



COMMISSION ON DECOLONIZATION

Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2017

Meeting called to order at 3:07 PM by Chairman Governor Eddie Baza Calvo.

I. ROLL CALL

○ **MEMBERS PRESENT**

- Gov. Eddie Baza Calvo, Chairman
- Sen. Therese Terlaje, Vice Chairperson
- Sen. Telena Nelson, representative for Speaker B.J. Cruz
- P.J. Guerrero, representative for Sen. Fernando Esteves
- Adrian Cruz, Free Association Task Force
- Victoria Leon Guerrero, Independence Task Force
- Eddie Duenas, Statehood Task Force
- Dr. Lisa Baza, Member-at-Large
- Tristan Quintanilla, Youth Congress

○ **MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

- Dr. Lisa Natividad, Member-at-Large (Excused absence)
- Mayor Robert Hoffman, Mayors Council

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: FEBRUARY 14, 2017

- Chairman – As you review, I'd like to thank Eddie Alvarez for the hard work and effort he's done on the commission on decolonization. I spoke with him and although he was excited to work, he has family matters to deal with. Welcome Amanda Blas!
- No changes. **Lisa Baza – motion to approve minutes. No objection. Motion passes.**

III. SEN GUAIYA HAO CONFERENCE RECAP

- Amanda Blas – Thank you to the three task forces. 150 participated in the events held at the Guam Museum and the University of Guam. They made a resolution about the importance of decolonization and youth identity on Guam.
- Dr. Natividad prepared a recap but could not make it today.
- Event cost - \$3,370 to provide lunch for both days and rental of Guam Museum.



- PBS filmed Decolonization portion for free. We are looking to spend the \$500 allocated for video recording to produce a segment into a 15-30 minute episode we could use.

IV. UN CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR RECAP

- Amanda Blas – I, on behalf of Gov. Calvo, and Dr. Bevacqua as an expert, attended the seminar. We talked about our situation as a territory. We asked member states and members of the Special Committee on Decolonization to support our right to decolonization. We brought up Chamorro Land Trust. There will also be a meeting in New York with the Special Committee on Decolonization.
- Dr. Michael Bevacqua – I've been to many seminars – my focus is the way the Davis decision contradicts international law. We can go and make our case, but even at the regional seminar level, the US doesn't participate in regional seminar. It chooses to boycott any discussion on this. There are possibilities for working with the UN, which would require a lot of advocacy and lobbying. We can establish relationships with different countries and gain their support. This year was different. It is the third international decade of the eradication of colonization.
- One way, which was discussed - visiting missions to colonies. In 1979, Guam was visited because of what was happening in Micronesia and because of constitutional discussions. Things like that can be a kick-start. Administrative power has to invite UN to discuss. Non-self-governing territories have been able to get around that. Governor can go straight to the UN, usually in cases of emergency.
- Adrian Cruz – Military buildup is a good reason.
- Jose Garrido – I don't recognize the protocol that we need to get the approval of the US for us to ask the UN to visit and know more about us locally. In future seminars, I would like to have a little part of the statement given to explain our situation. The representative from Guam is representative of the three task forces collectively and not solely pushing an independent agenda. I give my blessing to Bevacqua, but we should also be included.
- Dr. Bevacqua – I was sent as an expert, not a representative for Guam.
- Jose Garrido – If you are from another nation, they will think you are representing Guam. I think there is a way to clarify that Guam is pursuing decolonization through three different task forces.
- Chairman – As chair, I will go with what the committee decides on. As Dr. Bevacqua says, we would be looking for a visit as the result of an egregious act. The government is inviting the Committee of Twenty-Four. As I understand, it doesn't make a difference about statehood,



independence, or free association, but rather about the situation that has happened.

