

## Latinx Community COVID19 Response

Monday, April 13, 2020

**Meeting attendees:** Sandy Vargas, Carolina COPAL, Edain Altamirano Inquilin Unidos, Ivette Izea Martinez Casa de Esperanza, Katie Avina El Colegio, Carlos Ramos Unidos Mn, Nico Bauer Governor Tim Walz's Office, Graham Faulkner Policy Aide to Council Member Alondra Cano, Monica Hurtado, Jovita, Leda Schuster City of Minneapolis, Christina Kendrick City of Minneapolis, Maya Santamaria La Raza Radio, Elie Farhat Policy Aide to Hennepin County Board Chair Marion Greene, John Pacheco Latino Chamber, Veena Iyer ILCM, Roxanne Armendariz HUD Counselor for Neda, Miguel Fiol, Elisa Pluhar Neighborhood Development Center, Paulina Jacobsson MPS Global Education, Ruby Lee CLUES, Ambar Hanson Latino LEAD and Mortenson Family Foundation, Monica Romero City of Minneapolis, Beatriz De Santiago Assistant Principal at Green Central School.\*

*\*Please note that there were 54 total participants on the call. Due to the newness and quickly growing nature of these virtual calls, we apologize for not being able to reflect the name of all the meeting attendees. The City's internal capacity to document the names of all the meeting participants and produce more formal meeting minute notes is evolving and we hope to improve this capacity over time. Thank you for your patience and understanding.*

**Marion Greene, Hennepin County Commissioner (District 3, and Chair of the Board)** Taken lead on work related to immigration and New Americans. Resources, Access and services for people not included in other supports.

- County emergency assistance operating under waivers from the state. People can apply for assistance more than 1 time in 12 months. Because some of public funding is tied to status, encouraging philanthropic partners to participate
- Housing and economic development, rental assistance. Working with state dept of human services to explicitly prioritize undocumented households with fewest restrictions—implemented in tandem with city's economic assistance. HUD has promised funds by April 26 we are expecting to have money available by May 1. Hennepin County information line—working to are it a one stop shop for any call to the county to allow residents to connect—hours 8-8, 7 days per week
- How is the county prioritizing helping undocumented families: eligible for the state's family homeless prevention and assistance fund—specific teams including shelter in place and community engagement team—attempting to connect people—if there are organizations that want to hear more from community engagement can help connect dots.
- Question—messages to leaders and supervisors—some undercurrent some Latino employees have not been as supported as necessary in working with their communities. What is the

messaging to the leaders/supervisors who control time, function, focus of employees/Resp.: Community engagement has become an increasing part of the county's work—a way to elevate that work is the questions that the Commissioners ask—Greene has colleagues on the Board and can make sure that all ask some of the questions.

- Question: mental health services—COPE team has pivoted to offering online services. Re spanish language services Greene will inquire. Homelessness/mental health—CLUES does provide assistance in this area, but does not have contracts with Hennepin nCounty
- Question: knowing that there are so many people connected to the county, want people to receive accurate information. What to do to ensure that the families that county works with who are nonnative English speakers. Can County serve as a bridge for some of that information  
A: will inquire with community engagement office
- Question: Minneapolis Public Schools: telephone service—people don't have money to pay for telecommunications. Phone is important. Is there funding relating to communication. Many families use texting and WhatsApp to communicate with families. A: nothing specific but will inquire.
- Question: specific needs that Hennepin County can't provide but philanthropy should be aware of? Perhaps the subject raised by
- Question: how is sheriff's office dealing with social distancing—have we had cases of COVID-19 in Sheriff's office in jail or in workhouse or in juvenile detention? Sheriff's office has indicated they are not doing ICE holds. No cases of COVID so far. Working to get down to have people isolated from one another. Board is updated on that at least 1x per week
- Q: pandemic exposes how people are not covered by policies. Suggestion that groups of people giving the county and other jurisdictions policy and other suggestions how to provide/offer health care to people. Can we have Comm'r Greene gather people to offer health care options.  
A: we are seeing places where we are coming up short. (Thanks for legal assistance in creating Fund—see slivers of hope with other colleagues)
- Q: Conversations with people talking about safety—prostitution, crimes, drug sales, there is fear even walking down the street. Have not obtained the support needed. Who should people talk to? First call should be to local police department. But there is a Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee-includes public safety, the courts, a table where these individuals meet—will pass that on.
- Q: how undocumented families can apply and get support re rent payments—will be getting back to group about that
- Q: FALM/Medical legal issues: Richfield/Bloomington-do they have small business assistance/rental assistance. A: everything described is available across Hennepin County. Where do people call to apply? 612-348-3000—this is a centralized number—the people who answer this phone are generalists.
- Q: outstate Minnesota support? A: many programs like emergency assistance are statewide, appropriate for every county
- Additional questions: how is Hennepin County addressing the complaints about Landlord Retaliation

Richfield: VEAP providing rent assistance to residents of Richfield, Bloomington, who have

Made undocumented families a priority group. City of Richfield is also reviewing housing redevelopment

Association and economic development association and hope to take a vote on Monday April 20 to repurpose existing funds for rent assistance, including with a priority on residents who are undocumented.

## **Rep. Omar's Office**

Rental moratorium

Last week roundtable with stakeholders and groups—CM Ellison and Cano

Moratorium on rent and mortgages

Omar knows that debt is piling up for renters and mortgage holders.

Calls for rent strikes

Trying to head off from a more radical situation

Rep Omar pushing for nationwide moratorium on rent and landlords would be able to apply their losses, rental property relief fund. Mortgage payments would be suspended under the bill—HUD operated home lender relief fund. Still in its draft phase.

Moratorium to be made retroactive—header from people that while there is an eviction moratorium, people are concerned about what will happen when that runs out.

May see a rash of evictions at that point.

Aware of the fact that if landlords are not getting paid then they will have problems

Affordable housing acquisition fund—to cover purchase of private rental property—nonprofits, manufacturing. Making sure to include manufactured housing. Bill would include ability to create public housing—Rep Omar believes in Homes for All Public Housing directly operated by housing agencies.

Questions to ask Kendall:

Q: any insight on health care, not being covered with health care. Does Rep have advocacy in that direction. Rep Omar believes we need a universal health care program

Q. What is the timeline for a vote? Goal is to have this included in next package

Edain Calls to action: main goal is to push the elected officials to rent, mortgages and utilities. Will do another action at noon tomorrow in St. Paul in front of the capitol. Outside doing some noise, pushing.

Doing video calls—we have a form that people can fill and send to their landlords. Working with Keith Ellison—re tenants who cannot pay the rent. Landlords are asking for sex in payment of rent. Issue for everyone especially for single mothers. Have resource information. Tomorrow will be at noon in front of the capitol in St. Paul. If you want more information in the chats —will send a link to actions in the chat

### **Mariano Espinoza, NCR**

Hear community needs and concerns. Goal is to address concerns. Need to educate city leadership on how communities are impacted by COVID-19, Physical distancing and enforcement. We know that in some Latino groceries, is becoming a challenge, educate, don't enforce. MPD priority is to educate. Will not arrest people who are not complying with stay at home order. Health department is creating a community advisory committee. 2 Latinx will be part of the community advisory committee. Radio show every Tuesday. Receiving invitations from all media. We have people on the ground educating Latinx business owners.

SE Asian community-has been targeted, have been discriminated against. Governor created 1800 number to report incidents, be aware of how people are impacted.

E African community—in addition to food access—over 1 million refugees and refugee camps, people are concerned.

### **Michelle Rivero NCR/OIRA**

Community Briefings with different cultural communities (E African, SE Asian, American Indian, African American), mayor and council members participated in addition to community leaders. Saw commonalities in issues facing all communities impacted by COVID1-9

Information and resources:

Immigration bulletin lists grantmaking opportunities also includes immigration updates, unemployment issues, worker rights.

### **Small Business team**

Monica Romero: Small business funding- Can click on map and put address of business. Even though application is not in different languages, there are application guides in multiple languages 612-673-5992—Monica Romero. We have \$2.2 million. Among eligible businesses there will be a lottery system.

