

**Virginia Latino Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Friday – April 12, 2019 9am-2pm**  
**James Madison University’s Student Success Center**  
**800 S Main St; Harrisonburg, VA 22801**

**DRAFT: Minutes for Approval**

**In Attendance:** Cecilia Williams, Michael Martinez, Gloria Maria Pena Rockhold, Carmen Romero, Karina Kline-Gabel, Paul Berry, Cecilia Barbosa, Juan Espinoza, Melody Gonzales, Eugene Chigna, Vivian Sanchez-Jones, Jorge Yinat, Edgar Aranda, Edgar Lara, Alex Guzman, Damien Cabezas

**Not in Attendance:** Victoria Cartagena, Aida Pacheco, Ana Solorio, Sergio Rimola

**Staff & Counsel:** Justin Bell (Assistant Attorney General), Maribel Castaneda (Staff Liaison), Fernando Mercado-Violand (Director of Latino Outreach)

**Call to Order:** Cecilia Barbosa called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Quorum met.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Barbosa welcomed everyone to the meeting, followed by a welcome on behalf of the Office of the Provost from James Madison University Diversity Chief Dr. David Owasu.

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel informed the board that if there are any issues they encounter with parking that she can assist with university services.

Chair Barbosa introduced Alex Guzman, a new VLAB member.

**Public Comment**

Michael Monrroy from Americans For Prosperity/Libre Initiative was present for the meeting from Loudoun County. He works with the Hispanic community and was present to listen and network.

**Liaison’s Administration Report – Maribel Castaneda**

Maribel Castaneda briefed the board on the following topics.

- Maribel Castaneda acknowledged the board’s work on the annual report and indicated that Deputy Secretary DeShazor offered positive feedback about the current version of the report. Maribel Castaneda is arranging for a meeting in May with Governor Northam to present the final version of the report, and she is waiting for the Asian Advisory Board to submit their recommendations in order to fix a date for both VLAB and VAAB in the Governor’s schedule.



**Board Members**

Aida Pacheco | Ana Solorio | Carmen Romero | Cecilia Barbosa | Cecilia Williams | Damien Cabezas | Edgar Aranda-Yanoc | Edgar Lara | Eugene Chigna | Gloria Maria Peña Rockhold  
J. Michael Martinez de Andino | Jorge Yinat | Juan Espinoza | Karina Kline-Gabel | Melody Gonzales | Paul Berry | Sergio Rimola | Victoria Cartagena | Vivian Sanchez-Jones

- Maribel Castaneda welcomed any strategies on how to connect the recommendations in the report to action and expressed a hope that the report will reach out to important stakeholders.
  - Michael Martinez asked how recommendations can be effected as VLAB is tasked with an advisory capacity, and if action should come from a different executive branch entity. Maribel Castaneda answered that board follow up is crucial to ensuring that the report recommendations come to fruition.
  - Edgar Lara asked what the next steps were from here. Maribel Castaneda responded that many recommendations from the VLAB report coincide with policy advocacy from civic groups like the Virginia Latino Leadership Council and that each recommendation has a certain difficulty in implementation.
  - Michael Martinez commented that it has been the practice in all past years for VLAB to receive written responses to each of the major recommendations. Maribel Castaneda followed this comment that communicating the report recommendations to stakeholders beside the Governor such as policy officers and Secretaries is important.
  - Gloria Maria Pena Rockhold encouraged more meetings to be held with these stakeholders to increase accountability and monitoring around the report recommendations.
  - Edgar Lara asked if the follow up needs to be limited to the administration. Chair Barbosa replied that is not necessarily the case. Other partners in the civic and community space can and should be involved in advancing different recommendations. The VLLC for example has brought up many of the same issues that are in the report and they can be a natural partner.

### **End of Liaison's Update**

### **Consideration of Previous Minutes (02/22/2019) – at 9:24 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa asks if there are any changes to the minutes from the previous board meeting. Several members made requests for changes to the proposed minutes:

- Edgar Aranda raised an issue on page 4, clarifying that he asked about “vetoing anti-immigrant bills”, specifically SB 1156 and HB 2270.
- Jorge Yinat raised an issue on page 4, clarifying that he was asking about how to “add value” not “bring back” value to the administration, and felt the distinction was important to articulate his sentiment correctly.
- Melody Gonzales raised an issue on page 5, clarifying that she spoke with Fernando Mercado-Violand and asked about how the community office hours were conducted. On page 7 she clarified that she views “affinity groups” as employee resource groups rather than social groups. She then asks about clarifying data questions on page 9.

Chair Barbosa asked for a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Michael Martinez made a motion to approve, and his motion was seconded by Edgar Aranda. The motion passed unanimously, with with one 15 votes in favor and one abstention by Eugene Chigna.

### **Director of Latino Outreach Report – Fernando Mercado-Violand at 9:32 a.m.**

Fernando Mercado-Violand's focus since the last board meeting was keeping immigration organizations and those serving the Latino community apprised of what was happening in the General Assembly during the legislative session. He provided details to these groups and civic groups such as the VLLC and

informed them about what the Governor's office was doing in regard to different pieces of proposed legislation.

In March Fernando Mercado-Violand participated in the Latino Boards and Commissions call. He informed the (VLAB) board that many of the people on this call from the Latino community throughout the state are currently serving in some capacity on a board or commission and he has begun exploring new ways to expand the list of current Latino leaders and community activists. His goal is to have monthly stakeholder calls with the next one in May, focusing on Medicaid expansion. He hopes to have Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services Marvin Figueroa on the call.

Fernando Mercado-Violand recently attended a conference in Washington, D.C. focused on immigration policy that covered topics such as immigration status, "New American" communities, and the state of affairs of Latino communities across the US. He is continuing to gather information on how to provide administrative contact and grow communication with New American communities through a permanent office or point of service.

Next Fernando Mercado-Violand described his work with the Virginia Complete Count Commission (VACCC), noting that April 1<sup>st</sup> was Census Awareness Day. He organized and participated in roundtables in Alexandria, Richmond, and Norfolk to engage stakeholders on the Census Issue and galvanize localities to form their own Complete Count Commissions. He will be continuing his outreach efforts to different Latino community groups on the Census in addition to his scheduled office hours.

Gloria Pena Rockhold commented that there was much discussion about "unity" after 2017 and that it may be a lost opportunity if this energy that brought people together isn't harnessed by VLAB members in their respective locations around the Commonwealth through diffusion of knowledge and local outreach. It could be an opportunity to demonstrate the local strength of the Latino communities which is not always visible. Because it is sometimes difficult to explain what a board or commission does this outreach could encourage the development of new ways to communicate the goals and events of the board, possibly by using short videos.

Melody Gonzales pointed out that it is important to know who is invited to what meetings on Latino issues so that the goals of the event are achieved.

Chair Barbosa added that getting feedback from meetings and disseminating is also important.

Jorge Yinat commented that raising awareness of what the outreach office is about and publicizing event dates can help optimize the level of participation.

Vivian Sanchez Jones suggested that reaching out to Latino points of contact can help raise the level of participation.

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel added that this would help foster permanent lines of communication.

### **Liaison's Legislative Report – Maribel Castaneda at 9:43 a.m.**

Maribel Castaneda briefed the board on the following topics.

After the conclusion of the legislative session Governor Northam wrote an op-ed on April 11<sup>th</sup> addressing many persistent concerning issues that need solutions and highlighting accomplishments from the legislative session, such as:

- Education:
  - The General Assembly passed the largest single teacher pay increase in 15 years;
  - Approved a measure to ban tobacco from public schools;
  - Approved a \$12 million investment in public school counselors; and

