



County of Santa Cruz

Latino Affairs Commission

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

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January 29, 2014

Board of Supervisors

Latino Affairs Commission 2012-2013 Biennial Report

Dear Members of the Board:

It is with pleasure that I forward this report to you.

I. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

The Latino Affairs Commission was established April 7, 1992 and created an important and historical opportunity to advocate for the needs of the Latino community. Latinos continue to constitute the largest ethnic minority group in Santa Cruz County. The Latino Affairs Commission (LAC) was established by ordinance no. 4186 and added to the Santa Cruz County Code Chapter 2.117 on May 11, 1992.

The Commission exercises the following responsibilities in its efforts to ensure that the interests of the County's Latino population are protected and promoted:

- A. Respond to the interests of the Latino community, including public and private agencies, on concerns and issues affecting the needs of the Latino residents in the County of Santa Cruz.
- B. Collect critical data and information from both public and private agencies relating to the needs of the growing Latino community.
- C. Advise and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on relevant issues and matters concerning the Latino community.
- D. Monitor the various services made available to Latino residents by

public and private agencies within the County and help ensure the efficient delivery of those services.

- E. Advise and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding socioeconomic needs of low income Latinos, including the County allocation of resources to County programs and community program funding.

II. MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATIONS

During reporting years 2012 and 2013, regular meetings were scheduled bi-monthly on the second Wednesday of every other month. All meetings convened at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. Most meetings were held at the United Way conference room in Capitola. One meeting was held at the Watsonville Library and another at the 701 Santa Cruz County Government Center.

III. COMMISSION STRUCTURE

The Latino Affairs Commission consists of nine (9) members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Supervisorial appointments include:

First District: Monica Galvan

Second District: Jorge Mendez, Chair 2012, Liseth Guizar 2013,

Third District: Claudia Llamas-Padilla

Fourth District: Francisco Diaz

Fifth District: Yolanda Perez-Logan

An additional four (4) members are nominated by the cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz:

City of Santa Cruz: Vivian Vargas, 2013 Chair, Sonya Martinez 2012 and David Ortiz, 2013

City of Watsonville: Rebecca Garcia 2013 and Aquiles Borge, 2013

The current Commission includes two self-employed business persons, one active community member, one full-time student, one school principal, one Deputy Probation Officer, one Health Services Agency employee, one Public Agency employee, and one higher education professional.

IV. COMMISSION STAFF

EEO Officer Ana Ventura Phares staffed the commission for most of this reporting period. In October 2013, Mary Thuerwatcher, Commissions Coordinator, began staffing the Latino Affairs Commission.

V. ATTENDANCE – The 2013 attendance report is attached.

VI. GOALS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2012-13

1. Receive community input from Immigrant rights advocates and other members of the public on how the federal Secure Communities program is affecting the County, in particular Latinos and immigrants of all ethnicities. Collaborate with the Sheriff's in his task force in order to provide guidance on how to improve the program within the County.

Secure Communities Federal Program (S-Comm)

In 2011, local immigration attorneys and community members asked LAC to help address their concerns regarding residents being deported as a result of the S-Comm program, which allows Federal Immigration Enforcement to deport those detained by the Sheriff. On December 13, 2011, Sheriff Wowak created a task force which included Commission members, immigration attorney Doug Keegan, and Board staff members to review and advise the Sheriff's assessment tool and return with a report and recommendations to the Board on February 28, 2012. Commissioners Yolanda Perez-Logan, Chair Jorge Perez, Vice Chair Monica Galvan and LAC staff member Ana Ventura Phares participated in several task force meetings.

In March of 2012, Sheriff Wowak presented LAC with an update on the assessment tool used to determine eligibility for release. In April, LAC informed the Board that they voted not to support the assessment tool as presented because it did not do enough to minimize the many negative aspects of this program. In May, LAC sent a letter to your Board requesting your support of AB1081, the Trust Act which provided safeguards to non serious offenders and which only holds persons with serious or violent felonies. In that same month, your Board passed a resolution to support AB1081 which would reform the State participation in the federal S-Comm program and directed the Chair to write the Sheriff urging that he support AB 1081. Also in May, Chair Mendez, Sheriff Wowak, Supervisor Greg Caput, and Laura Segura Gallardo, E.D. of Mariposa Services (formerly Defensa de Mujeres/Womens' Crisis Support) held a public forum in Watsonville re: policies and practices regarding S-Comm. In June, Board Chair Leopold wrote a letter to Sheriff Wowak urging that he devise a policy guided by the language of AB1081. In the fall of 2012, LAC was informed that Sheriff Wowak revised his screening to exempt lesser/non-retainable offenses from the S-Comm program. In January, 2013, LAC voted and sent a letter to your Board asking for support of the revised AB1081 bill, now AB4 and in March 2013, your board passed and sent a resolution supporting the passage of AB4 to our local State representatives.