- Victoria Leon Guerrero – According to the UN schedule, there is an opportunity in October where more lobbying can occur. You can have as many people possibly testify. If we can have large representation, people will notice Guam. If Chairperson could attend, you could lobby member states and ask for a visiting mission.
- Chairman – I would be at the service of the commission. It's a matter of getting prepared and figuring what I would present to the committee. We would also have to campaign to bring as many representatives as possible.
- Victoria Leon Guerrero – if we have a representative traveling on our behalf, we could help draft the statement. Also we have to approve it, by law.
- Dr. Bevacqua – it is an invitation to the chief of commission not to the commission. He could send someone to represent the commission. If one person is invited as an expert and another as a representative from two different task forces, what they say could clash
- Jose Garrido – I'm just saying that when you are there, there is a semblance that you are representing us as well.
- Amanda Blas – I was there with Dr. Bevacqua, and he did not speak on behalf of independence. He constantly mentioned the three task forces and directed them to me to talk more about the things at hand.
- Dr. Bevacqua – thank you. In many respects, we don't know who's going until they are there. There are no announcements.
- Vice Chairperson – Could we have a calendar of UN meetings in which Guam might participate with how our participation might be invited (governor, chief executive, decolonization commission, NGO). We should know in advance where these meetings are, who's going on behalf of Guam, and we should have a say in what their statement will be.
- Chairman – as chairman of the commission, I will not make statements that have not been approved by the commission. If the commission wants me to go as chairman, I will not say anything that goes out of bounds with our commission.
- **Motion to create a subcommittee that explores the option of how Guam can pursue a visiting mission from the UN. - Victoria Leon Guerrero. No objection, so moved.**
- Sen. Cristobal – Point of clarification: power of committee is power of committee as a whole. This would be given to the General Assembly. If we can impact the resolution to pursue this mission. The buildup was a direct impediment to self-determination. This with the Davis decision and Chamorro Land Trust issue would together make it vital.



- **Motion to create a spreadsheet of schedule with related UN events and what participation Guam might have in these events. – Vice Chairperson.** Seconded by Adrian Cruz. No objection, so moved.

V. UPDATE ON SELF-GOVERNANCE STUDY

- Amanda Blas – Attached is the scope of work for governance study.
- **Motion to table for the next meeting – Vice Chairperson. No objection, so moved.**
- Dr. Lisa Baza - we could email you questions we want answered, so it will be more structured.
- Amanda Blas – I will send out an email.

VI. DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT COURT RULING IN *DAVIS V. GUAM*

- Amanda Blas – I am concerned about what these rulings mean for us. It is obviously a big issue for the commission
- Vice Chairperson – Pursuing education, which is our mission, is not enjoined by court. On education we are totally clear.
- Dr. Lisa Baza – What funds are used for education materials? Have the DOI funds been impacted in any way?
- Amanda Blas – Our funding rolls over but expires in 2020.
- Dr. Lisa Baza – I’d like to have something a little more substantive than “just continue what we’re doing”
- Jose Garrido – Should we always behave as good colonizers? Maybe the commission could sent out a press release that we don’t support the Davis ruling at all.
- Vice Chairperson – In DOI funding, they include in fine print that we have to follow
- Chairman – The visiting mission can be requested following egregious acts by the colonizer. I think it is the perfect opportunity to take it to the next level. As we move forth, let’s see what we can do to bring these folks to Guam.

VII. FINANCIAL REPORT

- Amanda Blas- The COD financial report is as of June 01. We are working with the different task forces on different purchase orders.
- You’ll see on the financial report how much you have left for each of the task forces. Per public law 33-185, they roll over until September 30, 2020. The funding available for the Commission Education outreach is



\$300,000. The only funds allocated currently based from the Commission have been \$121,000 for the Self-Governance Program.

