



County of Santa Cruz

Latino Affairs Commission PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

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February 1, 2012

Board of Supervisors

Latino Affairs Commission 2010-2011 Biennial Report

Dear Chairperson Leopold and Members of the Board:

It is with pleasure that I forward this report to you.

I. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

The Latino Affairs Commission was established April 7, 1992 and created an important and historical opportunity to advocate for the needs of the Latino community. Latinos continue to constitute the largest ethnic minority group in Santa Cruz County. The Latino Affairs Commission (LAC) was established by ordinance no. 4186 and added to the Santa Cruz County Code Chapter 2.117 on May 11, 1992.

The Commission exercises the following responsibilities in its efforts to ensure that the interests of the County's Latino population are protected and promoted:

- A. Respond to the interests of the Latino community, including public and private agencies, on concerns and issues affecting the needs of the Latino residents in the County of Santa Cruz.
- B. Collect critical data and information from both public and private agencies relating to the needs of the growing Latino community.
- C. Advise and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on relevant issues and matters concerning the Latino community.
- D. Monitor the various services made available to Latino residents by public and private agencies within the County and help ensure the efficient delivery of those services.

- E. Advise and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding socioeconomic needs of low income Latinos, including the County allocation of resources to County programs and community program funding.
- F. Advise and make recommendation to the Board of Supervisor regarding socioeconomic needs of low income Latinos, including the County allocation of resources to County program and community program funding.

II. MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATIONS

During reporting years 2010 and 2011, regular meetings were scheduled bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of every other month. All meetings convened at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. Most meetings were held at the United Way conference room in Capitola. One meeting was held at the Watsonville Library, another at the 701 Santa Cruz County Government Center, and one at the Probation Department in Felton.

III. COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The Latino Affairs Commission consists of nine (9) members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Supervisorial appointments include:

First District: Monica Galvan;

Second District: Jorge Mendez, Chair 2011, Vice Chair 2010;

Third District: Veronica Lopez-Duran, 2009-10 and Claudia Llamas-Padilla, 2011;

Fourth District: Eduardo Montesino 2010, and Francisco Diaz, 2011;

Fifth District: Yolanda Perez-Logan.

An additional four (4) members are nominated by the cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz:

City of Santa Cruz: Carmen Perez, Chair 2010, Vivian Vargas, 2011 Vice Chair and current member, and Sonya Martinez;

City of Watsonville: Margarita Alejo, and Maria Rodriquez Castillo, Vice Chair 2010 and not a current member. (There is one vacancy for Watsonville)

The current Commission includes two self-employed business persons, two community-based organization representatives, one teacher, one Deputy Probation Officer, one Health Services Agency employee, and a higher education professional.

IV. COMMISSION STAFF

Sr. Personnel Analyst Ana Ventura Phares in the Personnel Department is responsible for staffing the Latino Affairs Commission.

V. ATTENDANCE – The 2010 and 2011 rosters are attached.

VI. GOALS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2010-2011

Commissioners attended and/or participated in community meetings that give visibility to the Commission, the County and its mission;

Human Services Commission Steering Committee to review the Community Programs Assessment Report, Citizenship and Immigration Forum in Santa Cruz (co-sponsor), Immigration Action Group meetings, Smart on Crime Community Meetings, Prom Dress Drive for high school students, Stop the Silence Walk in Watsonville (co-sponsor), MLK Jr. Day activities in Santa Cruz, Dr. Ed Latessa presentation on Corrections and Community Supervision, Bi-National Week Workshops 2010-11 (co-sponsor), BASTA meetings, County Office of Education, UCSC Smith Renaissance Society (foster youth support & mentoring event), Presenter at Foothill College Latino Heritage celebration, Youth Resource Bank fundraiser, Reception with Burns Institute and Annie E. Casey Foundation, Xilonene, Rites of Passage Celebration for girls, Xinacheli training for girls, Luna Evening Center open house, Azteca Soccer fundraiser (Probation and Watsonville Police played Azteca Soccer teams, Ted EX event at Cabrillo, Radio KALW presentation on Juvenile Detention issues, and presentation on restorative justice at the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission, Barrios Unidos presentations, Gay Awareness and Teen Culture events, Children's Network, Girls Task Force, Drug and Alcohol Task Force, Presentation on gangs by Father Gregory Boyle at Resurrection Church in Aptos, Parent Education Night on gangs sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Town Hall Forum sponsored by the Santa Cruz Police Department, Santa Cruz Neighbors and Take Back Santa Cruz, Mayor's Academy for the City of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz City Council Meeting and County Board of Supervisors hearing on Secure Communities, Information Forum on Secure Communities at the Loudon Nelson Community Center, Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on Proposed Budget, Santa Cruz City Council Meeting on Community Programs Funding, Santa Cruz City Council Meeting on the Ocean Street Plan, and the Santa Cruz City General Plan Information Meeting at Loudon Nelson Community Center.

Secure Communities Federal Program

In addition, throughout the 2011 year, the Commission heard from various Immigrants' rights advocates and groups regarding their concerns about the Federal Secure Communities deportation program and its impact on immigrants and their families living in Santa Cruz County. The Commission reviewed Immigration, Customs and Enforcement statistics (ICE) that showed numbers of deportations in Santa Cruz County. In early 2011, Sheriff Wowak discussed and answered questions at a Commission meeting regarding the program as it relates to the County's arrest and fingerprinting process. Soon after, a few commissioners took a tour of the jail with Sheriff Wowak. In May 2011, the Commission sent a letter thanking your Board for supporting Assembly Bill 1081, which would allow local jurisdictions to "opt in" to participate in the Secure Communities program while still ensuring that victims of crime are protected, and public safety is prioritized. On December 13, 2011, Sheriff Wowak created a task force that included Latino Affairs Commission members to assess the current program and return with a report and recommendations to the Board on February 28, 2012.

Continue monitoring of the Disproportionate Minority Contact task force project;

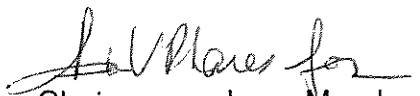
Commissioner Yolanda Perez-Logan, Assistant Division Director for the Probation Department, provided bi-monthly updates on the department's work with the Disproportionate Minority Contact stakeholders. In addition, in February 2010, several commissioners took a tour of Juvenile Hall.

VII. FUTURE GOALS FOR 2012-2013

1. Attend and participate in community meetings that are pertinent to the Commission and its mission;
2. Continue ongoing review of Disproportionate Minority Contact task force project;
3. Receive community input from Immigrant rights advocates and other members of the public on how the federal Secure Communities program is affecting the County and in particular the Latino community and immigrants of all ethnicities. Collaborate with the Sheriff's in his task force in order to provide guidance on how to improve the program within the County;
4. Receive and disseminate information regarding higher education and future job opportunities for local Latino high school students in Santa Cruz County;
5. Partner with the Human Care Alliance and others for the continuation of funding for non-profits during the upcoming budget years to ensure efforts to promote equitable funding.
6. Continue to support community organizations and the County through the co-sponsorship of the local annual Citizenship and Immigration Forum, the Bi-National Health Week, the Watsonville Cesar Chavez Event, Stop the Silence Walk in Watsonville and other events/activities that inform and educate the entire community on issues affecting the Latino community.
7. Meet at least once a year with the Supervisor and/or City Council member who appointed/nominated him or her to provide updates on Latino Affairs Commission related issues.

This report was approved at the Commission's regular meeting on February 1, 2012.

Sincerely,


Chairperson Jorge Mendez
District 2