

**Hispanic Business, Trade, and Culture Commission Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 12, 2006**  
**GOB Room 460**  
**Jefferson City, MO**  
**10 am-3 pm**

Members in Attendance: Chairman Representative Tim Flook, Danette Felix, Lillian Hurst, Pedro Pantoja and Heraclio A Perez

Members in Attendance by Conference Call: Al Gonzalez, Jeanette Hernandez Prenger, Crista Hogan and Miguel Meneses

Members Absent: Daniel Alvarez, Ramiro Icaza and Jalesia McQueen

Guests in Attendance: Tammy Childress, Representative Nolte's Office; Rose Granich, Representative Emery's Office ; Eric Mercer, Missouri Economic Research and Information Center; Kevin Stover, Missouri Department of Economic Development; Mark Wine, Missouri Department of Economic Development; and Krista Zurkamer, Missouri Department of Economic Development

Chairman Representative Tim Flook called the HBTCC December 12, 2006 meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. Chairman Representative Flook welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all in attendance for their support.

The Commission members, supporting staff and guests made introductions.

**HBTCC Executive Order**

Krista Zurkamer reviewed the Executive Order 05-43 establishing the Missouri Hispanic Business, Trade and Culture Commission. Ms. Zurkamer highlighted some of the essential elements within the Executive Order.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez asked for clarification on the point in the Executive Order addressing the convening of the Commission prior to November 1, 2006. Mr. Gonzalez expressed his concern with this element and suggested the possible re-wording or restructuring.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook recognized the element as being an item not executed by the Commission. He added the consideration of the Commissions incomplete membership to date. Chairman Representative Flook concluded the Governor is the only power that may or may not revise the Executive Order.

**Sunshine Law**

Krista Zurkamer reviewed the Sunshine Law with the Commission. The Commission shall provide a reasonable written policy consistent with the Sunshine Law and be open

to the public regarding access to public records and meetings. Meeting notices, public records and e-mails among members are all subject to the Sunshine Law.

Chairman Representative Tim Flook expressed the importance of abiding by the Sunshine Law with all Commission business. He also encouraged all members to review the Sunshine Law to better understand its effects on the Commission.

### **MERIC Presentation**

Eric Mercer from Missouri Economic Research and Information Center thanked the Commission for the opportunity to talk with them today and give them an insight to some of the things MERIC can offer. Mr. Mercer introduced the three perspectives being discussed in the presentation as geographic characteristics of the Hispanic population, demographic characteristics of Hispanic-owned businesses and insights on the Hispanic business owner/entrepreneur. The Hispanic population in Missouri has seen growth over the years. The 2005 Census estimated the population at 160,000. Mr. Mercer also did a comparison of Missouri with its bordering states in the total Hispanic firms and firms with Hispanic employees. The state of Illinois was the front runner with a wide margin. Missouri female Hispanic owned firms was a strong competitor among its surrounding states. Of the total number of firms in Missouri 39.896% are Hispanic female firms. A majority of the Hispanic firms are service based industries. The majority concentration of Hispanic population and Hispanic owned businesses are in the metro areas of Missouri. Of the Hispanic owned businesses 40% are located in Jackson and St. Louis counties. Of the Hispanic owned businesses 65% are located in Boone, Clay, Greene, Jackson, St. Charles, St Louis counties and St. Louis city. The three hotspots for Hispanic entrepreneurship are Kansas City MSA, St. Louis MSA and Branson area. Mr. Mercer discussed the cultural and socio-economic factors for the Hispanic entrepreneurs in Missouri. Some of these factors included poverty status, low English abilities, migration from other states and industry concentrations.

### *Lillian Hurst*

Lillian Hurst commented on the 30% growth in population of her home town county of Butler within the 5 year span as being a solid improvement.

### *Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja asked if the reasoning for the metro population explosion could be due to the packing plant facilities.

### *Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer agreed with Mr. Pantoja's sentiments in relationship to the population bunches in metropolis areas due to the high quantity of labor concentrated employment.

### *Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook did point out clarification of the census representing legal business owners.

*Crista Hogan*

Crista Hogan addressed the disproportionate Illinois.

*Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer speculated the reasoning due to the heavy population of Chicago but would follow up on this data to confirm.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja added the automotive industries presence in Chicago and surrounding areas as a reason. Mr. Pantoja added the strong Hispanic heritage in existence in Chicago from prominent Latino individuals.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez expressed his concerns with the validity of the data and specifics.

Discussion continued on the dated material from the 2005 census. Additional organizations have done similar studies in relation to Hispanic business in Missouri in order to find the actual representation and will investigate what current information is available.

*Crista Hogan*

Crista Hogan asked for clarification on how the hotspots were defined.

*Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer explained the hotspots are the areas with the highest percentage of total concentrations.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook wanted clarification on the poverty status-working poor or below as being the owner or the employee.

*Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer confirmed the characteristic is based on the Hispanic entrepreneur.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez discussed the “big tree” trend among Hispanic Missourians. Mr. Gonzalez expressed interest in seeing if the trends of Missouri reflect the nation.

*Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer confirmed that type of data can be done and is doable. Mr. Mercer would follow up on data.

*Crista Hogan*

Crista Hogan expressed interest in seeing a comparison to the female Hispanic entrepreneurs with that of none Hispanic.

*Eric Mercer*

Eric Mercer confirmed that type of analysis is possible and would follow up on data.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez added that type of analysis has been done and would forward the information onto Crista Hogan.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover inquired about the cause of decline in Hispanic owned businesses between 1997 and 2002 census, is this trend prevalent and should we expect a similar decline in the next census.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez argued the decline in numbers was a reflection of the aftermath of September 11; both businesses and the economy were affected.

*H.A. Perez*

H.A. Perez added after 1997 Mexico experienced a depression and trade relations suffered as a result.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover suggested contacting the Missouri Chamber of Commerce to validate some of the data and get at the grass roots level of the information.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook made note of the vast majority of Hispanic entrepreneurs declaring themselves as possessing good English abilities. This is a strong statistic that supports the greater part of Hispanic entrepreneurs benefit from their functioning English language skills. Chairman Representative Flook also referenced the April 2005 MERIC study of 'Latino Entrepreneurs in Missouri'. Krista Zurkamer will obtain a copy of the study for all Commission members.

Chairman Representative Tim Flook thanked Eric Mercer for attending today's meeting and educating the members on some of the research and information gathered by MERIC.

### **DED Report**

Kevin Stover directed the Commission members to the DED Report located in their meeting packets. Mr. Stover explained the role of DED as to provide necessary support to the Commission with the support of Mark Wine as international trade manager fostering trade activities as well as fostering economic growth in the Hispanic communities and Krista Zurkamer as the principle support to the Commission.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine introduced an upcoming event sponsored by DED, Spring 2007 Trade Show/Mission to Mexico highlighting manufacturing industries. Participants will be gone March 7-15 visiting Monterrey and Guadalajara. In 2005 Missouri exported to

Mexico 1.1 billion dollars worth of goods. This year is projected at a 6% increase. Mexico is the second largest trade partner for Missouri. The top five products exported to Mexico are as follows: transportation equipment 27.5%; crop production 17.7%; chemical manufactures 12.4%; electric equipment, appliances and parts 10.5%; and others 32%. Mr. Wine informed the Commission DED will begin recruiting participants next week in hopes of including 12-15 businesses on the trip. One of the events participants will be attending is Expo Manufactura Trade Show in Monterrey. Missouri will have a booth at the event giving the participants the opportunity to promote and recruit business. Director Greg Steinhoff is committed to the event and will be attending the Monterrey Trade Show.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez added the USHCC National Convention next year will be in Puerto Rico and this may be an event Missouri may want some type of presence in. It is a great event to learn how to penetrate the Hispanic market. Mr. Gonzalez added he would forward any information onto Krista Zurkamer for distribution.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook commented on his participation in Governor Blunt's Trade Mission last December to Mexico. He commended DED and its staff on the efficient event and the professionalism of all involved. Chairman Representative Flook also commented on the US State Departments' national statistics on American exports and trade. He assigned Mark Wine and Krista Zurkamer with the investigation of this data and distribution to the Commission members.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine discussed the SmartPort Initiative in Kansas City. Mr. Wine commended Chris Carteras for his tremendous job with supporting Missouri's hub for trade. SmartPort was created in hopes to grow the area's transportation industry by attracting businesses with significant transportation and logistics elements. There hopes of increase are based on making transportation cheaper, faster, more efficient, and secure for companies moving goods into, from, and through the Kansas City area. Mr. Wine informed the Commission of the upcoming Quarterly GOITA meeting in Springfield on January 24, 2007.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja added the marketable appeal of Missouri being centrally located within the United States. It is important for businesses to have the ability to move merchandise with speed and precision. In many cases shipment can be received within 3-4 days; this is an incredible asset and should be marketed as so. They are developing GPS tracking control for container shipments.

