

The Greater Tulsa Area Hispanic/Latinx Affairs Commission

Meeting Minutes | February 10, 2022 | 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center

Members Present	Members Absent
Carlos Bejarano	Monica Blendowski
Daniel Gomez	Amairani Perez Chamu
Fatima Linares	Hugo Salceda
Andy Little (Liaison)	
Jessica Lozano	
Mimi Martinez	
Jordan Mazariegos	
Mark Ohnesorge	
Adam Paluka (Liaison)	
Amanda Peregrina	
Angelica Reina Paz	
Elsie Urueta Pollock	
Jania Rivera Wester	
Jacob Rodriguez (Liaison)	

I. Call to Order

- a. Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm by Chairman Bejarano.
- b. Roll Call
- c. Commissioner Bejarano and the commission wish Commissioner Lozano a happy early birthday.

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. Commissioner Linares notes an error in January’s meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Bejarano calls for approval of the January meeting minutes, pending the correction.
 - 1. Commissioner Rivera Wester makes a motion for approval.
 - 2. Commissioner Peregrina seconds the motion
 - a. All in unanimous favor

III. Guest Speaker

- a. Olivia Landrum, Director of Community Outreach at UMA Tulsa is invited to speak on the efforts their organization is undertaking to improve outcomes for Hispanic/Latinx individuals, including entrepreneur education, community engagement activities and efforts to vaccinate Tulsa’s Hispanic/Latinx population.
 - i. After the presentation, Commissioner Mazariegos asks for clarification on why the organization has reached 50,000 people, but only a few thousand got vaccinated.

1. Olivia replies that vaccine misinformation, distrust, language barriers, requirements for ID, and confusion have contributed to a lot of hesitation to get vaccinated. However, UMA Tulsa has had the most success in vaccinating Hispanic/LatinX communities because the community trusts them, and the organization trains their peer educators to effectively communicate and talk with everyone they vaccinate.

IV. Chair's Report

- a. Commissioner Bejarano reports that he met with Jenifer Young of the American Red Cross. She briefed Carlos on the programs being offered for fire safety, including financial support for victims of home fires, smoke detector installations, and the pillowcase project, which focuses on children's education and preparedness for disaster events. She was put in contact with Kendall-Whittier Main Street for potential programming partnerships but would also like to attend a Public Safety Committee Meeting to see where else they can competently aid the Latinx population.
- b. Adam Paluka will be retiring as liaison for EMSA at the end of the month but has found a replacement, Jacob Rodriguez, Assistance District Chief of Clinical Affairs, to take his place.
 - i. Adam thanks the commission and expresses his appreciation for the impactful collaborations they've completed in their time.
 - ii. Jacob Rodriguez expresses his gratitude for the opportunity to serve and thanks to the commission for having him.

V. Committee Reports

a. Executive

- i. Commissioner Bejarano reports that the committee met on February 3rd and discussed the roles of each officer – in terms of expectations. They created the following descriptions:
 1. Recorder – will be taking over acknowledgments for each commission meeting.
 2. Historian – will be instrumental in compiling the annual commission report.
- ii. The committee discussed potential speakers for the coming months. They are currently recruiting Marcelino Leal with Community Health Connection to be a speaker in March. The committee informs the commissioners that all suggestions are welcome.
- iii. The committee announced that the committee will be looking at the four pillars of the resilient strategy to see how the commission's current initiatives align and how we can align future initiatives with the strategies put in place by the MORE Office.

b. Education

- i. Commissioner Linares reports that the committee did meet and is currently working on beginning the process of reaching out to potential recipients.

So far, there are about 42 nominees. Application deadlines will be the 25th of this month, and that's been extended.

1. Commissioner Rivera Wester reminds the commission that for the interview portion, no one must be fluent in any one or two languages. The application details will primarily inform the decisions.
- ii. Commissioner Linares reports that she is awaiting potential sponsorship from key partners.