- Local funding used for outreach – Sen Guaiya Hao Conference
- The \$3000 that was originally for Town Hall meetings will not be used for them anymore. We will be using a different approach.
- Task Force Accounts
 - Vice Chairperson – What was the total for each task force?
 - Amanda Blas - \$80,000 per year from local funding.
 - Amanda Blas – We are working with task forces about PO's.
 - Jose Garrido – Can we set aside in the budget some funding to go as a petitioner in the UN and talk as I did in 1997? Chairman for free association can go and petition? I went before and used my own money and am still paying.
 - Chairman – you are given a lot of leeway with your funds. Maybe you can see if you can try.
 - Victoria Leon Guerrero – you cannot use it for travel, only education.
 - Chairman – we could say this is endangering our quest to move forward with self-determination. Let's get this info and it could be used for further discussion. Amanda will check.
 - Jose Garrido – I don't want to be criticized by public for misuse of funds.
 - Vice Chairperson -\$121,000? \$300,000 is for outreach, is this for different task forces?
 - Amanda Blas – no, that is under the commission.
 - Victoria Leon Guerrero – for FY16, there was total set aside for total commission education outreach, then we divided and gave each task force \$80,000 and \$20,000 to commission outreach. We brought this up a few meetings ago. Commission by law is supposed to approve budget. We didn't see it before it went forward. Maybe next meeting we could approve the budget?
 - Chairman – Budget has to be given by August. Next meeting will be in July. We can get this budget request for next meeting.
 - Amanda Blas – yes, I will have that ready.
- Use or remaining local funding for commission
 - Victoria Leon Guerrero – how do we as a commission intend on spending this available balance?
 - Amanda Blas – working as an episode series. Each task force will have their own educational episode and a 4th to cover overall questions and history, etc.
- DOI Grant



- Victoria Leon Guerrero – About remaining DOI balance, perhaps we could have educational programs through DOE with professional development to encourage teaching on decolonization.
- Vice Chairperson– Wasn't there a subcommittee on education outreach?
- Everyone – No.
- Amanda Blas – I have a meeting with Joe Sanchez this week to get information about outreach and his budget for it.
- Chairman – Get the information from Joe Sanchez and then distribute it to Commission members and we can see where to go from there.
- Vice Chairperson– Any proposals you find from old minutes may be used.
- Dr. Lisa Baza – Joe Sanchez said instead of creating a new curriculum, they would do an addendum specific to decolonization for current government or Chamorro classes. The teachers would then have to go through professional development.
- Tristan Quintanilla – On what format will episodes be distributed?
- Amanda Blas – They will be broadcasted but we can work out it being digital as well as that is the easiest way to be transmitted.

VIII. Task Force Updates

- Free Association – given by Adrian Cruz
 - Thank you for the POs
 - We have monthly meetings the last Wednesday of each month at 7pm at the Azotea in Agana. Once we have a cohesive plan we will be adding more meetings.
- Independence – given by Victoria Leon Guerrero
 - We have a few events a month. Every month we take on a different educational focus. We are going village by village.
 - Concert on July 4 – Songs of Freedom, Lina'la Concert Series. After our big rally on April 7, community wants more. We are looking at doing these every 3 months. We'd like to invite the task forces if they want a table. We had 500+ people attend. We want to keep the spirit going. The commission and youth congress are also invited to have tables. We got 550 signatures on petitions. The rally was in response to the Davis case, and we want to show that we are coming and standing together.



- Statehood – given by Sen. Eddie Duenas
 - Has the plebiscite date been established?
 - Chairman – we are working the AG regarding Davis case. We are going to fight. We are going to have the attorney general's office in here next meeting. Hopefully that can help guide us. In the meantime getting this education program going is the best thing to do.
 - Sen. Duenas – we have spun our wheels for the last 20 years. I think if the law is not working it should be amended. It could be when we have the next gubernatorial election. Otherwise we have to wait another four years.
 - Chairman – hopefully with the AG we can get this thing going.
 - Jose Garrido – is it possible to have a closed thing, not government sponsored, where we wouldn't have to have court ruling?
 - Vice Chairperson – I think that's beyond our scope here. Are these position papers good to go? I know commission has to establish summary material based on your papers.
 - Sen. Duenas – we submitted in 1999.
 - Vice Chairperson – okay, do you have any updates?
 - Amanda Blas – our position has not changed.
 - Jose Garrido – your position statement should be a living document. For example, in 1999, the buildup hadn't happened.
 - Sen. Duenas – what does that have to do with this?
 - Vice Chairperson – I'd like to request for a list of the task force members.
 - Amanda Blas – I have contacted them for that. I will put it together.

