King County Immigrant & Commission Meeting 6/19/2019

Date: Wed, June 19, 2019

Location: World Relief, 841 Central Ave N, Ste C-106, Kent, WA 98032

Participants: Immigrant & Refugee Commissioners, Hannelore Makhani, Alejandra Tres from the King County Charter Review Commission, Larry Evans, Legislative Aide to King County Councilmember Gossett, Terrique Scott from Balance our Tax Code, Heidi Park from King County, Lisa McLean from the State of Washington, Matias Valenzuela from the King County Equity and Social Justice Office, Kristina Logsdon as the Chief of Staff for Council Chair Dembowski, and Zoraida Arias

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<th>Agenda</th>
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Action Items:
- Accept meeting meetings for April and May meeting notes
- Get questions answered about creating an office of Immigrants and Refugees
- Subcommittee to draft recommendation letter to council/executive concerning raids
- Learn about Census efforts planned for 2020 and discuss opportunities for collaboration
- Learn about and provide feedback on the decennial process of reviewing the King County Charter

Welcome & Public Comment 5:00PM – 5:15PM

Immigrant and Refugee Commissioners in Attendance:
Fo-Ching Lu, Monserrat Padilla, Issa Ndiaye, Medard Ngueita, Hamdi Mohamed, Lalita Uppala, Mohammad Bakr (late arrival), Andrew Kritovich, Mohammad Jan Ofuq, By Phone at 6:15PM: Senayet Negusse

Absent Commissioners: Nimco Bulale, Minal Kode Ghassemieh, Miguel Angel Duncan-Galvez Bravo (Sick)
Other Attendees:
- Hannelore Makhani, Language Equity and Community Engagement Manager
- Matias Valenzuela, Director of King County Equity and Social Justice Office
- Larry Evans, Legislative Aide to King County Councilmember Gossett
- Terrique Scott, Balance our Tax Code, WA Budget and Policy Center
- Heidi Park, King County, 2020 Census
- Lisa McLean, State of Washington, 2020 Census
- Kristina Logsdon, Chief of Staff for Council Chair Dembowski
- Alejandra Tres, King County Charter Review Commission
- Zoraida Arias, Upstream USA, King County resident
- Laura Mummert, Public Health Seattle-King County

Public Comment

Terrique Scott: Representing Balance our Tax Code, Spoke about the regressive tax structure in WA and their work on changing the code to include a capital gains tax. He is hoping to present at a future commission meetings about their goals and possible collaboration.

Hamdi Mohamed: HR6 passed in the house the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019. This includes dreamers and protection for people with TPS status. Also, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) changed their rules in their May 2019 manual. They are changing the naturalization and adjustment interviews process. The interviews are being outsourced to field offices in various cities in WA (i.e Spokane, Yakama). This is an attempt to decrease the interview processing time, but it can also be a barrier for some people.

Monserrat Padilla: On Monday, the Trump administration announced that beginning next week ICE will be doing massive potential raids. Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network is working on creating 28 rapid response teams to help anyone who may be in danger of being deported. “Know your rights”/“how to respond to raids” trainings in different languages will be offered.

Review Agenda and Approve Meeting Minutes 5:15PM – 5:30PM

Approval of April and May Minutes

Approved: Hamdi stated, “I motion to approve the meetings notes from April and May 2019.” Lalita seconded the motion. Medard, Monserrat, Mohammed Jan, Issa, and Andrew are in agreement. No oppositions.

Mohammed and Senayet were not present during the vote.

Creating an Office of Immigrants and Refugees

Matias gave a background on I&R Task Force recommendations, which included a proposed office for immigrants and refugees. Staffing for immigrant and refugee issues include a policy analyst for 2 years (minimum staffing) and a language access and community engagement position, which has now been funded and staffed. Budget process for the County operates on a biennial budget, so in about a year we will finalized the budget for the 2021-22 cycle.
Commission Discussion: What is doable right now for the commission? We need to start to show wins based on an aggressive work plan and also advocate to the Council. What are the steps to get us to meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees? Should one of the subcommittees take on the role of building that road map? Should we get a consultant to focus on determining feasibility? We should build out the purpose and vision for an office and show that there is a lot of work to be done. Start by getting organized and choosing a couple of items that we can have an impact on. Might also be useful to create a report of the impact that the Equity and Social Justice office has had with 1 staff, 2 staff, etc.

Matias: The commission could propose the need for a consultant to council and executives office. Finances and budget also need to be considered.

Kristina: We decided to make the commission before we created an immigrant and refugee office. There is so much work to be done for these communities. If you push for an office, the council will say that there are already enough commissions and offices. You need to show the council members that there is so much work to do and that there is a unique need for an office. This is your opportunity in the first year to try to make impacts in the immigrant and refugee communities. You need to prove that you are a credible body and that you are representing thousands of people.