c. Community Advocacy

- i. Commissioner Pollock reports that the committee met on the 8th of February and is in full swing for the preparation of the job fair. The date is set for April 23rd from 11 am-3 pm at Tulsa Honor Academy (THA). The budget is still being developed, but it's difficult to determine what will be needed since this is an inaugural event.
- ii. Commissioner Lozano has secured a DJ and the committee is working to begin securing appropriate groups to attend the job fair. They'll likely be capping the number at 75 for capacity services but they're prioritizing education and health organizations to specifically provide bilingual staff members to better support the Hispanic/Latinx community.
- iii. Feedback from the Latin American Chamber of Commerce suggested the commission charge is \$100/table rather than \$25.
- iv. Volunteer flyers are up, and organization sign-up forms will be going up very soon.
- v. The commission has been deciding what incentives would be best to attract applicants in terms of food.
- vi. Communications will be needed to spread the word – and the committee predicts that most of the budget will go into marketing.
 1. Commissioner Martinez asks if there'll be space for Non-Profit organizations to sign up. She advocates that an organization like Goodwill would be very interested in attending the fair.
 - a. Commissioner Pollock responds that non-profits aren't deprioritized – the committee wants to offer a variety of options. However, they are most committed to inviting organizations who're searching for applicants in the health and education field, with a need for bilingual employees. This is a direct re

d. Public Safety

- i. Adam Paluka reports that the recent snowstorm caused a significant increase in EMSA response.
- ii. EMSA is preparing for upcoming hiring opportunities, including enacting a new "Pay as you Learn program" that will allow folks to be paid while completing their education to be employed with EMSA.

e. Immigration

- i. Commissioner Gomez reports the committee met virtually last week.
 1. They met with Legal Aid, YMCA, Katie Coulter from Catholic Charities, and Krystal and Leticia who gave a presentation on the equality pillars and where the committee can be of assistance in the new “Tulsa’s Initiatives”, and “Flourish Tulsa” program.
 2. Both TU Law and catholic charities are involved in helping settle Afghan families, and the committee is very interested in participating in those efforts.
 3. Commissioner Gomez reports that the committee will be proposing a speaker soon for one of the upcoming commission meetings – a professional who can specifically speak on the human trafficking efforts that are impacting refugee and immigrant populations in Tulsa.
 - a. Commissioner Martinez offers her assistance to the committee.

f. Special Committees

- i. The committee reports the upkeep of the social media page and a recent meeting with the city of Tulsa for logo distribution guidelines.
- ii. Commissioner Linares asks if the commission is still posting the commissioner highlights on the Facebook page.
 1. Commissioner Bejarano replies that they’ve halted but are willing to pick the effort back up. New profiles will also be completed for new commissioners and ones that may have been missed in the first round.

VI. Old Business

- a. None

VII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. This Saturday, Tulsa Public Schools will be holding its last expo event from 8 am – 1:30 pm. There’ll be an opportunity to win \$500 for attendees. Interpreter and vaccine opportunities will be available as well as food and enrollment opportunities.
 - i. Commissioner Pollock reports that the number of applications across the district has been significantly higher than it has been in the past, especially for Latinx students. The increase indicates that the efforts to enroll Hispanic/Latinx students have been very successful.
- b. Commissioner Ohnesorge reports that his robbery detectives have reported an uptick in reporting crimes in the Hispanic/Latinx communities. However, the folks who make the reports aren’t willing or able to follow up on the matter. The police department will be pushing out some information to help and educate the community on the importance of reporting and following up.
 - i. Commissioner Ohnesorge encourages commissioners to educate folks within their sphere of influence on the dangers of meeting in private

places, which is where most robberies occur. Meeting in public places could eradicate a significant amount of robbery crimes.

- ii. Commissioner Pollock remarks that a lot of families have expressed that they don't feel safe leaving East Tulsa and asks Commissioner Ohnesorge if reporting and following up potential could be improved if the community could report to the police station in East Tulsa.
 1. Mark responds that he's spoken with the robbery lieutenant and proposed that same idea– and it has been well received. Logistics are still being worked out to make that tangible.
 - a. Andy Little follows up by reminding the commission of the importance of informing community members that not all police stations are staffed at night. Informing folks of the central locations that won't close are important.
 2. Andy Little reports that on May 14th the “sound the alarm” red cross program will be executed in conjunction with the Tulsa Fire Department.
 - a. The sound the alarm program is a home fire campaign that knocks on people's doors to personally install free smoke alarms to homes that don't have any and educate folks about home fire safety.
 - i. Andy reports that there's a much higher probability of fires breaking out in Hispanic/LatinX homes for several reasons. Lack of translators and high numbers of mobile home residents are primary factors. Mobile homes are made cheaply – and they're at a higher probability of burning. Several mobile home neighborhoods in east Tulsa and around the admiral area have a high number of Latinx residents,
 1. Commissioner Linares suggests the campaign produce Spanish advertisements to circulate in the Spanish-speaking communities.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Jania motions
- b. Amanda seconds
- c. All in unanimous favor
- d. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm