

COMMISSION ON LATINO-AMERICANS
QUARTERLY MEETING

February 8, 2025

9:00 AM

In-Person

Norfolk Public Library Room C
308 Prospect Ave
Norfolk, NE 68701

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER – 9 A.M.

Commission Chair Maria Whitmore called the quarterly meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Commission Chair Maria Whitmore welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Commissioners went around the table introducing themselves, followed by the staff. Alejandro Ramirez from the Norfolk Daily News was in attendance and introduced himself at the end.

III. ROLL CALL/RECORD ABSENTEES (MOTION)

Present: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Absent: Commissioner Jaime Suarez, Commissioner Adi Dobbins.

Motion 1 to approve the roll call was presented by Chair Whitmore.

Seconded by Vice Chair Lali Sage.

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

Motion 2 to excuse the absence of Commissioner Jaime Suarez was presented by Vice-Chair Lali Sage. *Seconded by Commissioner Aida Evans.*

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

***Motion 3** to excuse the absence of Commissioner Adi Dobbins was presented by Vice-Chair Lali Sage. Seconded by Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.*

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS 20-30 min

There were no comments from the public.

v. PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

NEBRASKA COMMISSION ON LATINO-AMERICANS QUARTERLY
MEETING

The Commission on Latino-Americans will host its Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, February 8, 2025. The meeting will take place at *Norfolk Public Library Room C*, located at 308 Prospect Ave, Norfolk, NE 68701. 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 January 24, 2025; 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, Norfolk Daily News on January 25, 2025 and it was e-mailed to the NCLA mail list and posted in Social Media channels.

VI. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (MOTION) 9:45 am

Motion 4 to approve the agenda was presented by Chair Maria Whitmore.
Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (MOTION) □ Approve minutes of the November 16, 2024 meeting

After reviewing the minutes Vice-Chair Lali Sage brought the Commissioners' attention to fact that the date from here November report was documented incorrectly. The correct date is July 2024 rather than January 2025. She requested these be corrected.

Motion 5 to correct the minutes from November with Vice-Chair Lali Sage's Corrections. *Seconded by Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.*

Vote yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Abstain: Commissioner Sandra Lopez.

*Vote no: None. **Motion passed.***

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS 10:00 am

1) Nebraska Latino Youth Summit planning update

Executive Director Maria Arriaga provided an update regarding the 2025 Nebraska Latino Youth Summit. The event is scheduled for October 30th, 2025, and is set to take place in La Vista, Nebraska. It was also announced that Bellevue will no longer serve as the planning partner for the summit. Executive Director Maria Arriaga assured the Commissioners that she has been actively working to secure a new planning partner and sponsors for the event to ensure its continued success. Further information will be shared as the planning process progresses.

ix. NEW BUSINESS 11:00 am

1) Qualtrics Cloud Services (Motion)

Executive Director Maria Arriaga provided the commissioners with a brief summary of the presentation given at the most recent quarterly meeting held in Scottsbluff. Following the summary, the commissioners took a brief pause to review the contract and discuss its details. After a moment of review, Vice-Chair Lali Sage inquired about the specific services provided by the contract. In response, Chair Whitmore elaborated on the service, explaining the benefits it would bring to the organization.

Motion 6 to approve the contract should it pass inspection by the AG's office was
Presented by Chair Maria Whitmore.
Seconded by Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

2) Elevation: Demographics and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Nebraskan's Aging Latino Population Report (Motion)

Executive Director Maria Arriaga explained the value she sees in the report, emphasizing its relevance to the ongoing concerns she has encountered in meetings with several agencies across the state. She noted that many of these agencies are particularly concerned about the aging Latino population. Maria believes that this report will provide crucial information that will enable the commission, as well as other agencies, to better serve this demographic moving forward.

Motion 7 to approve the creation of the report on Demographics and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Nebraska's Aging Lation Population was presented by
Vice-Chair Lali Sage. Seconded by Chair Maria Whitmore.

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

3) Contributions of the Latino-American population to the State of Nebraska report (Motion)

Executive Director Maria Arriaga explained that this would be a separate report specifically outlining the contributions of the Latino/Hispanic population in the state. She further shared that she plans to present this report to the Legislature, on March 6th, to support her testimony.

Motion 8 to approve the creation of the report on Contributions of the Latino-American population to the State of Nebraska was presented by Commissioner Sandra Lopez. *Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.*

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

4) Promotional Package/Telemundo and Lobo 97.7 (Motion)

Executive Director Maria Arriaga explained to the Commissioners how she has been talking with Telemundo and Radio Lobo 97.7 to create an advertising campaign to raise more awareness of our commission as well as highlight the services we provide to the Latino/Hispanic community. She explained how there were two separate options with which the Commission could move forward should the Commissioners approve the media partnership. After a brief discussion the Commissioners decided to approve both media plans.