2. Continue monitoring of the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) task force project.

Commissioner Yolanda Perez-Logan, Assistant Division Director for the Probation Department, provided bi-monthly updates on the department's work with the Criminal Justice Council's Disproportionate Minority Contact Project. Highlights include on-going collaboration and work between Probation staff, law enforcement agencies and other community members to improve relations with youth in Santa Cruz County, and participation in the "Turning a Curve of Youth Violence", Santa Cruz County Community Coalition to Overcome Racism (SCCCOR) and Santa Cruz County Safety Task Force. The DMC project staff also worked to improve the Risk Assessment Instrument, developed a DMC Data Dictionary, met with the community over several related issues such as community direct files and worked with stakeholders to re-vitalize the Juvenile Justice Council.

3. Continue to support community organizations and the County through the co-sponsorship of the local annual Citizenship and Immigration Forum, the Bi-National Health Week, the Watsonville Cesar Chavez Event, Stop the Silence Walk in Watsonville and other events/ activities that inform and educate the entire community on issues affecting the Latino community.

In 2012 and 2013, LAC members co-sponsored and actively participated in the Cesar Chavez Youth Awards event, the Immigration Forum, and the Bi-National Health Week. LAC members also outreached to the community regarding the Federal Immigration program entitled Deferred Action for Immigrant Children.

4. Commissioners attended and/or participated in community meetings that give visibility to the Commission, the County and its mission;

LAC commissioners attended many community meetings regarding health, safety, higher education, housing and immigration.

Commissioner Garcia reported on her on-going participation with the Tri-County Latino Elected Officials organization and Commissioner Galvan provided reports on her involvement with the UCSC Mentor Dreamers Group. Commissioner Perez-Logan reported on the Turning the Curve of Youth Violence Conference. She also acted as liaison to the Criminal Justice Council. Commissioner Perez-Logan also participated: in the Ms Lady Career luncheon whose mission is to promote leaders, excellence in education, college and career discovery, and develop young women; TEDx Watsonville hosted by the Youth Council; attended the Criminal Justice Summit also hosted by the Youth Council; Girls Rising event at the Mello Center; the Community Assessment Project report out and the Community Heroes awards ceremony.

5. Receive and disseminate information regarding higher education and future job opportunities for local Latino students in Santa Cruz County.

Commissioners Vargas, Galvan and Garcia contacted trustees and administration at Cabrillo College to discuss their Santa Cruz County College Commitment (S4C) for English Learners. This program focuses on preparing fourth graders for college.

In 2013, LAC launched their website: www.scclatinoaffairs.org. It provides the mission, goals, members, past reports, meeting times and agendas, along with local events of interest and a link to the Santa Cruz County Employment job opportunities site.

6. Partner with the Human Care Alliance and others for the continuation of funding for non-profits during the upcoming budget years to ensure efforts to promote equitable funding.

Chair Jorge Mendez participated as a steering committee member for the Human Care Alliance and provided a report on Community Programs funding. Chair Mendez and Vice Chair Vargas reviewed the United Way Community Assessment Project report with the commissioners and discussed needs for future involvement.

7. Commissioners regularly communicated with the Supervisor and/or City Council member who appointed/nominated him or her through meetings and e-mail to provide updates on Latino Affairs Commission related issues.

8. *Review the 2013-2016 Santa Cruz County Equal Employment and Cultural Competency Plan*

In April of 2013, LAC reviewed the EEO and CC plan with the recommendation to continue hiring bilingual (English and Spanish) staff as needed to ensure efficient delivery of services and programs to the Santa Cruz County community. The commission, along with the other Personnel department commissions will continue to assist by providing outreach about job opportunities and serving as oral board panel members when appropriate.

VII. FUTURE GOALS FOR 2013-2014

1. Attend and participate in community meetings that pertain to the Commission and its mission.
2. Continue ongoing review of Disproportionate Minority Contact task force project.
3. Promote economic development for the Santa Cruz County community.

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4. Meet with elected officials to promote college readiness.
5. Continue to support community organizations and the County through the co-sponsorship of the local annual Citizenship and Immigration Forum, the Bi-National Health Week, the Watsonville Cesar Chavez Event, Stop the Silence Walk in Watsonville and other events/activities that inform and educate the entire community on issues affecting the Latino community.
6. Prepare an exhibit for the Community Wall in the County Building to raise awareness of Hispanic Heritage month in September 2014.

This report was approved at the Commission's regular meeting on January 15, 2014.

Sincerely,

Monica Galvan
Chair