



Commission on Immigrant Affairs

Regular Monthly Meeting

Monday, November 4, 2019 6:30 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

301 W. 2nd Street, Austin, Texas 78701

Approved Meeting Minutes

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

- Sadot Azzua from Austin Police Department Community Liaison and Liaison for Refugee and Immigrant Outreach
- Operation Blue Santa – provides toys and dinner for unprivileged families for more than 40 years
- Special application drive for Hispanic community at the Mexican Consulate on 11/13/19
- Last day to apply is 11/25/19
- Offered to help connecting with Assistant Police Chief or Executive Management Team for U visa updates or other information

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6:41pm

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Krystal moved to table minutes for August and September. Rennison seconded. All in favor.
- Reviewed minutes from October 2019. Glen moved to approve and Joseph seconded.

3. NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- A. Presentation by RAICES, Alexander Minnaar and Adriana Quiroz, related to services provided and challenges faced by the organization and the community
- Talked about background and services of RAICES – community-based immigration legal services.
 - Legal trends seen by RAICES include: immigration forms are long and complicated; applicants fill forms by themselves and get denied due to lack of knowledge; case processing and visa availability affecting cases taking longer; applicants without an attorney are confused about immigration court days and complexity and delays add to sense of confusion; employment authorization cases have major delays; long delays on oath ceremony scheduling for citizenship; electronic monitoring/home visits/proof of presence in U.S. are seen; Remain in Mexico Program keeps people to apply for asylum outside of U.S. and it is difficult to find representation.
 - Social services needs include: housing; unaccompanied children; free or reduced fee counseling; transportation; enrollment in schools; in-person interpreters; needs for medical doctors to be educated on N-648 form, medical certification for disability exceptions for citizenship civics test.
 - Advocacy Department of RAICES is about a year old that advocates for immigrant friendlier policies. Local campaign examples include disseminate Know Your Rights, Immigration 101 sessions, and community meetings for advocacy.
 - Potential assistances from city council include: more resources, create spaces for people to be involved comfortably, educate residents how government work on a local basis, and having commissioners from Commission on Immigrant Affairs present at RAICES community meetings.



- Karen to connect RAICES with language access organizations such as CAN.
- Commissioners to make recommendation to CommUnityCare on educating about N-648.

4. OLD BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- Explore Certified Welcoming standards and Certification with Refugee Services of Texas – Karen
 - Lauren Hargraves – program specialist from Central Texas Office of Refugee.
 - Welcoming America – having cities at local level to have welcoming and inclusive spaces for refugees and immigrants; membership (fee-based) or certification (long term goals with strategic planning at city level; requirements have to be met).
 - Currently no cities in Texas is certified.
 - Will table certification process until new staff come onboard in January; but all commissioners should review welcoming reports and standards.
- Hispanic Latino Quality of Life Commission – APD forum on treatment of immigrants – Karen
 - Public meeting that discusses racial profiling, police accountability, and APD relationship with ICE.
 - Hispanic Latino Quality of Life Commission would like one or two representatives from Commission on Immigrant Affairs to be present and sign up for citizen communication.
 - XXX moved to authorize Sam, Montserrat, Krystal, and Glen to represent the Commission on Immigrant Affairs at the public meeting. Kate seconded.
- Update on U visa certifications by APD, Office of Police Oversight – Kate and Karen
 - 4 requests for reviews in 2019. APD didn't reverse decisions on any reviews. 2 were rejected by committee because the complaints were within policy. One was concerned about the applicant and decisions on the last case were stuck.
 - Will revisit in 6 months from now.
 - Karen turned over all materials for changes for statute of limitations to Office of Police Oversight. The office will review to determine if they will get involved.

5. STANDING ITEMS: Discussion and Possible Action

- Cities United for Action Update – Sam
 - Kate will take over the calls
- Joint Inclusion Committee Update, including update on Equity Mini Grants – Karen
 - Postponed to December
- Karen will attend retreat on budget for next year. Will report at next meeting.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Working group for job descriptions for the immigrant affair office will be reviewed.
- Sinying Chan will be staffing at the commission.
- New commissioner from Council Member Caser's office, Juan Vences-Benitez, will join at next meeting

7. TASKS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Kate will report back from Philadelphia
- Glen will go to 11/16 meeting
- Karen and Glen will work on connecting with CommUnityCare



8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Census Bureau could come for next meeting

9. ADJOURNMENT

- Krystal motioned to adjourn. Kate seconded.
- Adjourned at 7:42pm

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