*Lillian Hurst*

Lillian Hurst inquired about the country having the better trading relationship with Missouri since Mexico was the second leading country in exports.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine informed Ms. Hurst Canada was the leader in exports from Missouri. The relationship between Mexico and Missouri is continuing to grow and develop. It is an extreme advantage that in many ways Mexico mirrors Missouri. They share a linked economy.

*Lillian Hurst*

Lillian Hurst expressed interest in whether this connection was unique to Missouri.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine added the unique character for Missouri is its initiative in developing relationships with Mexico and the proactive approach in cultivating these relationships.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez expressed his concerns with technology transfer issues and the lack of respect for patent intellectual property laws.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine wasn't aware of any specific technology transfer problems in existence with Mexico. Mr. Wine added Guadalajara is the silicone valley of Mexico so they have many advances.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja added NAFTA has policies in effect in relation to patent intellectual property protection but there are countries that do not fall under NAFTA.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez conveyed his concern with this issue and the need for more being done to enforce the laws and promote respect for intellectual capitol technologies.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja conveyed the importance of education in the schools and of the people in becoming successful and profitable in the global market. More and more products are being jointly manufactured by more than one country. Mr. Pantoja expressed the significance of being more creative and imaginative; how is it we can make money for the United States but especially Missouri.

*Krista Zurkamer*

Krista Zurkamer informed the Commission DED is currently working with the ITSD division in the restructuring of the Hispanic Business, Trade & Culture Commission website. The website will list the members; executive order; meetings-notices, agendas, minutes and archive; reports; links; and contact information. The contact information will be listed as Krista Zurkamer at DED. The website will continue to grow as the Commission establishes their objectives. ITSD is working on setting up an email address for the Commission. Commission members will be reimbursed for their mileage to and from the meetings. DED will also be covering costs for meeting meals. The

Commission members will be responsible for any additional costs incurred during Commission meetings. Ms. Zurkamer will investigate the possibility of lodging reimbursement. Commission Members will each receive an Expense Report for their reimbursement. Ms. Zurkamer will administer the reports to the Commission members and dispense to DED for compensation.

Chairman Representative Tim Flook called for a lunch break at 11:45 p.m.

HBTCC meeting resumed at 12:23 p.m.

Chairman Representative Tim Flook informed the Commission of the remaining three vacancy positions. There are stipulations for the remaining three positions. All three members must be from the Democratic Party. Two of the members will need to be from the northern part of Missouri with the remaining members from the south central part of the state. Ms. Zurkamer will email the Commission the specifics to the remaining positions along with the Governor Appointment Application.

### **Commission Endeavors**

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook brought to the attention of the Commission a few specific ideas as possible endeavors for the HBTCC. The first of the ideas is the possibility of conducting a Hispanic Day at the Capitol. This would give the Hispanic community the opportunity to have a few moments of the Governor's time. The Hispanic leadership would have the opportunity to discuss with the Governor some of their concerns and in turn the Governor. The Commission would assist the different Chamber of Commerce and organizations securing a date and time. Chairman Representative Flook suggested a date in March or April.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja suggested Cinco de Mayo as a possible date for Hispanic Day at the Capitol.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook agreed this date would be logical but the last two weeks of session is very busy and would be difficult to schedule time with the Governor.