Question about some Lake St. Businesses excluded—cultural districts are designated zones, green zones, by census designation area of concentrated poverty

### **Updates from Philanthropy/Governor's Office/State**

Latino Economic Development Center: updates

Team has been divided ½ team making sure that people apply for Bridge and Gap fund. Other ½ is focused on DEED small business emergency loan. Today hopefully will submit first batch of applicants (12) all Latino Small Businesses. We have been one of the certified leaders through that program. Takes that long to do 12. Hoping to do that many each week. Want to utilize some of the funding received by MN Council of Foundations. Some people are asking how we will use the \$200,000. Everyone can apply

### **Migdalia/Governor's Office**

Brief update: Info sharing in Spanish. Frequently asked questions needed to be updated with extension of stay at home order. Updates should be going out today. By Friday all of infographics were put on page.

We have been doing work to meet with you and see what actions to take

Question—about translating executive orders—we are working on a response to that request—do not yet know what of all the materials to translate. Need some form of Prioritization. Find ways for info that is most pertinent is available in multiple languages. Trying to push for Spanish, English, Somali.

Graves Foundation: Increased flexibility on grantmaking and increased spend Dow—increase by 25%.

Casa de Esperanza: Crisis line 651-772-1611. 24/7

CLUES: Ruby Lee. Update on funds that CLUES received from MN Council of Foundations—\$400,000. Can't fund to subgrants. Have not yet received funds. April 15 will start taking applications over the phone. Funds that will be distributed will be \$250/individuals and 400/family. Only for undocumented individuals. Call hotline 651-768-0000. Not going to publicize it again. If people have families in urgent need—funds won't last that long. Families get to choose what they use it for.

Will continue to raise funds. On website only raised \$5000—can only serve limited number of people. Don't want to build high expectations.

Share ideas/feedback/strategies

Ruby—Lisa Sass question—should people who call line be people

CM Cano: Trying to shape Mayor's thinking around our specific fund. At present money is strictly for Rental assistance. Trying to get that to be more flexible. Part of the challenge is the source of the funds. (Housing dollars within the city's pool of resources), limited in how it can be used. Hesitancy in making direct cash assistance because of lack of ability to control/track how money gets used.

City is anticipating additional needs, esp if we are in a prolonged situation with COVID—may have an opportunity to shape other funds.

Casa de Esperanza: challenges in getting supplies Shelter challenge—getting access to supplies. Ivette—smaller domestic violence shelter in the state of MN. As quantities are limited in stores—having problems finding gloves masks—is there something that we can do to double the amount of quantity or letter that can be issued to shelters so that we can buy in double quantities- DV situations have increased. Crisis lines are still running, advocates are providing services. Please don't stop referring community members to shelters. 24/7

Lot of funding going out for businesses-lot of Latino youth that heading to college and lost jobs. No funds for seniors or young students of color to pay for deposit for college. Students of color challenging enough. Being able to come up with money for deposit.

Sandy Vargas: 1)longer term: if we don't take opportunity to create ongoing policy list will. Miss the window. Whether it's health care, rental assistance. Our community does not participate in many of these things on an ongoing basis. How policies have to change (County, city, state, federal). After immediate emergency put together a list of policy recommendations. We'll jump on the emergency and the longer term goes back to where it was 2)running list of what the resources are

Ruby—encourage conversation about policies now to expand or change okay, given time of need. Re expansion of programs that the state has. Families that are not served. Advocacy in City of Minneapolis, still work in progress. How do we bring forward some of these policies and expansions of programs to the Governor. There is some level of championing that he can address. Talk about and start a list to be part of that.

Ambar—this is a place where Latino Lead can play a leader role. Happy to host a space. Have been trying to figure out next steps. If there are other people interested. Henry Jimenez.

Who would want to be on the subgroup

Sandy, Ruby, Monica, Guerrero, Katie Avina, Rosa Tock, Cano. When send out meeting minutes if you're interested in policy work, who will volunteer to be collector of the energy—Ambar will communicate with Irma.