IX. Next Meeting: July 5, 2017

- Commission is supposed to meet on first Tuesday of the month by law. Next meeting will be July 5, 3-5 PM, as the first Tuesday is a holiday.

X. Open Discussion

- Amanda Blas – Former Sen. Hope Cristobal brought up the idea of doing a museum exhibit for decolonization similar to the one put on by Gov. Joe Ada. She proposed it would last from March-September.
- Chairman – Amanda can talk to Johnny Sablan about availability of the museum. Usually exhibits are shorter than 6 months.



- Vice Chairperson– It was not easy to get the meeting minutes. It was established years and years after the commission on self-determination. I would like for those to be available for everyone.
- Amanda Blas – I would like to thank the task forces. The commission is a very small office – with two persons.
- **Motion to speak in Chamorro for a portion of the COD Meetings – Jose Garrido. Seconded by Victoria Leon Guerrero. Motion passes.**
- Sen. Duenas – I mentioned to Amanda about the process to get needed supplies to procurement. Last time we met with GSA. I got frustrated and said forget it, I'll use my own money. You need to attend a two week conference to be certified.
- Amanda Blas – we are continuing with the current system but are looking at way to streamline the process. Until we do that we will move forward with the current one.
- Chairman – things are going a lot faster now. Good job, Amanda.
- Vice Chairperson – Go through Amanda's office instead of GSA. She will expedite it.
- Amanda Blas – I am working on getting one document so everyone understands the process.
- Jose Garrido – Could we put on open discussion to include the public?
- Amanda Blas – yes, Sen Cristobal's was actually public open discussion. We also had a sign-up sheet.
- **Motion to approve Amanda Blas as the Executive Director of the Commission on Decolonization. – Vice Chairperson. Seconded by Sen. Telenia Nelson. Moved. Congratulations, Amanda.**
- Victoria Leon Guerrero – maybe we would want to vet and approve of the staffperson that is to be hired?
- Ryan Calvo – what does it take to get another person at that table? Greater autonomy. Road to independence. I believe there are other groups.
- Amanda Blas – as for different political status option
- Ryan Calvo – if everyone wants greater autonomy – tribal autonomy, which are subsections in the office of interior. It will be a tribal autonomy.
- Chairman – by statute we only have three.
- Ryan Calvo – what would be the process?
- Chairman – it would be through legislature. Introduce a bill to have a new status.
- Amanda Blas – by law, we have one representative from each task force.
- Ryan Calvo – we have another option. Tribal Autonomy. How do we get it as an option without rewriting the law?
- Dr. Bevacqua – The UN initially suggested independence because they assumed people wouldn't want a close relationship with their colonizer. Then they went in and gave these three options. Other options can be



developed. But in history, the others don't go anywhere. In Puerto Rico, they had 6 options and one with none of the above. There were so many that people were confused and a lot voted for none of the above. Tribal Autonomy would not be considered decolonization.

- Victoria Leon Guerrero – 11 members were listed in public law. In order to gain a seat, you would have to amend the law. You have to appeal to a senator. You have to be mindful that it has to go through that process.
- Chairman – you bring a valid question. There are certain bodies that have jurisdiction. Maybe we can see.
- Jose Garrido – political status options were given by the UN. If your political status wants to be the fourth, you have to amend the law establishing this. If it is not decolonizing, then it does not work. You cannot put another status if it is not decolonizing.
- Chairman – I'd like to invite you to meet with Amanda. She can sit with you and answer your questions and help guide the course with you. I would love to invite you to get all your questions answered.
- Ryan Calvo – thank you committee.
- Subcommittee for UN Visiting
 - Vice Chair Sen. Terlaje – I'd like to be on the committee.
 - Dr. Bevacqua – one from each task force
 - Victoria Leon Guerrero – Former Sen. Cristobal would like to be a part of it.
 - Tristan Quintanilla – would it be appropriate for me to be a part of it as well?
 - Chairman – you are the future! Yes!
 - Victoria Leon Guerrero – I would like to request a meeting in the next two weeks for the subcommittee.

XI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn – Victoria Leon Guerrero. Adjourned at 4:41 PM.