

Virginia Latino Advisory Board
Minutes – Monday, November 17, 2014
Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere St
Richmond, VA 23220

Members Present: Gonzalo Aida, Carolina Espinal, Christopher Falcon, Julio Cesar Idrobo, Joel Martinez, J. Michael Martinez de Andino, Aida Pacheco, Gloria Pena Rockhold, Alex Rodriguez, Esuardo Rodriguez, Vivian Sanchez, Zuraya Tapia-Hadley, Lucero Soto Wiley, Michel Zajur

Members Absent: Charlotte Fritts, Cecilia Martinez, Christine Poarch, Theresa Speake, Gresilda A. Tilley-Lubbs, Alexander Vanegas, John Villamil-Casanova

Ex-Officio Members Present: none

Liaison with Governor's Office: Diana Vall-Ilobera, Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security

Legal Counsel: Anna Birkenheier, Assistant VA Attorney General, Financial Law and Government Support Section

Guests Present: Lissette Carbajal(Governor's staff), Maribel Ramos(Governor's staff), Natalia Olson(SBA), James Williams(SBA), Jaime Areizaga-Soto(Governor's staff), Demas Boudreaux(VHCC)

1:31

14 members present, meeting called to order

Michel welcomes everyone for being here; restates expected rules of participation for members and visitors; all board members introduce themselves and their areas of specialty; all guests introduce themselves

Jaime introduces himself; says that Veteran's Affairs is an open door; implores members to let him know what we (the Governor's office) can do for them. VA has the highest per capita veteran population in the U.S. We are here to serve you.

1:56

Minutes from 09/16/14 meeting are approved.

Natalia Olson presents on SBA.

2:15 Aida asks how we compare to other states in terms of representations. Natalia says that we can look at numbers and get that information to our Board. However, the numbers are not perfect because disclosure is optional.

Zuraya asks for the numbers for veterans, women, minority-owned business.

Julio says SBA does great work to help people who want the support. One of the biggest issues for business in Latin America is trying to send these products to the US. Virginia is one of the worst states in terms of regulations. Businesses find barriers of regulations, etc. Is there anything that we can do to help these businesses?

Natalia says she supports imports; this is why we are focusing on the free-trade countries. Part of our agreements is to help with government transparency. For example, we have food regulations that must be met, so that point of origin is important to us.

State regulations seem to be more strict in VA than the federal level. Natalia has no control over that.

Aida asked if Secretary of Commerce and Trade can provide explanation of regulations affecting US? What are other states doing? Alex Rodriguez says we should do our research into this.

Natalia speaks about “Look South” initiative briefly. All organizations, all initiatives about Latin America, are being funneled through this committee.

Aida asks about Puerto Rico specifically.

Michael Martinez de Andino speaks on different states’ requirements in the sense of protecting their natural resources.

Alex Rodriguez says that SBA is accessible, encourages other members to use this resource and/or pass it along. He says the information just needs to get out there. People just need to *know*.

Aida asks Natalia to provide us with recommendations on what direction to take, after her discussion with Maurice Jones.

Natalia recommends that we connect with other Commissions in surrounding states.

Michel says that past governors have focused on Europe and Asia. Mark Warner was the last governor to go to Latin America. Governor McAuliffe has said that he will make this trip, but that it must be a business trip. How can we as a group facilitate this trip to ensure the business components? Natalia will put him in contact with Brett Pendron(sp?), who focuses on trade missions specifically.

Natalia says that Virginia did get a step grant, money from congress, about 300,000 for trade missions.

Everyone is allowed a few minutes to read letter from Governor McAuliffe to VLAB members.

Various members share the concern that there are a lot of resources the Latinos do not know about.

One member recommends that we focus on boards and commissions that are aligned with these focus areas by the Governor. (Healthcare; Education / preparing workforce; Small business; board appointments)

One member recommends that we can all take a part in identifying people who can join these boards.

