



COMMISSION ON DECOLONIZATION
Commission Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2018

I. Roll Call

- a. Eddie Baza Calvo, Chairman
- b. Dr. Lisa Baza, Member-at-Large
- c. Dr. Lisa Natividad, Member-at-Large
- d. Mayor Robert Hoffman, Mayors' Council
- e. Adrian Cruz, Free Association Task Force
- f. Dr. Michael Bevacqua, Independence Task Force
- g. Eddie Duenas, Statehood Task Force
- h. Stephanie Lorenzo, Youth Congress Representative (For Tristan Quintanilla)
- i. Also Present:
 - i. Dewey Huffer, Statehood Task Force

II. Approval of Minutes: April 3, 2018

- a. **Motion to approve – Adrian Cruz**

III. Continuing Business

a. Executive Director's Report

- Thank you to the Director for the wonderful presentation at the MIF. First time there's been discussion on political self-determination in Micronesian region. It was very impressive.
- Any changes or comments to written testimony? It will be submitted following this meeting if there are no changes.
- I sent the budget over e-mail. The testimony highlights that there are two different programs under the budget: Public Information program, where the task forces get their money, and there is a chunk that the Commission uses, and operational, which goes toward travel, salaries, as well as telephone and



internet. Compared to last year's general fund, we take about .05% of the budget of the general fund. We submitted two options. Option 1 is status quo budget. Option 2 is the smaller fund, cut by about \$40,000 to accommodate for the recent Tax Act.

b. Self-Determination Study

- Some changes were made at the recommendation of Governor's legal counsel to prepare for it going to the AG. There were no changes to the content, only to the introduction. It is no longer an MOU, but instead an MOA, which is stronger legally. It's going forth for signatures. UOG is in the process of signing. We will update as we go forward. We are looking at it being signed in the next week or so. After UOG signs, it will come back to the Governor as chairman and then to BBMR and the AG, then back to the Governor. We'll push for it to be signed hopefully in the next month.

c. Financial Report

- We have the typical financial report. We are requesting a new computer. The computer Mariana's using right now is my personal one, and the Commission computer is on its way out.

a. Motion to approve purchase for a computer – Mayor Hoffman. No objection.

d. Task Force Updates

i. Free Association, given by Adrian Cruz

- We are preparing for the debate that will be happening. We are still waiting on our website. We agreed to give away our tickets in exchange for some airtime for our status.

ii. Independence, given by Dr. Bevacqua

- Last month we had our general assembly for April and talked how decolonization can help preserve the CHamoru language. On the 19th we have



our war claims event. Last December we helped 165 people complete forms. We had many people suggesting we do another one. It will be on the 19th at UOG at the HSS Atrium. There will be food. We are excited about the debate next week. We have been giving out tickets to people that come to our meetings and through social media.

iii. Statehood, given by Eddie Duenas

- We are in the process of trying to print our banner and roadside signs and bumper stickers. I am waiting for a quotation from different copy places. Otherwise, we are ready to roll. Is the Commission as a whole planning to set up with a mass meeting where we could come and present?
- Chairman – that is up to the body. Every status is pretty independent about how they move along. If there's something the body as a whole would like to do, then that's something for everyone to agree on. We have not set up any type of forum sponsored by the Commission to give an education program.
- Adrian Cruz – We did before. The problem was that Statehood never wanted to attend.
- Eddie Duenas – we used to have meetings in the villages. In the past they'd schedule certain things and we'd all come.
- Chairman - Just a thought: my recommendation – contact Republican and Democratic Party Chairmen to see where they have their meetings and rallies. That way we don't have to set up. We can go to their venues and give them an education. If you have educational materials, you can pass it out. We are not going to have a vote this election season because of the issues in the courts, but let's use all the meetings and venues to our advantage.
- Eddie Duenas – we could do Mass meetings – North, South, Central.



- Executive Director – we did it before, but turnout wasn't very high. I spoke to the Mayors' Council before, and some mayors are willing to host us, but from previous experiences, the attendance was a problem prior.
- Dr. Natividad – I think that's why it's important we work with UOG to come up with this social media campaign plan to disseminate information how people are able to receive it.
- Mayor Hoffman – It's not just this topic. From my experience, people do not show up.
- Eddie Duenas - I suggest the Commission sponsor 3 or 4 major meetings. I think they should get with the mayors to have meetings and invite us to come speak. My suggestion is to do north, central, south, so it's not each individual village.
- Mayor Hoffman – Now that people have seen more from the Commission, they may come. We have mayors willing to do it. We can try one more time.
- Chairman – Obviously when it comes to political parties, there are different rules about disseminating information. What about materials for education for political status? Does that fall in line with the restrictions? If everything's kosher in terms of laws, maybe we should plan some sort of dissemination of information to government employees and Gov Guam worksites. GovGuam employees have about a 90% voter turnout.
- Executive Director – I will check with legal, but we can see about that.
- Mayor Hoffman – Maybe we can do something to gauge how much people know. For example, have you heard information on free association? And we could use this to see what areas need more work.
- Executive Director – we've had talks about that with UOG. I could see about creating a survey so we can have a gauge of that. We could send it to the classes we already spoke to so we can see the amount of engagement.



