the dust to settle, really see what we are going to do with this committee. He expressed that there are talks about asking non-Commissioners representing different areas throughout the State to serve in this committee. This is an idea he likes to explore and wants the Commissioners take into consideration. Maybe they know somebody in their areas that is an expert in some area, like education, business development, immigration, because anytime you have experts in a committee that advances the cause.

Chair Romero expressed that this year the Commission is going to take a very strong stand on immigration issues. That he wants the Commissioners to be prepared for that, do research to see what other states are doing with regard to protecting the immigrants and come back with some recommendations.

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Florentina Staigers expressed that this is a challenge and that she is taking the challenge. She wants to see some positive policy changes coming out of the House and Senate. She informed that together with Director Escudero probably after their retreat, they would be setting an agenda to establish priorities and what sorts of policy changes are needed.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Escudero will welcome great ideas and input for next year's retreat.

Florentina Staigers presented a Resolution in opposition to Senate Bill 260. Oberlin City Council will hear this issue on December 15 at 7:30 p.m. She distributed to all an Issue Policy Brief on Local Law Enforcement Initiatives.

She gave a brief explanation and told the members that probably reading the complete brief would be their homework later. She informed that there has been communication and dialogue about law enforcement initiatives because the Senate Bill 260 passed the Senate unanimously on April. She explained that this measure would allow local law enforcement agencies to enforce civil violations to the immigration laws, which now they only are allow to enforce criminal provisions to the immigration laws. Due to the length of this brief, it is not transcribed, but is attached to these minutes as **Exhibit A**, and the Resolution in opposition to Senate Bill 260 is attached as **Exhibit B**.

Chair Romero asked Florentina Staigers that together with the Director prepare a statement that she would be able to share with the members of Oberlin City Council. He suggested also that they should start the process of proposing initiatives that better position the State in regards to immigration issues, instead of speaking when something will occur.

Chair Romero consulted with the Commission legal counselor if he is allow as individual and Chair of the Board of the Commission to support the Oberlin City Council initiative. The counselor expressed he is allow to. Chair Romero expressed that he supports the Oberlin City Council initiative and that he will work with the Director to draft a statement.

Chair Romero introduced Gretchen Lopez, Program Director of the Ohio Seniors Health Information Program (OSHIP) at the Ohio Department of Insurance to present information about new changes in Medicare. Mrs. Lopez presented and distributed information about the new changes for Medicare.

Commissioner Santiago informed that she and Lilleana have been visiting hotels for the DHO Gala. She put together recommendation and budget for the University hotel, distributed to the members in attendance and will send them

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to the ones not present. This issue will be discussed by the full board for a vote at the next meeting in January 2009.

Public Commentary

Public introduced themselves.

Announcements

Commissioner Simms-Howell informed that he and his wife attended the Cincinnati Public Schools Safety Program presented by the FBI. He informed also that the LULAC National Convention would be in Cincinnati in the year 2011.

Commissioner Williams informed that she participated in the National Immigration Forum State of Politics through of phone call that includes part of Texas and Arizona. They concluded that a day must be set to resolve the issue of immigration. They resolved that by Thanksgiving 2009 is the time they want the Comprehensive Immigration Law to take place.

Director Escudero informed, to clear concerns of Commissioner Simms-Howell about the DHO date and the OSU game, that the DHO is Friday, September 18 and the game is Saturday the 19 in Cleveland. There is no conflict with the date.

Adjournment

Chair Romero adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Richard Romero, Chair

Mary Santiago, Vice Chair

ADDENDUM TO MINUTES

RESOLUTIONS 2008

DECEMBER 9, 2008

RESOLUTION #1	Resolution in opposition to Senate Bill 260 - Presented, not voted on for lack of quorum
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