

**COMMISSION ON LATINO-AMERICANS
QUARTERLY MEETING
November 16, 2024
9:00 AM**

In-Person
Crete Public Library
1515 Forest Ave
Crete, NE 69333

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER – 9 A.M.

Chair Whitmore called the meeting to order at 9 AM.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Whitmore welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Commissioners went around the table introducing themselves, followed by the office staff. Alejandra Fernandez a reporter for the Crete news was in attendance and introduced herself at the end.

III. ROLL CALL/RECORD ABSENTEES

Present: Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Aida Evans, Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Absent: Commissioner Sandra Lopez.

Motion 1 to approve the roll call was presented by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Seconded by Commissioner Adi Dobbins.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Vote No: None. Motion Passed.

Motion 2 to excuse the absence of Commissioner Sandra Lopez was presented by Chair Maria Whitmore.

Seconded by Commissioner Jaime Suarez

Vote yes: None.

Vote No: Commissioner Aida Evans, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Abstained: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, governors Representative Lali Sage.

Motion fails.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS 20-30 min

There were no public comments.

v. PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

**NEBRASKA COMMISSION ON LATINO-AMERICANS QUARTERLY
MEETING**

The Commission on Latino-Americans will host its Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, November 16, 2024. The meeting will take place at the office of *Crete Public Library*, located at 1515 Forest Ave, Crete, NE 69333. We will begin at 9 a.m. and adjourn at no later than 2 p.m.

The Quarterly Meeting is open to the public and all interested individuals are invited to attend. Time will be allocated for public comments within the first hour of the meeting. We encourage those wishing to speak to call our office ahead of time, in an effort to provide better accommodations.

The agenda for the Quarterly Meeting will be kept current and made available for public inspection at the Commission's office. For further information, please contact us at (402) 471-2791.

Public Notice of this meeting was placed in Mundo Latino Publications on November 8, 2024; The Hastings Tribune, The Grand Island Independent, Kearney Hub, Lexington Clipper, The North Platte Telegraph, The Columbus Telegram, The Lincoln Journal Star, Scottsbluff Star-Herald, Omaha World-Herald on November 2, 2024 and it was e-mailed to the NCLA mail list and posted in Social Media channels.

v. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion 3 the approve the agenda was presented by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Seconded by Commissioner Adi Dobbins.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None. **Motion passed.***

vi. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** □ Approve minutes of the August 31, 2024 meeting

Motion 4 to approve the minutes from August 31, 2024 was presented by Governors Representative Lali Sage.

Seconded by Aida Evans.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None. **Motion Passed.***

viii. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS 10:00 am**

1) Nebraska Latino Youth Summit recap

Executive Director Arriaga gives the commissioners a brief review of the Nebraska Latino Youth Summit. She reported on feedback received from both the planning committee and the students that were in attendance. She proudly stated that the overwhelming majority of feedback received was positive. The Commissioners thanked the staff and stated their joy at seeing the success of this year's NELYS. To end the conversation ED Arriaga informs the commissioners that there were unforeseen expenses tied to the food for NELYS that will need to be paid for using the Commissions cash fund, she asked the commissioners to approve this expense.

Motion 5 to approve expenses in the amount of \$3,398.00 was presented by Governors Representative Lali Sage.

Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

Motion 6 to approve expenses for the hotel rooms was presented by Chair Maria Whitmore.

Seconded by Commissioner Jaime Suarez.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

2) Hispanic Heritage Month celebration recap

Executive Director Maria Arriaga recaps the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration event that the commission held with Congressman Bacon. ED Arriaga spoke about the events success and how the issues that arose on the day were quickly handled and resolved.

ix. NEW BUSINESS 11:00 am

1) Honor Commissioner Cristina Castro-Matukewickz

The Commissioners took a brief break to recognize former Commissioner Matukewickz's dedication to the Latino community. She was presented with an award for her outstanding work on behalf of the Latino Community.

2) NELYS 2025 Planning

The commissioners along with ED Arriaga took some time to discuss where the 2025 Nebraska Latino Youth Summit will be held and on what date. After some brief discussion the commissioners decided to hold the summit on October 30th of 2025 in the Omaha metro area. With a plan in place to alternate the summit between Grand Island and the Omaha Metro area moving forward.

Motion 7 to approve the planning for NELYS 2025 was presented by Chair Maria Whitmore.