Handouts: [City of Seattle] Immigrants and Refugee Commission Annual Report June 2013- June 2014

Next steps to consider:
- Have a conversation with Sahar Fathi about the process for creating the Seattle Office for Immigrants and Refugees.
- Potential visit from Tillery Williams, KC Council Policy Analyst focused on Immigrants and Refugees
- Hold a stakeholder meeting
- Proceed with power mapping activity with support from Rich at OneAmerica

Added Agenda Item – Rapid Response/USCIS Changes 6:00PM – 6:10PM
Monserrat proposed adding an agenda item to discuss what the commission can do about the upcoming potential community/workplace raids announced by Trump. All commissioners present were in agreement to add this item to the agenda.

Discussion: We could make a statement from the commission and publish it on our website. Audits in King County have been increasing and lots of surveillance being done. We could make a one-pager of recommendations for the council and also put it in the King County newsletter and send it to DHS as well.

Next Steps:
Hamdi, Monserrat, Issa, and Hanne (support staff) will work as a subcommittee to draft a letter for the council/executive’s office. The letter will include recommendations and a clear ask to the council/executives office. The final letter will be emailed to the councilmembers directly. Plan to have it sent out on Monday 6/24/19. Hanne will look into translating the letter for the commission website.
Hamdi motioned for the approval of the subcommittee and drafting of letter
Fo-Ching seconded the motion.
Approved.

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<th>2020 Census Presentation</th>
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<td>Heidi Park (King County Coordinator for 2020 Census) shared the County’s efforts to prepare to the Census as upcoming RFPs for community organizations. She discussed the problematic question about citizenship status and stated that they are waiting on a Supreme Court decision about that. Immigrants and refugees make up 22% of King County’s population. The number of immigrants and refugees has grown 74% between 2000-2017. If the census does not count everyone correctly it could mean loss of money to certain programs for vulnerable populations. Political representation is also determined by the census. Lisa McLean (State of Washington Census Coordinator) presented community funding opportunities for community organizations to do education/outreach activities in particular demographic communities. She shared the OPM website with community resources that the State curates, but shared that there is no capacity for translation of the site. She clarified that the citizenship question does not have to be answered in order for the census to be considered complete.</td>
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<td>Handouts: Draft of the 2020 Census, An Overview/fact sheet of the 2020 Census (From WA Counts)</td>
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<td><strong>Next Steps to Consider:</strong></td>
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<td>• IRC involvement in community tables and/or helping with response to Supreme Court decision on the citizenship question</td>
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<td>• Inviting Heidi back in the fall for an update and receive additional information on the next round of community investments</td>
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<td>Alejandra Tres from the King County Charter Review Commission presented about her work on the equity subcommittee for the Commission and areas up for potential review. The Charter is our “constitution” for the County that is reviewed every 10 years. Changes in the charter must go to the King County Council and then voted on by King County citizens. Alejandra noted that the Charter is a difficult document to read and understand, but all suggestions are welcome from the Immigrant and Refugee Commission. Hamdi mentioned that OneAmerica and many community-based organizations serving the immigrant communities have come up with a list of recommendations and asked whether the Immigrant and Refugee Commission would be interested in supporting them. The group expressed needing more information and time to review. Timeline for submitting these recommendations was unclear.</td>
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<td>Handouts: Recommended Changes to the King County Charter</td>
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### Subcommittee Updates

**Commissioners met with their respective subcommittees for 20 minutes and reported to entire commission.**

**Subcommittee 1: “Advancing Immigrant Rights through Capacity Building and Advocacy”**

Members: Minal, Nimco, Issa, Lalita, Mohammad, Miguel

Identified 2 deliverables:
1. Survey – Three to four questions accessing immigrants’ needs, displacement, etc. Could work with community advocates to create survey, make an electronic version, and have it translated.
2. Capacity Building - They want to do more capacity building work and inform leadership of community needs. Encourage the community to ask questions. Would like Minal’s and Nimco’s input, who were not present.

**Subcommittee 2: “Equitable Policy Development and Access to Services”**

Members: Senayet, Fo-Ching, Hamdi, Monserrat, Medard

Goals:
1. Want to connect to existing community efforts to promote regional health coverage options for adult immigrants
2. Promote the protection of immigrant-owned business interests, specifically working with the SeaTac Coalition and make policy recommendations, maybe do a workshop with the City of Seattle.
3. Look into Equity housing policies, creating access to affordable housing for immigrants and refugees

**Next Steps:** Each committee to update work plan in Google Drive. Hanne will help Subcommittee 1 to identify who can support them with survey design.

### Coordination & Housekeeping

**Matias shared that they are looking for one or two people from the commission to be part of the hiring panel for King County Immigrant and Refugee Policy Advisor position within the Equity and Social Justice Office. Monserrat volunteered and Senayet’s name was suggested.**

Hanne shared logistics about communications, materials, updated contact information needs, and upcoming invitations to connect 1:1 to build relationships.

### Wrap-up and next steps

**Draft the recommendation letter for the council/executive, send out on Monday**

**Next month to discuss arranging a stakeholders meeting regarding the creation of an immigrant and refugee office**

**Will discuss commissioner term allotments next month**

Meeting adjourned at 8:07PM.