



Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 24, 2019

Present: Co-Chair Yarlennys Villaman and Commissioners: Elizabeth Badger, Karin Lin, Marcio Macedo, Alejandro Epstein-Santoyo and Merline Sylvain-Williams and CIRC Staff: Executive Director Nancey Schlacter, Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa, and ISL Tagesech Wabeto

Absent:

Co-Chair Nick Lopez-Cortes and Commissioner Karim Razzaz (on phone), Jennifer Sparks, Sandra Mercedes Canas, and Donna Davis.

1. Call to order:

Co-Chair Villaman called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Co-Chair Lopez-Cortes called in on a conference line.

2. Public comment

No public present, no comment.

3. Introductions to the Commission

Commission Members introduced themselves to Elizabeth Badger, for whom this was her first CIRC meeting.

4. Review and approval of December minutes

Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the December meeting, Commissioner Macedo moved to approve, and Commissioner Lin seconded.

5. Executive Director's report

There was a light attendance at the legal screening clinic on January 16 and there is no obvious explanation for the limited attendance. ED Schlacter will wait for Commissioner Canas to be present to update the Commission on the issues of language access at local shelters. ED Schlacter discussed the topic with Liz Mengers, Planning & Development Manager of the Continuum of Care. ED Schlacter explained that 23 CRLS staff members participated in 3 PAIR KYR presentations for CRLS social workers, guidance counselors, and psychologists. The last session was canceled since staff were trained in the first 3 sessions.

• Report from Immigrant Services Liaison (ISL)

The Commission received a monthly summary of outreach from ISL Wabeto. ISL Wabeto will be attending farmers markets every Sunday until April. ISL Wabeto will meet with the outreach coordinator of Project Citizenship to discuss how to promote outreach initiatives. ISL Wabeto informed the Commission that Just-A-Start will be providing free tax-prep for Cambridge residents. ISL Wabeto is focusing her latest outreach efforts on communities of faith, in conjunction with the CET. ISL Wabeto will be attending the Mayor's Office event for residents impacted by the federal government shutdown.

6. New Business

• Public Charge Rulemaking

ED Schlacter is working with Attorney Dierdre Giblin of MLRI to schedule a public charge training for Cambridge Housing Authority staff and DHSP staff in late February. The focus of the presentations is a consistent message informing people to continue using their current benefits/entitlements. The new rule will result in negative changes, but it is not retroactive. The new rule may be published as soon as June.

• MIRA Action Alert

ED Schlacter provided the Commission an email from MIRA that listed the various immigrant related legislation currently being considered at the State level. ED Schlacter read the issues listed:

- Safe Communities Act

- Bar Use of State funds for local law enforcement to act as immigration agents
- MA Drivers Licenses for all qualified drivers
- All graduates of MA high school who have lived in MA for 3 years can be eligible for in-state tuition and state financial aid
- Ensure MA Health covers all kids equitably
- Create Commission to address barriers to licensure for skilled medical professionals trained abroad.

Commissioner Epstein-Santoyo expressed interest in the legislation regarding in-state tuition (Dream Act). Commissioner Badger expressed interest in the Health Act. The Commission voted to send a letter in support of the Safe Communities Act, similar to one sent in 2017, with revisions, on a motion by Commissioner Macedo, seconded by Commissioner Epstein-Santoyo. ED Schlacter will make the revisions and send to the Cambridge state legislative delegation on behalf of the Commission.

7. Ongoing Business

- **Goal setting for CIRC 2019**

After a discussion regarding the City's budget planning, the Commission voted to place a hold on this discussion until finances were discussed with the Commission, motion by Commissioner Badger and seconded by Commissioner Epstein-Santoyo. Project Coordinator will prepare budget information for the Commission.

- **CCTV "Ask the City" video series – segment on CIRC** – The project is completed but currently awaiting approval from Lee Gianetti the Director of Communications.

8. Future projects

- **Presentation by City Demographer**

ED Schlacter confirmed that she will schedule the city's demographer Cliff Cook for the meeting in March.

- **Presentation by Superintendent Christine Elow**

ED will be scheduling CPD Superintendent Christine Elow for February or April. Before confirming, Supt. Elow asked for more information regarding what the Commission was interested in discussing. Commission Members provided the following questions:

- What are some CPD initiatives that effect immigrant communities?
- What are the Sanctuary City protections that CPD affords immigrants in Cambridge?
- Does CPD handle matters differently than other police departments with regard to hate crimes against immigrants?
- What links does CPD have with social services?
- Are you familiar with Chelsea PD's "Chelsea HUB"? (an effort to support high-risk individuals and connect them with resources)
- What state roadways, located in Cambridge, have dual jurisdiction for CPD/State Police? Might immigrants be more vulnerable travelling on State routes? What are the routes in Cambridge that are within State Police jurisdiction?
- Does CPD get advance notice about planned ICE activities in Cambridge?
- How many detainers has ICE requested from CPD during the Trump administration?

- **AGO on UPIL training/outreach**

ED Schlacter is working with John Galli at the Community Learning Center but will also reach out to Hitomi Abe to involve CET outreach workers.

- **Elevator pitch**

The Commission will wait for Co-Chair Lopez-Cortes' attendance to discuss.

- **Presentation by ED of Arts Council**

The Commission agreed to have Executive Director Jason Weeks discuss the process for public art and ideas for welcoming immigrants in the Spring. Commissioner Macedo volunteered to do some research and report back.

- **Housing Authority**

A commission member asked ED Schlacter to reach out to Cambridge Housing Authority to discuss any concerns their staff may have heard from residents who are immigrants.

Co-Chair Villaman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Sylvain-Williams.

Next commission meeting will be on Thursday, February 28, 2019, at 6 pm in the Large Conference Room.