Seconded by Aida Evans

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

3) Office New location

ED Arriaga gave the Commissioners notice that the office for the staff will be moved to the third floor of the state capitol due to the renovations. She assures the Commissioners that this change will only be for two years then the staff shall be moved back into the tower.

4) Elevate Summit – Nov. 19 in Kearney

ED Arriaga asked that four of the commissioners be present at the Elevate Summit on November 19th. She believes that it is important for us to have a presence at the summit as the commission is one of the events sponsors commissioners Dobbins, Rodriguez, and Whitmore agree to be present at the event. They asked that hotel lodging be provided for them.

Motion 8 to approve accommodations for the commissioner who will attend the Elevate Summit was presented by commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Seconded by Commissioner Adi Dobbins.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

5) Ad-Hoc Committee to nominate officers

Motion 9 to approve the election of officers was made by Commissioner Jaime Suarez.

Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Vote No: None **Motion Passed.**

The new executive officers are as follows: Chair Maria Whitmore, Vice Chair Lali Sage, Secretary Jaime Suarez.

Motion 10 to approve the elected officers was made by Governors Representative Lali Sage.

Seconded by Commissioner Adi Dobbins.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Vote No: None **Motion Passed.**

x. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- 1) Review Budget Status Reports for August, September, October
- 2) Review General Ledger Reports for August, September, October

The commissioners took time to review the financial reports. No questions or concerns were raised.

Motion 11 to approve the financial reports was made by Chair Maria Whitmore.

Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Vote No: None **Motion Passed.**

xi. DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Arriaga gave a brief report of all the work she has been doing to fulfill her role as the Executive Director and to advance the goal of the Commission.

Motion 12 to approve the Directors report was made by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Seconded by Governors Representative Lali Sage.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion 13 to approve the Executive Session was presented by Commissioner Jaime Suarez.

Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Governors Representative Lali Sage, Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Adi Dobbins, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

*Vote No: None **Motion Passed.***

XIII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS 1:30-2:00pm

Aida Evans: has been conducting community meetings, as well as supporting more families from Guatemala and El Salvador.

Leticia Rodriguez: Has been working with students to help them complete scholarship essays, as well as assisting a local student by teaching them how to drive. She has also been accompanying non-English speakers to the DMV to help them through the different processes.

Lali Sage: Has been promoted to team supervisor for the RESEA program, which is a federal program to help unemployed individuals rejoin the workforce. She will take this position in July 2024.

Adi Dobbins: Has been approved for a 200,000-dollar grant that they are going to do a large event to bring in more people to the city of North Platte. She has been working with the community to help get some peoples needs met and help them get their businesses started.

Jaime Suarez: Has been working with one world community health centers to implement a new plan for mental health to try and overcome the machismo culture that is in the Latino community.

Marilyn Schacht: Has been working with Nebraska Appleseed to get a senator to carry the driver license for all bill into the Legislature. She asks maria to set up a meeting between herself and the director of the DMV. Has received approval that Crete will be the first certified welcoming city in Nebraska.

Maria Whitmore: Has been working towards several efforts listed below.

- Emergency preparedness program UNL extension
- NELYS core organization in support of office team:
 - Visits to schools promoting NELYS
 - Contact with UNL extension for resources for NELYS
 - Requested speakers and break out sessions leaders, panel coordinators, some vendors and supported office team.
 - Attended webinar for corporate registration requirements. UNL CAP
- Attended “project Schuyler” an immigration legal assistance program from UNL law school attended virtual open house UNL projects with law school and marketing for license program. (Will coordinate with Ricardo A.)
 - Contact with bar association minority person.
 - Attended meeting with Judicial branch hearings follow up
 - Judicial retirement supreme court justice Havican.
 - Continue relationship with UNL extension.
- Helped new families in my area with different needs.
- Promote commission at Crete community event.
- Identify resources for license program permit program.
- Support for moms and new immigrant families in navigating health system special needs child,
- New pregnant mothers arriving in our area assisted (with obtaining help to proper feeding) organizing baby showers in support of new moms in need.
- Met with “Healthy families Nebraska” coordinator. She will have openings for bilingual case workers and coordinators.

xiv. NEXT MEETING

The next quarterly meeting will take place on February 8th in Norfolk.

xv. ADJOURN 2:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 12:48

Secretary: Governors Representative Lali Sage
Transcribed by Communications and Marketing Specialist Ricardo Alcala