



COMMISSION ON IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

MONDAY, February 7, 2022 6:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Board Members in Attendance:

<i>Krystal Gomez, Chair</i>	<i>Rennison Lalgee</i>
<i>Nicole Merritt, Vice-Chair</i>	<i>Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch</i>
<i>Sara Becker</i>	<i>Joseph Ramirez-Hernandez</i>
<i>Karen Crawford</i>	<i>Juan Vences-Benitez</i>
<i>Adrian De La Rosa</i>	

Board Members not in Attendance:

Glenn Rosales

Staff in Attendance:

Sinying Chan, Staff Liaison & Health Equity Unit Program Coordinator/Austin Public Health

CALL TO ORDER

1. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 6, 2021

- Karen moved to approve, Kate seconded, all in favor

2. NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

A. Updates from Reimagining Public Safety Task Force by City of Austin Assistant City Manager Rey Arellano

- In August 2020, the City Manager created the City-Community Reimagining Public Safety Task Force which gave its recommendations in April 2021. Council approved 9.3 million dollars towards task force recommendations. More information can be found on the website <https://www.austintexas.gov/departments/task-force>
- The dashboard on the website is used to track the review of recommendations that were sent to the City Manager and show 118 of 140 recommendations are complete. Currently, the focus is on follow-up action for these recommendations. Rey is reviewing the 8 working groups and will update the dashboard when complete, beginning with the two working groups for APD.



- Austin Cares is an active program that moves 911 calls from those experiencing mental health crisis to a Mental Health Clinician. Language Access is a large effort right now and is currently focusing on Spanish and API languages for public services.
- B. Updates from Saeed Azadi, Public Health Division Manager, and Holly Eades, Program Manager, on their work at the City of Austin Refugee Health Screening Clinic**
 - The Refugee Health Screening Clinic does comprehensive medical and mental health assessments, treatments, immunizations, and referrals. They work with them for one year and then give them documentation they need to apply for their green card and I-693.
 - Afghan Placement Program significantly impacted numbers. Projecting 500-1500 arrivals for 2022. Budget increased to 1.5 million dollars for FY2022 due to increased refugees for Afghan Placement Program
 - Challenges: 100% Grant-funded, unpredictable federal support, contract limitations per the grant, operating with minimal staff, anticipating 500-1500 Afghans to Austin area.
 - Recommendation: The City of Austin create two full-time general fund positions to support the office through the above challenges with funding and staffing. Ideally, the positions would be one manager and one medical staff.
- C. Updates from Edna Yang, Co-Executive Director from American Gateways, on the City's funding in support of immigrant legal services.**
 - American Gateways work with partners to ensure low-income immigrant clients have access to legal services, education, and advocacy. They are currently in year 4 of a 5-year contract with the City of Austin.
 - They provide direct legal services through direct universal legal representation. To better leverage funds, they provide education and outreach on the immigrant legal system, have volunteers who offer legal representation pro-bono, and host legal clinics for those with temporary status, such as refugees, to help them apply for permanent status or renewal.
 - Currently, they are only able to meet about 25% of the need that requests their help.
- D. Budget updates and discussion by Karen Crawford**
 - Had informational session with Budget Office. There are currently three virtual forums set up: Wednesday 16th 6:30pm– Affordability and Resiliency, Thursday 24th 6:30pm – Access and Engagement, Saturday 26th 10:00am – Public Safety and Health. Equity will be leading the forum discussions. Commission needs to decide if it will hold a forum.
 - Commission needs to vote on their recommendations at the March 7th meeting because they are due to the Joint Inclusion Committee by March 14th. Recommendations are due to the Budget Office by March 30th.
 - There has been a meeting scheduled for the Chairs and Vice-Chairs on February 19th with the Joint Inclusion Committee to talk about the budget.
 - Budget Working Group will have finalized recommendations for the March 7th meeting for the Commission to vote on.
 - For more information or questions, visit www.austintexas.gov/budget, email budgetqa@austintexas.gov, or call 311.

3. OLD BUSINESS



A. Budget updates

- Addressed in New Business

B. Report back from ISNA and the RST quarterly consultations – Juan and Rennison

- No updates

C. Joint Inclusion Committee meeting update – Karen

- There is a new staff member, Jeremy Garza, who will be the staff liaison for the JIC

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Budget discussion and vote on recommendations
- Tentatively scheduled APD presentation
- Austin Public Library presentation from Emi Johnson – will move to April if presentation will not affect the budget
- Intergovernmental Relations Office briefing from Brie Franco
- Long-term planning for the Commission to explore a City-funded study to better inform the Commission's decisions and recommendations and see if previous recommendations have been implemented, based on the usefulness of studies that have been presented at Commission meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENT

- No announcements

ADJOURNMENT

- Nicole moved to adjourn, Kate seconded, all in favor



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