- Signed into law guidelines for improving detection of concussions in student athletes.
- Justice & Courts
  - Removed the rule stipulating that unpaid court fees would result in driver's license suspension, returning driving privileges to 627,000 Virginians
- Infrastructure:
  - Approved a dedicated funding stream to I-81 improvements
- Urban Development:
  - Signed into law legislation that will address eviction rates and increase opportunities for low-income Virginians
  - Increased funding to the Virginia Affordable Housing Trust Fund to \$7 million
- Civic Engagement:
  - Announced Census Awareness Day, although funding didn't pass through the General Assembly
  - Established the African American Advisory Board, whose official start date is July 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - Maribel Castaneda noted that she is accepting recommendations for members
  - Vetoed a bill that would have restricted voting access
- Health and Human Services
  - Increased funding for care and support at Central State Hospital located in Petersburg
  - Vetoed a bill that would have undermined access to affordable healthcare and legislation designed to shame TANF recipients
  - Vetoed a bill that would have applied unnecessary restrictions on local law enforcement of non-existent "sanctuary cities" in the Commonwealth

Michael Martinez added that the Governor passed a bill requiring leases to be written.

Edgar Aranda commented that working together with Maribel Castaneda and Fernando Mercado-Violand and the rest of the legislative team was a pleasure and critical in the effort to support good legislation

### **VLAB communication and outreach policy at 9:53 a.m.**

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel raised the issue on how VLAB can begin engaging with the Latino community across the Commonwealth. She commented that it is important to have a consistent policy on outreach and communication, and consider how we use our representation positively online when we represent VLAB in our respective communities. Karina is leading this project and coordinating with Justin Bell. The idea is to facilitate our ability to go out into the community and form stronger connections. Examining the best practices and asking where to partner is key, and she is working quickly so that the plan can be evaluated in time for the next board meeting and put into practice.

Melody Gonzales added it would be helpful to think about what is the community engagement group plan and if there are other opportunities we can start thinking about. She asked what were some specific engagement opportunities and wants to bring these to Justin to evaluate if they are within the mission of the board.

Jorge Yinat expressed the importance of getting the outreach plan in writing and establishing procedures that will be good for planning on specific issues.

Carmen Romero complimented the healthcare forum as a successful example of community outreach and suggested addressing one topic by quarter in partnership with the many non-profits that tackle these issues. She brought up the "Radical Hospitality Model" as a vehicle for increased community engagement. Engagement involves a high level of work, so given limited resources she suggested VLAB could make gains on different topics it prioritizes by partnering with community groups.

## **Summary of the VLLC meeting with Governor Northam on Monday May 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:07 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa described that the VLLC is a 501 c4 designed to increase the points of contact between the Latino community and the administration. The head of the organization, Walter Tejada organized and led the meeting. Walter Tejada created the list of topics to address with the Governor based on suggestions from meeting participants, of which some VLAB members were included (members in parentheses denotes involvement in the discussion on that issue):

- Driver privilege cards (Edgar Aranda)
- Wage theft reduction measures (Paul Berry)
- Census 2020 funding for Latino communities (Paul Berry)
- Recruitment of Latinos into the Governor's administration (Paul Berry)
- Affordable housing and eviction policies (Chair Barbosa)
- Procurement (Jorge Yinat *in absentia*)
- Consumer financial protection (Jorge Yinat *in absentia*)
- In-state tuition for Dreamers
- Expansion of the Office of Newcomer Services to include services to legal immigrants
- Racism and white privilege
- Working and living conditions of migrant farm workers

Chair Barbosa detailed that the Governor expressed interest in all the topics and was receptive to solutions proposed by the speakers.

Jorge Yinat asked what the Governor said he would do in terms of action. Chair Barbosa replied that the Governor didn't cover specifics in the meeting about follow up but there was a mutual understanding about continuing accountability.

Michael Martinez commented that there are many issues that the administration is aware of and there are real resource priority processes that go on in any administration to address planning.

Edgar Aranda commented that on the driver's privilege card issue the subject matter advocates are currently requesting meetings with representatives from the Virginia State Police and Secretary Moran.

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel asked how VLAB envisions a working relationship with VLLC. Chair Barbosa replied that she invited Walter Tejada to the VLAB meeting to discuss that but he was unable to attend. She added that she would follow-up with him after the meeting.

