



**Regular Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
Tuesday, October 24, 2023 6:00 P.M.**

**Present:** Commissioners Tsamchoe Dolma, Ana Mejia, Karim Razzaz, Karin Lin, Vanessa Sarmiento, Debbie Klein

CIRC Staff: Acting Executive Director Carolina Almonte, Language Access Manager Crystal Rosa, and Director of Operations Sarah Binney

**Absent:** Chairs Jen Sparks and Abishek Raman, Commissioner Maximus De Medici, Immigrant Services Liaison Tagasech Wabeto

**1. Call to order**

- Since both Chairs were absent at the meeting, Acting Executive Director Almonte called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

**2. Public comment**

- No members of the public were present at the start of the virtual meeting. There was no public comment.

**3. Review and approval of June 2023 minutes**

- Commissioner Sarmiento moved to approve the June 2023 minutes; Commissioner Razzaz seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**4. Staffing update**

- Acting Executive Director Almonte introduced herself to the Commission. Commissioners introduced themselves and shared why they joined the commission.
- AED Almonte shared that the Commission would now have the option to meet hybrid with some members in-person at the CHRC office and some commissioners on zoom. Commissioner Dolma proposed to move the meetings to hybrid. Commissioner Sarmiento seconded. The hybrid proposal was approved unanimously, the next meeting on November 28, 2023 will be a hybrid meeting.

**5. Old Business – Welcome Event**

- Welcome Event
  - LAM Rosa presented to the Community Engagement Team in September to discuss interest in partnering with planning the Welcome Event. LAM Rosa will follow up about next steps in organizing with outreach workers.
- New Commissioner Recruitment – Status Update
  - CIRC staff developed a new system for interested applicants to use to apply to the Commission in 7 different languages. CIRC staff are working on reaching out to and scheduling interviews with the second wave of Commissioner applicants. We received 20 applications total.

## 6. New Business

- Pathway for Immigrant Workers – November 1, 2023
  - o CIRC will continue its information sessions in partnership with Pathway for Immigrant workers, a local non-profit, on November 1, 2023. The target for these events is local employers of low-wage employees looking to sponsor their employees in getting a green card. This event will take place in the community room of the Main Library.
- Commission Goals
  - o AED Almonte asked Commissioners to share goals they have for upcoming Commission work.
  - o Commissioner Lin asked for previous working groups to be revitalized.
  - o Commissioner Sarmiento asked for a shared calendar for relevant city events such as legal clinics and the welcome event. Commissioner Sarmiento also proposed more opportunities to engage in outreach and spread awareness of the Commission in the immigrant communities of Cambridge. Commissioner Razzaz also shared that the Commission should have more presence in the community.
  - o Commissioner Mejia share the importance of publicizing the work of the Commission.
  - o Another Commissioner asked for more trainings for Commission members. AED Almonte mentioned some trainings she is hoping to organize for Commissioners in 2024 including Open Meeting Law training, implicit bias training, and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) training.

## 7. Staff Reports

- New Resident Guide – DOO Binney shared her changes to the New Resident Guide to ensure the resources are up-to-date and the guide is fully print and online compatible. The updated guide has been posted on the city website in English. When the existing printed copies run out, staff will translate the updated guide and print updated copies in 8 languages.
- MISN meetings – AED Almonte shared that she, and occasionally LAM Rosa, regularly attends MISN (Municipal Immigrant Service Network) meetings that Metropolitan Area Planning Council organizes. In these meetings, AED Almonte and other community partners discuss strategies to support new arrivals to Massachusetts.
- Multilingual Helpline - LAM Rosa discussed her efforts regarding the upcoming Multilingual Helpline. This helpline will allow residents to call the city in any language and be connected to an interpreter that will help them navigate to the correct City department for their needs. The interpreter will then accompany the resident through their entire time on the phone or through the process of leaving a voicemail. City staff will be trained in the upcoming weeks on how to use the helpline and best practices for working with an interpreter.

## 8. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.