*Miguel Meneses*

Miguel Meneses asked if there were any international delegations coming to Jefferson City; it would be beneficial to the Commission and Hispanic Day to schedule around this type of visit.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine had no knowledge at this time of any scheduled visits by international delegations. Mr. Wine added the Mexico Trade Office staff usually visits in the middle of May which would coincide with session. He added to keep in mind the March 7-15

Trade Show/Mission to Mexico. Mr. Wine also brought to attention of the Commission the possibility of the Governor being out of state sometime in April.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook believed two months was efficient enough notice to secure time with the Governor. He added the end of February beginning of March as possible time frames for a meeting. Chairman Representative Flook introduced his second idea of giving out an annual award to a Hispanic business owner for their achievements. It would be a new tradition recognizing leadership amongst the Hispanic Community. This also could be done in conjunction with Hispanic Day at the Capitol.

*Lillian Hurst*

Lillian Hurst expressed her interest in formulating a mission statement for the Commission. This mission statement could emulate the voice of the Hispanic community.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook asked for a bit more clarification; refining the Executive Order as the mission statement. Refine upon the Executive Order and adopt our own approach. The mission statement would layout the Commissions role.

*Danette Felix*

Danette Felix added her understanding as a simple phrase clarifying the Commissions' goal.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez encouraged the Commission to take into account goal versus mission. The mission should inspire and communicate among everyone reading it. The concepts and terminology must be taken into consideration. Mr. Gonzalez volunteered to research possible mission statements for the Commission.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook offered his services to Mr. Gonzalez with the structuring of the mission. Chairman Representative Flook suggested we table this issue until further consideration may be made.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez expressed the importance of not duplicating anything in relation to Hispanic Day. Mr. Gonzalez added keeping in mind all the numerous organizations already out there putting on Hispanic programs. The Commission should mobilize and centralize the community.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested the Commission to focus on setting goals and things the Commission would like to accomplish. The Commission will conduct information session and gather the information needed to formulate the recommendations

for the Annual Report. The information sessions will also let the Commission focus in on the areas lacking and how improvement can be made. Chairman Representative Flook presented his third idea of holding seminar session throughout the state informing the communities of what is available to them. The Commission can work with different organizations in the state and in those areas of interest to disseminate information and to assist them with issues of concern.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja encouraged the Commission to create a working relationship with those organizations in Kansas City, St. Louis and Springfield. Many of those communities have international marketing departments. In most cases they have done what we are doing. The Commission would benefit from hearing about their experiences.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez concurred with Mr. Pantoja's statement.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover added the number of organizations already in existence that would aid the Commission and assist in networking. Some of which include the Missouri Chambers, Missouri Economic Development Council, National Federation of Businesses, DED Road Shows, Small Business Development Centers and Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board. Mr. Stover went on to explain some of the programs offered by each of the organizations. For example the Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board works with small businesses who have found impediments with state agencies to lessen or remove those barriers. All of these sources would be beneficial for the Commission to move forward with awareness issue.

*Lillian Hurst*

Lillian Hurst thanked Mr. Stover for making the Commission more knowledgeable. The public awareness of this type of information is important and getting that information out in their hands. The Commission can help facilitate the grass roots extension.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested the Commission plan for the next meeting having a discussion on refining the mission statement, creating a resource guide and organizing commentary from individuals in the represented fields of interest. Chairman Representative Flook suggested possibly designating one topic area to be addressed for the next meeting.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja agreed with Chairman Representative Flook commentary from those in the field would be very beneficial to the Commission. Everybody has a different opinion but the Commission would be able to focus in on the immediate areas of attention.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez added the Commission can aid the state to know what we as private citizens are doing and the best way to engage the public.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine reviewed shortcomings in the US Census export data as it omits services, indirect exports and exports via out of state export management companies. Mr. Wine did have a positive addition of news with the US Bureau of Census working on the technology to evaluate data by zip code. This would assist the state in getting the specific information needed to help the community.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested taking a bird's eye approach of international export and local business talking about the topics. The Commission needs more information simply to formulate the goals and objectives. For the next meeting the Commission with the assistance of Mark Wine and Krista Zurkamer will invite a few presenters to address issues they have encountered and how the Commission may be of assistance. Chairman Representative Flook assigned himself and Al Gonzalez to produce some possible mission statements for the next meeting and will be addressed on the Agenda.