Gloria Pena Rockhold observed that it is sometimes difficult to explain the process of policy solutions and implementation to those outside the board and posed the question of whether there is a way to increase transparency on VLAB proceedings in order to connect the community with new opportunities.

## **Committee Strategic Planning at 10:20 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa next presented the guide (see end of minutes) for use in the committee meetings to facilitate planning on different subjects. She charged the committees to discuss and recommend actions to be taken by the committees, by the entire board, and by Executive Committee to advance VLAB's recommendations .

Michael Martinez observed that there was a commission established in 2018 on affordable housing issues and evictions and asked if there is a way to connect with that commission and take joint action on issues before it and VLAB.

Chair Barbosa instructed the committees to convene at 10:27 a.m. and to halt their work at 11:30 to resume Board business.

The Chair reconvened the Board at 12:05

## **Committee Presentations**

### Housing

Michael Martinez began by observing that a consistent funding stream for affordable housing is an identified priority. The current \$7,000,000 per year will have an impact but this could be grown and reach a wider population. Applying lessons from similar programs for identifying those in need and devising solutions can be strengthened if the affordable housing issue is taken up in partnership with the AAAB (Asian American Advisory Board) and the AFAMAB (African American Advisory Board). There are many downstream effects from more affordable housing solutions (higher education rates, better health outcomes, etc.) and coordination with the other boards on this issue could be productive. Tenant education is another area that could be improved with the administration distributing bilingual/multilingual information to help VA residents who are not aware of rights and resources. For the executive committee it would be a goal to promote the statewide pro bono housing law program and the multilingual tenants rights documentation.

Carmen Romero suggested meeting with the Board of Housing and possibly attending their next meeting. The affordable housing issue recommendations will be different now that Amazon is coming to Virginia as well.

### Business

Jorge Yinat began by observing that wage theft reduction was presented in the annual report to the Governor. Next, Edgar Aranda described the next step on this issue as identifying a person within the administration or possibly legislators who are interested in this topic and begin meeting with different stakeholders in order to continue directly advocating on policy solutions for wage theft.

Justin Bell added that it is possible to facilitate communications between board members and individuals working in the administration concerned with this and other areas of VLAB interest.

Edgar Aranda continued on the topic of road safety and driver's privilege cards, stressing that it is an advocacy issue that he would like to continue to raise with relevant stakeholders. He and others are seeking to communicate this importance to Secretary Moran and the Virginia State Police as relevant parties who can advise on how to make progress on this issue. Justin Bell advised that meeting with Secretary Moran is possible.

Jorge Yinat added that the driver's privilege card should be offered to those who are termed "undocumented residents" to more accurately describe the status of individuals who would benefit from this service.

Justin Bell then reiterated that it is possible to reach out to legislators and members of the administration on relevant issues to the board and that restructuring some of the ways VLAB operates could be brought up in the same settings.

Alex Guzman pointed out that having a driver's privilege card would help mitigate the housing and eviction instability in the Commonwealth on the basis that renters can present cards as a valid piece of identification for entry into leases.

Jorge Yinat addressed state contract and procurement by small Latino-owned businesses. Last year he attended a meeting with the director of Small Business Supply and Diversity and she was very receptive to the idea that more data sharing is required to analyze the type of participation in the procurement process and small businesses owned by Latinos. As a result, she was willing to assist in gathering these metrics and making them available when possible.

The recommendation from the committee to the governor is to "strengthen state contract and procurement opportunities by charging the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD) to develop a plan to increase Latinx businesses' participation in the State procurement process, to include assessing the extent of participation; reasons for the current level of participation; and strategies to increase participation." Working with the Dept of General Services on this could also be productive.

### Health

Cecilia Williams described Medicaid access and the importance of eliminating the work requirement for permanent residents which currently stands at 40 quarters of work history and 5 years of residency. Reducing these requirements would enable more residents to access quality affordable healthcare and plans are to work with Assistant Secretary Figueroa and Jill Hanken to explore a legislative solution. This would have a positive impact on the number of eligible residents and improve the quality of healthcare coverage.

