

Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship
Thursday, November 20, 2016

Present: Commissioners Marcio Macedo, Swati Sawant, Yarlennys Villaman, Melanie Torres, Karin Lin, Roxana Maldonado-Garcia, Alejandro Epstein-Santoyo, Jennifer Sparks and Merline Sylvain-Williams. CIRC Staff: Nancy Schlacter and Crystal Rosa.

Absent: Commissioner Sana Ghafoor, and Leslie DiTrani.

Documents used:

- October Minutes
- November Agenda
- Joint Statement by Cambridge Mayor E. Denise Simmons and City Manager Louis A. DePasquale regarding Cambridge as a Sanctuary City
- Memo about immigrant serving organizations in Cambridge/Metro
- Email from Mojdeh Ronhani, Executive Director of Cambridge Legal Services and Counseling Center (CLSACC)
- Community Advisory from Northwest Immigrant Rights Project regarding DACA Program after Presidential Election
- Programs and Resources handout from Community Learning Center

1. Call to order

Executive Director Schlacter called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Review and approval of October Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the October meeting and approved them unanimously on a motion from Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Macedo.

4. Presentation by Maria Kefallinou, Executive Director of Community Learning Center (CLC)

Ms. Kefallinou provided an extensive overview of the programs and resources that the Community Learning Center provides to low income residents of Cambridge. Ms. Kefallinou distributed a guide about CLC's key programs and resources to the Commissioners. CLC serves 1,000 students every year, from 70 countries, and currently has a waitlist of 500 individuals. Community members learn of CLC through word of mouth and through classes taught at Cambridge Housing Authority buildings. A variety of programs are offered at CLC, including a College Success Initiative that provides students scholarship opportunities to attend university; in collaboration with the Agenda for Children, CLC assists and supports immigrant families in navigating the school system with *Pathways to Family Success*. CLC provides comprehensive civic education and citizenship preparation within their curriculum. Additionally, CLC collaborates with a variety of city organizations and stakeholders to expose their students to different kinds of leadership roles within the community. Ms. Kefallinou explained that Commissioner DiTrani also supports CLC by offering Immigration Clinics pro bono. Further, CLC organizes a Welcoming Potluck for their students to participate and engage with folks from other ethnic backgrounds.

5. Executive Director's Report

- ED Schlacter received an email from Mojdeh Rohani, Executive Director CLSACC, with some preliminary, basic information for immigrants, whether documented or not. Ms. Rohani noted that AILA/NE, along with MIRA and PAIR, are developing a Know Your Rights training which they will make widely available once ready for rollout.
- ED Schlacter is in contact with Sabrineh Ardalán, Assistant Director of Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program, who has offered to assist the City in legal research efforts surrounding immigrant and refugee rights. ED Schlacter will continue conversations with Ms. Ardalán to determine whether and how to coordinate efforts.
- ED Schlacter has reached out to AILA/NE, to supplement their efforts as they coordinate Know Your Rights presentations in venues throughout the state.
- ED Schlacter previously provided a memo to the City Manager's Office about immigrant serving organizations in Cambridge/Metro. The memo was distributed to the Commissioners present.
- ED Schlacter received a forwarded email from Executive Director Ben Echevarria of Somerville's Welcome Project regarding a series of Train the Trainer sessions on immigrant serving legal resources.

6. October Meeting Follow-up

- **Sanctuary City Policy**
A joint statement by Mayor E. Denise Simmons and City Manager Louis A. DePasquale reaffirmed the City's continued commitment to support Cambridge as a Sanctuary City.
- **Google Drive access**
Commissioners were encouraged to contact Project Coordinator Rosa if they have any problems or questions with accessing CIRC Google Drive.

7. New Business

- **Secure Communities and ICE Detainer policies**
ED Schlacter will contact Cambridge Police Department a presentation to the Commission for the December meeting.
- **Subcommittee for outreach material**
Commissioners Sparks, Torres, Sawant, and Macedo expressed interest in developing a CIRC flyer for wide distribution to the community as well as content for other outreach platforms. CIRC staff will coordinate when the subcommittee can meet to discuss and design flyers, website content, and other marketing collaterals.
- **Know Your Rights trainings**
ED Schlacter will follow up with AILA/NE on how CIRC can help sponsor trainings locally.

Commissioner Villaman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Sparks.

Next Commission meeting will be Thursday, December 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.