*H.A. Perez*

H.A. Perez introduced a few ideas to promote culture in Missouri and each of the ideas would be easy in planning and promoting. Mr. Perez proceeded with his first idea of inviting chefs from Mexico to hold cooking seminars across the state to teach authentic Mexican cuisine. He presented his second idea to the Commission as cultural exchanges within the state. Some of the areas of interest may be painting, dancing, and singing. Both these type of events would bring presence to the Commission and put forth the efforts of the Commission.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested the possibility of the Commission incorporating programs involving job skills within the state.

Discussion continued about the Commissions' dedication to cultural concerns in relation to economic concerns. Should there be a focus over one apposed to the other. The Commission was in agreement that both cultural and economic concerns are principal to the objectives of the Commission. Although culture is significant to the Commission business, trade and export will be a highlighted area for the Commission.

*Miguel Meneses*

Miguel Meneses informed the Commission of an event Kansas City will be doing in May involving 30 restaurant participants and all types of food.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested gathering input from area Hispanic chamber of commerce on existing events and coordinating with them as a Commission in assistance and representation.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover added the existence of the Sister Cities organization. This is a possible organization the Commission would be interested in networking in.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez encouraged discussions with these cities on what they are doing and create a working relationship. The Commission can evaluate what is being done well and apply that to other communities.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja added schools and universities as possible connections for the Commission to explore. The future is in the new generation and the Commission should consider what they have to offer.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez included the Cambio Colores and the Cambio Center at the University of Missouri as a specific connection for the Commission. The Cambio Center does specific studies in the areas of interest for the Commission and would be a tremendous resource.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover informed the Commission of a project the state is working on known as the Business Portal. The idea is for a one stop shop full of the tools and resources that exist to help people better get connected to needed information. The project is in the final stages of testing and tentatively will roll out in Spring/Summer 2007.

*Al Gonzalez*

Al Gonzalez asked if the website will have some information in Spanish.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover confirmed with the website being multi lingual.

Discussion continued about the Commissions' concerns with bi lingual adaptations for all materials associated with the Commission. The Commission was in agreement that all material will be available in both English and Spanish. Having both available is not only culturally sensitive but effective. It is important for the Commission to devise a plan of getting the information out to the multicultural audience.

*Mark Wine*

Mark Wine asked for the assistance of the Commission in recruiting possible company candidates for the Mexico Trade Mission/Show in March. Mr. Wine added he would like to have the companies finalized by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in January so preparation can be done for

company profiles. Information will be sent out to all the Commission members soon in relation to the event.

*Pedro Pantoja*

Pedro Pantoja addressed his concerns with the lack of labor force with the non presence of permits or documents. The topic has seen growing focus within the past few years and continues to be a growing problem. More people should be receiving permits with their observance of paying taxes, learning English and law abiding.

*Chairman Representative Tim Flook*

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested the Commission investigate what type of labor is lacking and how it may or may not affect the Hispanic community. The Commission would also take into consideration how it falls under the mission statement. Chairman Representative Flook suggested all members review the Executive Order in hopes of finalizing a mission statement at the next meeting. Al Gonzalez and Chairman Representative Flook will work together in putting together some samples to be discussed at the meeting. At the next meeting there will be a proposed time schedule for meetings and locations for the Commission to consider. The next meeting will be in Jefferson City due to the initial planning stages of the Commission.

Chairman Representative Tim Flook suggested Friday, January 19 or Monday, January 22 as possible dates for the next HBTCC meeting. The Commission was in agreement Monday, January 22 for the next scheduled meeting date 10a.m. to 3p.m. Krista Zurkamer would make arrangements for a conference call option for that day also. Krista Zurkamer would also make arrangements for 2 or 3 presenters for the meeting to address issues of concern.

*Kevin Stover*

Kevin Stover added as a minor note Mark Wine contact was wrong on the contact list. His email address is mark.wine@ded.mo.gov

Chairman Representative Tim Flook asked for a motion to adjourn.

Al Gonzalez moved. Danette Felix seconded the motion to adjourn the December 12, 2006 HBTCC meeting. All approved, motion carried.

With no further business Chairman Representative Tim Flook adjourn the meeting at 2:15 p.m.