Damien Cabezas described aspects of the current gap program and the coverage imbalance, highlighting the need for greater access to linguistic services in health care. There are examples of good programs in other states that provide things like telemedicine and Spanish speaking foreign medical graduates .

Chair Barbosa added that facilitating more participation by Latinos in the medical professional fields to increase healthcare access and service is a recommendation to raise with the governor's office.

### Civic Engagement

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel brought up the VACCC (Virginia Complete Count Committee) and recommended asking the VACCC for a brief at the next VLAB meeting.

Vivian Sanchez-Jones asked how many Latinos are on the CCC. Fernando Mercado-Violand answered that Aida Pacheco, Elda Stanco Downey, Monica Sarmiento and Nancy Rodrigues are assigned to the VACCC.

Edgar Aranda commented that he is on the Fairfax County CCC and will provide feedback from that as well.

Gloria Pena Rockhold asked that if there are best practices that Edgar Aranda can share with the VACCC and VLAB.

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel continued by discussing how to restructure the VLAB website to better communicate what the board does, what important civic participation opportunities are available to the public, and offer overall better centralization of productive actions VA residents can take. There isn't necessarily a social media component for this right now, but this could take place later on as well to

complement the website updates and disseminate information in both places. She stressed the importance of communicating in multiple languages and how this fits into a strategic social media plan.

Damien Cabezas asked if it was possible to identify what places in the administration web services lead to the VLAB website.

Eugene Chigna asked what current website traffic consists of and what metrics exist on VLAB website viewership.

### Education

Melody Gonzales next addressed English Language Learning (ELL) by posing the question of how the Secretary of Education can collaborate with educators, students, and families to create a systematic approach to ELL. Identifying those that could benefit from the ELL resources is a starting place. Reaching out to Latinos in other civic, board, and commission spaces for this as well could be productive. Evaluating the quantitative and qualitative data on ELL educators is also a useful activity. For the board it would be helpful to share what is happening in each board members' respective community on the ELL topic.

Increasing the number of Counselors in public schools is another area of concern – increasing the number of Spanish speaking counselors and Latino counselors would be a way to improve local results. This should fit with the other goal of hiring more Latino educators and teachers in schools.

Chair Barbosa concluded this portion of the meeting by noting that the next steps are to meet with the Governor and provide this feedback and discuss the report recommendations. Following that meeting, the Executive Committee will report back to the entire Board and then the Board can begin implementing the actions for each recommendation, including monitoring status and maintaining accountability over the direction of the policy recommendations.

### **Discussion on Census Complete Count Website and Public Resources at 12:55 p.m.**

Fernando Mercado-Violand used his laptop to project the VACCC website to describe information and resources available to the public on the 2020 Census. The VACCC has members from around the Commonwealth who are leaders from different constituency groups as well as 2 elected officials. It meets monthly and there is a phased work plan consisting of an education phase, followed by an awareness phase, and finally a get out the census/implementation phase. The CCC is working on messaging to share this plan statewide and with local CCCs. He encouraged the board to share with the Latino community and informed the Board that there are Census staff in the state that can act as points of contact for the implementation of the Census. The Census staff in Virginia are currently expanding with new hires right now, including for the role of a bilingual resource officer. This is a resource for informing the public about the Census, what it is meant to accomplish, and how to participate in its effective and safe completion.

Jorge Yinat asked if the website is going to appear in multiple languages. Fernando Mercado-Violand replied affirmatively.

Chair Barbosa next asked how residents were defined. Fernando Mercado-Violand responded that any current inhabitant of the Commonwealth is eligible for counting by the Census.

### **Bylaws discussion at 1:05 p.m.**

Michael Martinez began the discussion by noting that the Ad Hoc Governance Committee met and formulated suggestions for changes as well as considered recommendations from VLAB members submitted electronically and at the previous meeting. The Governance Committee evaluated changes it

found necessary to include or remove based on the distinction between bylaws and policies. If a clause appeared in the governing document that created VLAB legislatively then it would be considered unnecessary to duplicate in the Bylaws of VLAB. Policies would be created for actions deemed necessary for the functioning of the Board that were not found in the Bylaws.