- Chairman – did the decolonization registry include mailing addresses? The ones who signed up might have interest, and we should provide them the information and educational material.
- Dr. Lisa Natividad – when the information from the Self-Determination Study comes, we can see also see then how we could go about disseminating the information. I think a mixed bag is very important. It might be time to move forward.
- Eddie Duenas – We are trying to move forward and make it effective. This was done 20 years ago, and it’s effective to a certain extent.
- Chairman – it’s election season, and people are looking for information. This is the perfect time to get our campaign moving forward.
- Eddie Duenas – I was looking at the budget. We have been saving our money. Unless we have the money here, we can’t move forward.
- Executive Director – you have money right now. As a reminder, fiscal year 18 is not part of the carryover. FY 16 and 17 are still in reserve. We will leave it off the next financial report so there’s no confusion.
- Chairman – Sometimes there is carryover, and sometimes there isn’t. When you get it, spend it. There’s no guarantee we’ll have carryover. If the Legislature keeps the 2% sales tax, I do believe some of the issues we have with the crisis will be alleviated, there might not be a need for limiting the carryover provisions done in the past. Let’s see how things move forward in the next few months. In the meantime, spend your money. Come to the budget hearings.
- Executive Director – About the debate, as a reminder the debate is next Tuesday. I believe no one has RSVP’d. Please email me to RSVP and I could let them know. Second thing, I will be going to the UN Regional Seminar. I will be leaving to represent the governor sometime next week.



IV. Work Session/Subcommittee Schedule

- a. Work Session: Self-Determination Study – we did not have one because we are still in the process of getting it fully signed.
- b. Work Session: DOE Curriculum Framework
 - Dr. Natividad – The next step would be for us to look at the DOI funding to fund a hiring a curriculum writer. DOE is working on a proposal right now for us to review and move forward.
- c. Work Session: United Nations
 - Dr. Natividad – I was at the UN Permanent forum for indigenous issues the last couple of weeks. I wanted to share that during my time there, I was able to meet with the new chair of C24 – Antigua. One of the first things they asked was “when are you guys coming back?” Following the seminar next week, I suggest doing a markup of our existing resolution that was passed to be able to retain the strong language. They are willing to work with us on drafting in advance. I know there’s limitations with funding, but I think it would be great for each task force to send a representative to provide testimony to the Committee in June in New York.
 - Chairman – I’ve filed the amicus with Organization of American States about Puerto Rico’s complaint in regards to the breaking of the charter for all member states in representative democracy. OAS is an international body. We can check how that process is moving along, and the complaint made. Maybe this is something COD could weigh into. This is something maybe we could see how we could get more involved.
 - Dr. Natividad – That may be good. The best precedence is the Davis case. If we get a ruling soon, and it’s not in our favor, it’s time to explore the international courts. One thing that in order for them to accept the case, is that we need to have exhausted all domestic legal remedies. If we’ve gone through



2 appeals, that's grounds to bring it to international court. OAS is a good start. There's also the human rights council we could consider as well. The consistency of our presence is very important. I was also able to meet with the first Secretary from the permanent mission of Fiji which is critical. He gave me some advice to move forward. It's consistent with what you've been doing. His main thing is that we need to engage our administering power. He suggested exploring a closer relationship with DOI and our delegate's office. I wonder if maybe we should invite the delegate when she's in town, to our meeting, and we could collaborate. Maybe Amanda can check with her schedule for subsequent meetings and we could consider that. I wanted to share is a project I was hoping for us to be able to do a year from now – to convene a two-day decolonization conference, sponsored by COD and probably co-sponsored by UOG. I think we should invite the chair of the Committee (Antigua) to really bring presence to this issue. We'll do all the preparation and planning and bring in the key players. The second person I'd like to invite is the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues – Vicky Corpus from the Philippines. Everything we do is on the track of decolonization, but that is parallel to our rights as indigenous people. There are places where they intersect. She can underscore the indigenous right to define who we are. That is question on the Davis case. Partnering with UOG is a strategic way to get her in. if we do it as a quasi-academic exercise, she would have no problem coming.

- Chairman – I look forward to attending as a member of the general public.
- Dr. Natividad – I will submit a proposal.
- Executive Director – Part of the grant we applied for covers a youth conference. We haven't gotten word back yet. We're hoping to find out in the next couple of months or so.

V. Open Discussion



- Eddie Duenas – Are we going to have the plebiscite in November?
- Chairman – It doesn't look like it.
- Adrian Cruz – Senator, you mentioned you spend \$700 for printing for UOG. We worked with them for weeks and received a flood of email reminders. Unfortunately, I got a call at the time slot you were supposed to present because there was no statehood representative. The whole point of our Commission as we wait for a decision pending the Davis case, is to do educational outreach. When we don't show up to important things like that, it hampers our work. When we had the village meetings, you guys didn't come at all. I don't understand.
- Eddie Duenas – I was at UOG, and went to several different buildings, and people didn't know where it was. I even asked Dr. Underwood. When I got there, I did not have my printout of the e-mail, so I did not know where the presentation was. I left in desperation after not being able to find the place.
- Chairman – your point, Adrian, is very important. What you do or don't present to the public will make them decide where they want to go. It is very important we all realize that is a heavy responsibility. What you do will affect their decision on political status.
- Dr. Bevacqua – people want representation from all of the task forces. A lot of times we miss chances for outreach because we can't fill all of the slots. They have had trouble reaching the statehood task force. I think it'd be good for statehood to get more active members.
- Dr. Natividad – maybe we can explore the possibility of statehood task force. Maybe Dewey could be your liaison to be an extension of you.
- Eddie Duenas – he did speak on my behalf using the website. I'm giving him this copy to be a guide.



- Executive Director – we have several members interested in joining statehood. Maybe we can have another meeting to delegate responsibility so it's more spread out. We'd like to modify the list so there are more active members. We need to meet. I recommend May 22 at 3pm.

VI. Adjournment

- **Move to adjourn – Mayor Hoffman. Seconded by Dr. Natividad.**