



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
LANSING

SUSAN CORBIN
ACTING DIRECTOR

**Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan, Commission Meeting
Michigan Statewide Carpenters and Millwrights Apprenticeship
Wayland Training Center
500 Reno Drive Wayland, MI 49348
September 17, 2021 6:00PM-8:00PM
Meeting Minutes No. 336**

Commissioners Present

Monica B. Reyes, Chair
Juanita Bocanegra, Secretary

Jose Sanchez III
Floresio Hernandez
Jeremiah Hernandez
Juan Marinez

Abril Valdes Siewert
Celeste Sanchez Lloyd
Jesse Bernal
Consuela Barber-Lopez

Staff Present:

Francisca Garcia (Administrative Assistant)

Guests:

Poppy Hernandez and Dr. Isabel Montemayor.

Start Audio Recording: 5:58 PM

1) **Call to Order:**

Chair Monica B. Reyes calls the meeting to order at 5:59 PM.

Introduction: Chair Reyes calls the meeting to order.

2) **Roll Call:**

Welcome of new Commissioners. Role Call done with introductions.

3) **Acknowledgement of Commissioner Absences:**

Commissioners Jesus Hernandez, Jessica Cruz, Esperanza Cantu, Anthony Rubio and Sonya Hernandez were not present.

4) **Approval of Agenda:**

Reading of the agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Juanita Bocanegra moved to approve the meeting agenda, with support from Commissioner Jeremiah Hernandez. Motion was passed.

5) **Approval of Minutes from April 16, 2021:**

Minutes from the April 16 online meeting were approved with prior review from Commissioners.

MOTION: Commissioner Juanita Bocanegra moved to approve meeting minutes, with support from Commissioner Jeremiah Hernandez. Motion was passed.

6) **Public Comment:**

Monica B. Reyes, Chair
Sonya Hernandez, Vice Chair
Juanita Bocanegra, Secretary
Esperanza Cantu, Trustee
Abril Valdes Siewert

Anthony Rubio
Celeste Sanchez Lloyd
Consuela Barber-Lopez
Floresio Hernandez
Jesse M. Bernal

Jessica Cruz
Jeremiah Hernandez
Jesus M. Hernandez
Jose Sanchez, III
Juan Marinez

Francisca gave instructions on how public comment would work. Guests were informed the meeting is being recorded. Speakers are to identify themselves by name prior to their public comment. Speakers will be called in the order their request is received. There were no public comments.

7) Executive Report:

a.) Chair Monica Reyes

- a) Chair began by informing everyone about the Attorney General's order to resume open, in-person meetings.
- b) Shared that Executive Director Fayrouz Saad accepted a position in Washington D.C. joining the Biden administration. Her last day was August 30th. This leaves us in a place of transition. Currently we are working with Karen Philippi from Office of Global Michigan and Poppy Hernandez from the Governor's Equity and Inclusion Office.
- c) This week the 10th through the 19th the state is celebrating Welcoming Week. Various organizations and communities bring together neighbors of all backgrounds to build strong connections. Chair encouraged Commissioners to check out link included in her report.
- d) Poppy Hernandez will be talking to us about Office of Global Michigan partnering with HLCOM to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.
- e) Mask guidelines from the Governor's office in regards to in-person meetings included with Chair report. Masks are not mandatory for vaccinated individuals.
- f) Community Housing Network of Troy Michigan is looking for one of our commissioners to be a part of their virtual event for Hispanic Heritage Month. They are looking for someone to talk about how Hispanic's in Michigan have been impacted by the pandemic. Commissioner Abril Valdes Siewert asked for the date of the event. Chair said she would get back to her with that information.
- g) Chair thanking the Personnel Committee for working in the hiring process. Poppy Hernandez, Fayrouz Saad, Commissioner Juan Marinez, Commissioner Jesus Hernandez, and Chair were part of the committee. Dr. Isabel Montemayor has been selected for the Executive Director position. The committee is requesting a motion to approve the hiring of Dr. Isabel Montemayor as the new HLCOM Executive Director.

MOTION: Commissioner Jesse Bernal moved to approve the hiring of Dr. Isabel Montemayor as the new HLCOM Executive Director, with support from Commissioner Jose Sanchez III. Motion was passed.

- h) Dr. Isabel Montemayor was present for the meeting and made a few comments. She is excited to start working with the commissioners and getting to know them personally and professionally. She will be able to set up meetings with each of the commissioners soon.
- i) Chair will be meeting with E.D. on Tuesday, September 21st to discuss moving forward and planning for upcoming strategic planning meeting. Chair would like each commissioner to plan a "Meet the Community" event in each of their communities to introduce people to new E.D. These events can be held in person or virtually.
- j) Chair calls on Poppy Hernandez to speak on behalf of the state. Poppy Hernandez: The SOM initiative with HLCOM includes scheduling, policy advising and appointments. The Governor's office has appointed more than 70 Latinx leaders in the past year and a half. Poppy is going to work very hard to align our strategic priorities with those of the Governor over the next year and the next 4 years. Poppy would like to be a part of our strategic planning meeting to ensure that alignment happens. Poppy gave thanks to the commission for their work. She thanked Commissioner Celeste Sanchez-Lloyd for her work with the COVID task force. She is certain that the work done to reach out to the farmworker population is on par with what the Governor wanted in terms of communicating how much their contributions to the state are valued. On September 22nd there will be a virtual panel in which some of our commissioners will be a part of. This is being offered to both SOM employees and external contractors. Commissioner Florenio Hernandez asked what strategic priorities the Governor has so that the commission is aware. Poppy answered that the Governor prioritizes equitable access to healthcare and education for all Michiganders; the role of the commission is to mitigate those priorities to the Latinx population and to advise on what areas the state might be missing. Commissioner Abril Valdes Siewert asked what are the