Justin Bell added that there should be a clause in the Bylaws that would allow for the creation of different policies.

Michael Martinez continued by stressing the importance of adhering to established deadlines for input when documents are available for review by the entire Board. He began by describing the comments as follows:

- On Page 1:
  - there is a deletion in Section 1.1 to remove a duplication that is already in the code. The clause for a 4 year meeting quota for the board was also struck as it is redundant.
  - Under the section on Executive Leadership in Article II the words “OFFICERS (Elected)” was struck
- On Page 2:
  - In Section 2.4 a clarification is added to reflect the practice that the Secretary should take notes and record all votes at meetings. The word “Liaison” replaces the word “staff” when referring to the individual assigned to the Board from the Governor’s office.
  - Under section 2.5 it was specified that votes are to take place at the elections meeting and that it will not be by ballot. The Liaison will record the votes.
  - Under 2.6: clarified that vacancies are filled by a majority vote of the board at the next Board meeting.
- On Page 3:
  - In Section 2.7 it is clarified that the secretary, Vice Chair and Chair are all now designated as elected officers of the board and that the Secretary will preside in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.
  - Section 2.8 was struck.
  - Section 3.1 was amended to remove the language indicating a limit of 4 meetings per year.
  - Section 3.3 was amended to establish that 2 missed meetings without notification of extenuating circumstances would result in notification to the Secretary of Commonwealth that the member is considered for dismissal from the Board.
- On Page 4:
  - Section 3.5 - The requirement that voting on all questions should be by voice vote was deleted.
  - Section 4.1 - changed the statement to reflect that the standing committees will address the Governor’s priorities as defined by the Governor’s office as well as priorities established by the Board.
- On Page 5:
  - Policies will be written on practices of the board.

Chair Barbosa indicated that the meeting was drawing to a close and that the Bylaws discussion should be tabled to ensure all concerns were addressed. She also clarified that members of the Executive Committee was made at the previous meeting and consisted of the elected members and the subcommittee chairs. Justin Bell added that the vote Chair Barbosa referenced establishes who is in the Executive Committee but it is advisable to put this in writing as well.

Jorge Yinat agreed with this and with Michael Martinez’s suggestion to adhere to a deadline for submitting additional comments.

Chair Barbosa asks for a motion to adjourn. Eugene Chigna made the motion, and was seconded by Gloria Pena Rockhold. The motion passed by unanimous vote at 1:49.

The next meeting is set for June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

The table below captures the recommendations of action to be taken for those suggestions and recommendations sent from VLAB to the Governor and his staff.

<b>LEGISLATIVE ACTION</b>	<b>EXEC COMMITTEE</b>	<b>FULL BOARD</b>
Increase affordable housing – dedicated funding source for housing. Add Amazon.	Coordinate with VAAB and AA Board. Infographic from our demographic of our priorities and needs.	Help contact with your organizations – e.g. health.
Reduce evictions	As above	As above
Reduce incidence of wage theft – follow up w DOLI.	None	None
Increase road safety - driving privileges – meet w Secy Moran; Del Cox, transportation comm.	None	None
Medicaid access - eliminate 40 quarter work requirement – Jill Hanken, Marvin Figueroa	None	None
Latinx participation in Census 2020	Briefing of Board at next meeting. Give information between meetings.	Awareness – start outreach.
Increase access & diversity of state government		

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION</b>	<b>EXEC COMM.</b>	<b>FULL BOARD</b>
Create open and accessible government		
Strengthen state contract and procurement		
Increase civic engagement - voter registration – enhance website so public can see what VLAB is doing. Connect other sites to VLAB.	Website – give feedback on enhancing VLAB website.	Review and approve enhanced website
Systematic approach to ELL – data on ELL educators, what are issues. How to support DOE w parent engagement.	Help with DOE meetings secured. Advocate for new \$ be dedicated to Latinx counselors.	Hearing stories – let Comm know. Let Comm know of inspiring work done w parent engagement. Best practices? Staff who are ELL w good stories.