



**Regular Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Thursday, July 23, 2020**

Present: Co-Chair Karin Lin and Co-Chair Karim Razzaz, Commissioners Marcio Macedo, Tsamchoe Dolma, Ashebir Gezmu, Alejandro Epstein-Santoyo, Subandha Karmacharya and Jen Sparks and CIRC Staff: Executive Director Nancy Schlacter, Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa, and Immigrant Services Liaison Tagesech Wabeto

Absent:

Commissioners Ana Mejia, Aleksandra Ibrahim, and Elizabeth Badger

1. Call to order:

Co-Chair Karin Lin called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Public comment

No public present during the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

3. Review and approval of December 2019 and January 2020 minutes

Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the December 12, 2019 and January 23, 2020 meetings. Commissioner Sparks moved to approve the minutes from both meetings, and Commissioner Epstein-Santoyo seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Welcome

Members of the Commission shared their personal experiences adapting to the stress of the COVID-19 shutdown and public response to racial injustice and the killing of George Floyd.

5. New Business

• **Welcoming Community Ordinance**

ED Schlacter provided an electronic copy of the Welcoming Community Ordinance to the Commission for their review. ED Schlacter summarized that the ordinance was similar in substance to the state's Safe Communities Act, which has not yet passed. ED Schlacter suggested the MIRA Coalition [website](#) as having a breadth of resources for supporting outreach to immigrants and informing them of their rights.

6. Executive Director's (ED) report

According to the data from the virtual legal screening clinics held between April and July, CIRC and De Novo have served a total of 88 clients. There were 2 legal screening clinics in April, due to the short notice cancellation of the March clinic. De Novo and Cambridge organized a telephonic legal screening clinic to serve MA residents during the COVID-19 shutdown. There were 8 callers to the first April virtual clinic and 21 callers to the second clinic in April. There were 12 callers to the May clinic, 22 callers to the June clinic, and 25 callers to the clinic in July. ED Schlacter also detailed the reopening protocols for city buildings and staff occupancy for public appointments on Monday through Thursday.

7. Immigrant Services Liaison (ISL) Wabeto Report

Immigrant Services Liaison (ISL) Wabeto provided a summary of her efforts during the COVID-19 shutdown. ISL Wabeto meets with CET outreach team virtually once a week and distributes the resources discussed. During these meetings, CET invites guest speakers from Cambridge Health Alliance and provides updates about COVID-19. Currently, ISL Wabeto meets with the Family Engagement Working Group through Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) about schools reopening. CPS is working with families, community members, and others to decide what to do in the Fall, whether to fully reopen in-person classes, have a hybrid model, or transition fully to virtual learning. ISL Wabeto has an assignment to contact 5 to 10 families from different immigrant communities and ask them what their experience was with communication from schools during the school closure, and how they were impacted by the shutdown and distance learning. ISL Wabeto joined this group to support immigrant families with virtual learning challenges because many of them have been struggling with the system, especially

families with lower grade students. ISL Wabeto explained that young students need family supervision on their virtual learning, but most immigrant families have not been able to help their children with online learning.

8. Ongoing Business

Strategic plan for 2020-2021

Project Coordinator (PC) Rosa provided the current survey submissions that ranked the Commissioners' goals identified earlier in the year. PC Rosa explained that the following items had received the most votes prior to the meeting. PC Rosa will email the Commission the results of the survey with the members of each working group, as identified by the survey submissions. The group agreed to focus on the top 3 items as strategic priorities for 2020 -2021.

- Coordinate Family Preparedness training
- Outreach to local health centers for tabling
- Know Your Rights on worker's rights and undocumented workers who are exploited
- Engagement with CPS/school family liaisons/newsletters

9. Future Projects

PC Rosa will look up the budgeted costs for the Welcoming Event to see how that money could be used to support other immigrant serving efforts. The Commissioners agreed to wait on hosting a Welcoming Event due to the public health crisis and the lack of bandwidth given the circumstances imposed by the pandemic.

Commissioner Sparks moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Macedo.

The next commission meeting will be on Thursday, September 24, 2020, at 6 pm via a Virtual Zoom meeting.