

Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship
Thursday, December 15, 2016

Present: Commissioners Leslie DiTrani, Yarlennys Villaman, Melanie Torres, Roxana Maldonado-Garcia, Jennifer Sparks, and Merline Sylvain-Williams.

CIRC Staff: Nancy Schlacter and Crystal Rosa.

Absent: Commissioner Marcio Macedo, Sana Ghafoor, Karin Lin, Swati Sawant, and Alejandro Epstein-Santoyo.

Documents used:

- November Minutes
- December Agenda
- CIRC Referral Resources for Immigration Legal Issues
- ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations – Priority Enforcement Program (PEP) slideshow
- ICE Information sheets on PEP, and a Comparison between Secure Communities and PEP
- Sample of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Immigration Detainer – Request for Voluntary Action

1. Call to order

Executive Director Schlacter called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Review and approval of November Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the November meeting and approved them unanimously on a motion from Commissioner Torres, seconded by Commissioner Sparks.

4. Presentation by Deputy Superintendent Steve DeMarco on ICE Detainers

Dep. Supt. DeMarco provided an overview of Cambridge Police Department's (CPD) mission and values. CPD's main mission is to collaborate with the community to solve problems and improve public safety in a manner that is fair, impartial, transparent and consistent. CPD's core values are integrity, professionalism, fairness and impartiality, teamwork, efficiency, advocacy, and empathy. The Associated Press acknowledged CPD as one of the most balanced police departments in the nation. It exceeds all national standards in every employment category, except for women officers, where it fell short by only 1 percent. The department has 44 multilingual officers, including speakers of Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian/Creole, Chinese (Cantonese and Taiwanese), Greek, French, Tamil, Hindi, Arabic, Urdu and Russian. Dep. Supt. DeMarco explained CPD's response to the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report. According to Dep. Supt. DeMarco, CPD was already implementing 36 of the applicable recommendations prior to the Report's May 2015 publication date. Since the release of the Report, 1/3 of CPD officers have completed crisis intervention de-escalation training and 210 officers have completed trauma-informed training, which focuses on how victims experience trauma and how officers deal with their own trauma. CPD will train local prosecutors on the subject in the near future.

Dep. Supt. DeMarco went on to explain CPD's policy regarding ICE detainers, which restricts when CPD can hold someone after an arrest. Dep. Supt. DeMarco asserted that CPD has not used an ICE detainer as a primary reason to hold an individual. Massachusetts has been a member of Secure Communities since May 2012 and there have only been nine detainers lodged by ICE since then. Dep. Supt. DeMarco explained that fingerprints are taken at the police station after an arrest has been made, and are forwarded to the State Police. Then the arrestee waits to be seen in court to set bail. If bail is set, CPD will not hold anyone past their time, despite the ability to conduct a 48-hour hold with an ICE detainer. CPD does not want to ruin their longstanding trust with the community. If there is an ICE detainer, CPD will have a discussion with the ICE agent to determine the severity of the alleged offenses. CPD considers ICE detainers on a case-by-case basis. CPD works to establish trust with all Cambridge communities, so individuals feel comfortable reporting crime without fear of impacts on their immigration status. However, the State Police will report fingerprints to ICE through the FBI, which may result in an ICE detainer. CPD is not involved with State Police policy on ICE detainers.

5. Executive Director's Report

- ED Schlacter coordinated two Know Your Rights (KYR) trainings with the Community Learning Center (CLC), to be held on January 9th from 10 am -12 pm, and on January 11th from 6:15 - 8:15 pm. ED Schlacter also coordinated a KYR training with Reservoir Church, to be held on January 10th from 7-9 pm at the Community Room of the Fresh Pond Apartments at 362 Rindge Ave. The last KYR training currently scheduled is at Cambridge Community Fellowship Church, located at 234 Franklin Street on January 17, 2017 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm.
- ED Schlacter has ordered Red Cards from Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC). In the meantime, Project Coordinator Rosa will design some for temporary use until we receive the official cards. Red Cards are used to indicate to law enforcement that the cardholder is asserting their Constitutional right to remain silent.
- In collaboration with Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (CLSACC), ED Schlacter created a handout of Referral Resources for Immigration Legal Issues. Members of CIRC received a copy of the handout during the meeting.
- ED Schlacter received a forwarded email from Executive Director Ben Echevarria of Somerville's Welcome Project regarding a series of Train the Trainer sessions on immigrant serving legal resources.

6. November Meeting Follow-up

• Needs Assessment

ED Schlacter met with Carole Sousa, Chair of the Community Engagement Team (CET), which resulted in the coordination of two focus groups, with CET Outreach Workers and CPHD Literacy Ambassadors, to assist with information gathering for the development of a CIRC Needs Assessment. The CET Outreach Workers Focus Group will meet on Thursday morning, January 12, 2017 from 9:30 – 10:30 am. The Literacy Ambassadors Focus Group will meet on Thursday, January 19, 2017, from 12:00 – 1:30 pm at 119 Windsor St. - Ground Floor. One CIRC volunteer is needed for each session. Based on the information gleaned in the focus groups, CIRC will devise key questions for CIRC Commissioner interviews with immigrant community members. The projected goal is for each CIRC Commissioner to conduct 5 interviews over 1 - 2 months, using the key questions. Information gleaned from the interviews will be used to identify the needs and priorities of the CIRC's work and to assist in the development of CIRC's vision, mission and goals.

- **Subcommittee for outreach material**

Commissioners Sparks, Torres, Sawant, and Macedo assisted with a brainstorming session regarding CIRC's online presence. Before CIRC can discuss the design of flyers, website content, and other marketing collaterals, it first needs to develop its vision, mission, and goals.

- **Election of Chair**

The members of the Commission agreed that January was too soon to hold the election for a Commission Chair. The Commission will check back in February or March.

7. New Business

No new business

Commissioner Sparks moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Torres.

Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, January 19, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.