Motion 9 to approve both media plan options was presented by Vice-Chair Lali Sage. *Seconded by Commissioner Aida Evans.*

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

5) Raices de mi Pueblo of Hastings, NE Sponsorship (Motion)

Raices de mi Pueblo submitted a request for a \$1,500 sponsorship. However, Chair Maria Whitmore expressed concerns regarding the incomplete application. Commissioner Aida Evans, who is familiar with the organization, vouched for the organizer. Despite this, Chair Whitmore reiterated that she was not comfortable approving an incomplete application. In response, Commissioner Evans stated that she

would work with the organization to ensure the application was resubmitted with the necessary information.

Motion 10 to approve the sponsorship request in the amount of \$1,500 was made by Vice-Chair Lali Sage. Seconded by Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez.

Vote Yes: None

Vote No: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, Commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht. **Motion Failed.**

6) Review guideline of Commissioners and lodging

Executive Director Maria Arriaga reminded the commissioners that when the commission provides lodging, extra expenses may not be charged to the room. She also briefly discussed the new procedure for securing lodging for travel, noting that reservations must now be made through a third-party agency.

7) Bills review for support

Executive Director Maria Arriaga provided a list of bills that she has designated as important to the commission's mission and asked the commissioners to review these bills.

8) Governor Pillen executive order and immigration climate in Nebraska-Strategies.

ED Arriaga spoke briefly about the recent executive order signed by Governor Jim Pillen. She states that at this moment in time she is unsure how this order will affect our agency. She asks the Commissioners for their opinions on how we should approach this order.

9) Unidos US Conference

Executive Director Maria Arriaga asked the Commissioners who would be interested in participating in this years Unidos US Conference. After brief discussion the Commissioners decided we should reserve a total of 10 spots.

x. FINANCIAL REPORTS (MOTION) 11:00 am

The Commissioners took a moment to review the reports.

Motion 11 to approve the financial reports was presented by Commissioner Sandra Lopez. Seconded by Commissioner Aida Evans.

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, commissioner aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

- 1) Review Budget Status Reports for November, December, January
- 2) Review General Ledger Reports for November, December, January

XI. DIRECTOR REPORT (MOTION) 11:30 am

Executive Director Maria Arriaga presented her report to the commissioners, providing a concise overview of her efforts to further the commission's mission. She outlined the completion of several key tasks she has fulfilled to advance the commission's objectives. She placed particular emphasis on her involvement in weekly meetings focused on developing a comprehensive statewide strategy to establish a network dedicated to supporting the Hispanic/Latino community during emergencies. In conclusion, she expressed her gratitude to the commissioners for their continued dedication and work on behalf of the Latino community.

***Motion 12** to approve the director's report was presented by Chair Maria Whitmore. Seconded by Commissioner Aida Evans.*

Vote Yes: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez, commissioner Aida Evans, Vice-Chair Lali Sage, Commissioner Sandra Lopez, Chair Maria Whitmore, Commissioner Marilyn Schacht.

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

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (MOTION) 12:40 pm

No Executive session was held.

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

Aida Evans: During Commissioner Evans report her voice had grown weak so her husband Mark provided the commission with the following report on her behalf: Commissioner Evans will be hosting a community event covering mental health on April 11th. The event will be community wide and interpreters will be provided for language services. In addition to this event she has also be referring families to the Multicultural Coalition for aid with the current confusion stemming from the current federal government. She has also been working with schools to address issues raised by the current political climate. She ended her report by stating she has been working closely with Executive Director Maria Arriaga to report issues and concerns from her community.

Sandra Lopez: Commissioner Lopez has been providing loans through her job at Catholic Services, as well as working with business owners to address concerns of deportation. She has also been working with families to help them set up power of attorney documents in the event of deportations.

Leticia Rodriguez: Has been working with families to set up processes to protect their children should the parents be deported. She has also been assisting elders with health issues, and helping families put together immigration documentation.

Lali Sage: Vice-Chair Lali Sage has been able to directly help Spanish speakers in her daily job as she is able to assist them and not transfer them to the translation line. She has also been helping the staff of the Commission by being available to answer questions of unemployment that have recently arisen.

Marilyn Schacht: Commissioner Marilyn Schacht reported that the City of Crete has officially received its certification as an official welcoming community. This is the first certified welcoming community in Nebraska. In recognition of this certification the city of Crete is hosting a celebration. She is also doing a road preparation class to prepare people for driving on wintery roads and how to handle emergency situations.

Maria Whitmore: Chair Maria Whitmore attended the Emergency Preparedness Program that was organized via UNL-Extension, She helps several families navigate the US health care system, She has assisted individuals in acquiring their driver's licenses, and helped in reviewing state legislature for bills of interest to the Commission. She also assisted a family which recently welcomed a baby, Chair Whitmore has been gathering resources on their behalf to assist them during this tumultuous time. Finally, she attended the apprenticeship conference at Central Community College.

XIV. NEXT MEETING

The next Quarterly Meeting will be held in Lincoln, NE, on May 17th

XV. ADJOURN 2:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 11:39

**Acting Secretary: Commissioner Leticia Rodriguez
Transcribed by Marketing and Communications Specialist Ricardo Alcala**