parameters that the Governor is willing to address? Commissioner Abril used the cancellation of the Drive Safe hearing as an example. Where does the Governor stand? Poppy states that the Governor is very aware of the issue and that she is supportive, however, this is a legislative issue. Many of the organizers of the issue are organizing ineffectively. The Governor does not have the ability at the present time to pass this legislation. Chair Monica Reyes stated that the commission got late notice of the hearing. Commissioner Juan Marinez volunteered to attend, but we were not notified of the cancellation or why. Commissioner Abril Valdes Siewert commented that perhaps the commission needs to be educated more on the legislative process to effectively help the community in organizing surrounding issues like this. In addition, Poppy wanted to share that the state spent a lot of money providing COVID testing and vaccines to the migrant farmworker community. Michigan is very committed to equal access to farmworkers.

- k) Commissioner Anthony Rubio introduced at 7:05pm, arrived late to the meeting. Chair Monica Reyes requested he introduce himself and talk about his work in his part of the state. Commissioner Anthony Rubio reports that his area needs more access to vaccinations. The workers are suspicious and need a lot of coaxing to accept the vaccine due to misinformation. Commissioner Anthony Rubio is willing to work with Chair Monica Reyes to offer more vaccines in his area. Poppy Hernandez commented that a member from the Department of Agriculture and DHHS should have been assigned to his area, she is surprised to hear about the lack of vaccines available. She will be looking into the issue further and get back to Commissioner Anthony Rubio.

8) **Executive Director Report:**

- a.) None.

9) **Committee Reports**

- a) **Finance Planning:** Chair Monica Reyes will have to send an email to everyone. Commissioner Cantu was unable to attend the meeting due to an illness in her home. The report received from July was not helpful at this time. There are excess funds. Chair Monica Reyes has brought questions about items on the budget to the accounting office. We are being charged for office space when we have not had an office for a year and a half. Once the E.D. starts in her position, she will work with the Chair to get some of these questions answered. Commissioner Anthony Rubio asked what will happen with the excess funds. Chair Monica Reyes states that she has requested 10, \$1,000 scholarships, 2 phones and 2 printers for staff.
- b) **Public Relations:** Commissioner Sonya Hernandez not present to give an update. Chair Monica Reyes requested Commissioner Jesse Bernal give the update. The committee has decided to have the HHM awards ceremony virtually on October 14th, 6pm-7pm. All the awards will be nomination based. Commissioner Sonya Hernandez will be reaching out to the Governor's office for a recorded message to include in the ceremony. Commissioner Bernal states that more information will be sent out soon. Chair Monica Reyes requested a Veteran related award be included. Chair Reyes requested a budget from the committee so that awards can be ordered. Commissioner Jeremiah Hernandez asked for clarification on the budget, the \$28,600 surplus does not include the amount for the awards. Commissioner Abril Valdes Siewert pointed out that some of the issue is that awards and flyers were done by the previous E.D. and the P.R. Committee would need to review old purchase orders for reference.
- c) **Advocacy:** Commissioner Juan Marinez reported that he attended the driver's license hearing at the capitol, but it was cancelled. Other advocates from western Michigan and MIRC were present. Chair Reyes requested that Commissioner subscribe to MIRC (Michigan Immigrant Rights Center) emails.
- d) **Covid-19 Task Force Committee:** Commissioner Sonya Hernandez not present to give update. Commissioner Consuela Barber-Lopez reports they have not met.

10) **Old Business:**

- a. None to report.

11) New Business:

- a. Commissioner Comments: Florensis Hernandez attended a LLEAD meeting on July 29th in which the Lt. Governor was present. The questions asked of the Lt. Governor were focused on the child detention center in Michigan. Commissioner Florensis Hernandez is bringing the community concern to the attention of the commission. Poppy Hernandez pointed out the difference between the residential center which is a federally run facility and “detention centers”. Commissioner Florensis Hernandez suggests that education on the centers in our state is needed by the community. Commissioner Celeste Sanchez-Lloyd reported that Grand Rapids announced this week racism is a Public Health issue. Commissioner Juan Marinez encourages commissioners to be aware of the redistricting in Michigan and how it affects their areas.

12) Announcements:

- a. Next commission meeting is on October 15, 2021, at 6pm. Location TBD.
- b. Strategic Planning Meeting on November 19, 2021, starting at 10am in Lansing. Commission meeting to follow at 6pm. Location TBD.
- c. Elections will take place at the November meeting.

13) Adjournment

MOTION: Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bocanegra and supported by Commissioner Rubio. Motion passes and the meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica B. Reyes, Chairperson Date

Juanita Bocanegra, Trustee Date