Michael de Andino says all the sections in our draft letter are pertinent

Estuardo thinks that in taking on the 300 boards and commissions, etc., we should work outside of this group and existing groups (Hispanic chambers, etc.). We should use that info to fill in those positions.

Aida: We can include this on our website. Names of boards that align with us.

Aida: We should have local input. Maybe a summit. Dialogue with community. How do we empower the community members?

Alex Rodriguez says in developing a plan, we must first identify a problem; advocate for a solution; develop consensus; implement change. We need to be very clear in the problems we tackle. Education is so broad.

Gloria Rockhold: What are our strengths? What do we bring to the table? With that information, we can move forward faster. It is better than pointing out people's shortcomings and flaws. It is more sustainable. Ideas will be embraced quicker if we take a strength-based approach.

Aida: Perhaps we need to get information from the PEW Foundation on this.

Alex Rodriguez: If we can condense that data in a meaningful way.

Mike: One of the purposes of the letter is to address areas that we are focusing on. We're with you and we understand what you are focusing on.

Julio: The Governor identified three problems: business diversity; health low enrollment for Latino community; education, drop-outs of Latino communities. Real, tangible solutions.

Zuraya: Let's understand that we are an ADVISORY board.

Four subcommittees are created:

Education (including workforce development)

Small business (including international trade and procurement)

Healthcare

Civic Engagement (including voter registration and board appointees)

Break-out sessions begin so each subcommittee can develop a tentative “Agenda.” Chair of each subcommittee presents briefly at end of breakout session.

Healthcare

Mike is Chair. Focusing on gathering pre-existing data, trying to find out from the different regions, who has not signed up and try to find some reasons why they have not signed up. We want to use what’s already out there. Have a partnership with the Dept. of Health with local community organizations, which requires an inventory of these organizations. (churches, community centers, chambers of commerce, etc.) Dates established in different localities, local organizations, have a presentation emphasizing why it’s important to sign up, how easy it is to do, how legal it is to do; decrease fears

Maribel reminds the Healthcare subcommittee that the open enrollment is November 15th until February 15th

Civic Engagement

Carolina is Chair. Cesar is Vice-Chair.

Four areas of work:

voter registration – Gonzalo, how to engage more Latinos to be registered

leadership development – Carolina, database feeding into board

immigration – Julio

Latino Liaison Office – Zuraya

Chose Dec. 15th as possible subcommittee meeting

Business

Lucero is Chair.

Concerns:

650,000 population; represent \$20 billion in purchasing power.

We know that we are 8% Latinos; we want to know what areas are pulling their weight

First step is to dig into those numbers. We want to piggy back on SBA, SWAM, and do outreach throughout the community. The what’s and who’s. Are there incentives?

Basically, do research into existing programs, statistics; then education and outreach; etc.

Education

Gloria is Chair. Aida Pacheco, Joel Rodriguez (Vice-Chair), Vivian

Start with getting data on what’s going on: via issues.

Access to Pre-K education

High school drop-out rates

Career and technical access

Workforce development

Apprenticeship – see similar programs and how we can develop across the state

Parental involvement and support – ties into development

Next steps:

Reach out to Department of Education (Vivian)

Aida: Exploring regional forums and come up with action steps for the community.

Choosing meetings dates:

3rd Friday the months of:

March 20th – Charlottesville – elections

June 19th – NoVa

September – LHM Reception Data TBD, Richmond

November 20th – Williamsburg, VA

Announcements section:

Aida wants information on our website

Lucero's company giving grants; what is our federal/legal status

Julio planning a rally in front of white house this Friday when immigration EO is announced.

Special elections coming up.

Estuardo: How can we bring in some businesses, etc.? Some businesses can be supportive of our gatherings. Refreshments.

Creciendo Juntos, December 11th in the morning, Charlottesville, Affordable Care Act.

Michel: Meeting at PHB Wednesday November 19th, roundtable discussion on procurement.
Legislative Reception upcoming.