

Ad Hoc Committee on Development of a Commission on Immigrant Issues Meeting Notes April 4, 2013

Present: Fernando Marroquin, Urania Petit, Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, Rafael Pichardo, Nancy Caddigan, Letty Cotto, Joseph Kalapele, and Edgar Johnson. Linda Bayer facilitated.

Updates: Linda distributed copies of the resolution establishing the task force for creation of a commission which was passed by the Hartford Court of Common Council on March 25. She also distributed copies of the press release issued by the Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance after the resolution was passed.

Research: Nancy Caddigan distributed and reviewed information about non-citizen voting in other communities. Ricardo reported on his findings that local voting by non-citizens can complicate the citizenship process due to federal prohibitions against voting. He also noted that the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) is a reliable source of information. Mui Mui sent via email a copy of an opinion that provided the basis for the State's conclusion that State commission members may be non-citizens. No other information has been found concerning non-citizens serving on commissions.

Draft Recommendations: The latest draft of the recommendations, which reflected the changes made at the meeting of March 27th, was reviewed. Some wording and formatting changes were proposed and incorporated. An additional duty was included, i.e. "propose policies and/or actions to address the issues and needs of refugees and immigrants".

The group discussed the advisability of including reference to the commission working with government agencies, in particular the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. It was agreed that such a relationship will and must occur. The possibility of having a "seat" on the commission for a USCIS representative was discussed. The conclusion was reached that a strong working relationship with USCIS and other agencies will develop naturally and need not be included explicitly in the outline of the commission. Processes for achieving this goal will be developed when the commission is operational. The group also discussed the need for outreach, education, and advocacy and determined that the current language adequately provides for these actions.

Next Steps:

1. It was agreed that this is the last meeting of the ad hoc committee; at the next meeting, the group would take on the title of Task Force as determined by the Council resolution.
2. Linda will circulate the final draft of the recommendations in the next few days.
3. The Task Force will meet on **Friday, April 12, 2013 at 4 PM** for a final review and approval of the recommendations.
4. Efforts will be made to assure that as many members are present as possible at that meeting.
5. Linda will invite Jorge Colon, the attorney assigned to the Task Force by Corporation Counsel, to attend the next meeting. He will be developing the ordinance to create the commission.
6. The Task Force will send the recommendations to the City Council and will outline the next steps to be taken