

**AGENDA**  
**CULTURAL RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD**

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 – 10:00 am  
City Hall Commission Chambers – 806 N Second Ave.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Introductions:**

**Consent Calendar:**

1. Approve Minutes from February 21, 2024 Meeting

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Immigration Attorney Informative Session Update
  - a. Dodge City Public Library
  - b. Immigrant Connections, Inc.
2. New committee members
  - a. Onboarding and KOMA/KORA Training
3. Approve Implementation Plan for 2024
4. Welcoming Week Committee Update
  - a. International Festival 2024
5. Engage Dodge Spring Session
6. Welcoming Interactive with Welcoming America
7. National League of Cities (NLC) Cultural Diversity Award

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. ICMA Award Application

**BOARD PROGRAMS/DATES** (keep in mind):

- March 26-28, 2024 USCIS MSI
- April-Celebrate Diversity Month
- April 10-12- Darlin & Roxana attending Welcoming America Interactive
- Engage Dodge April 2, 2024 - May 14, 2024
- Naturalization Scholarship Deadline April 17, 2024
- May 5, 2024, Cinco de Mayo
- June 17-23, 2024 Refugee Week
- June 25-27, 2024, USCIS MSI & June 25, 2024-Projected Naturalization Ceremony
- National Hispanic Heritage Month September 15- October 15, 2024
- September 8, 2024, Dodge City International Festival, Wright Park
- September 13-22, 2024, Welcoming Week
- Human Rights Day – Tuesday, December 10, 2024

**COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS/STAFF**  
**ADJOURNMENT**

# MINUTES

## CULTURAL RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD RETREAT

Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 – 9:00 am  
Municipal Services Building – 100 Chaffin Rd.

### CALL TO ORDER

**Attendees:** Brenda Carmona, Holly Mercer, Karim Schneider, Debbie Snapp, Karla Lees, Jeff Heirs, Susan Finley, Yarisel Sanchez

**Absent:** Esmeralda Granados, Kurt Lampe, Esmeralda Soto, Elizabeth Reazola, Isabel Garcia, Vicky Ortiz, Coral Lopez

**Staff:** Melissa McCoy, Darlin Rayo

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Election of 2024 Chair: Brenda Carmona was nominated for Cultural Advisory Board Chair by Debbie Snapp. Holly seconded the motion.
2. Election of 2024 Vice Chair: Elizabeth Reazola was nominated for Vice Chair by Debbie Snapp. Holly seconded the motion.

### CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approve Minutes from January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting: Debbie motioned to approve the minutes, and Karla seconded the motion.

### OLD BUSINESS:

1. Strategic Plan for Welcoming and Integration
  - a. Implementation/Tracking
    - i. Equitable Access & Communication:
      - Language Access: Board members recently met with Judge Theresa Watson, who shared valuable insights into how language access can be improved. Examples include utilizing video call services and providing interpreters for public meetings, such as the recent KDOT meeting where city staff were sent to interpret. The goal is to ensure that all major entities have language access services beyond English and Spanish. Debbie pointed out that when approaching these entities, it's important to ensure they have the resources needed to be successful in implementing language access initiatives. This may include providing tools, offering trainings, and other support measures. Language access for taxing entities and service providers is crucial for ensuring inclusivity and accessibility. Currently, the city provides all information in English and Spanish, but recognizes

the need to expand beyond these two languages to accommodate all communities.

- Connect Communities: In previous years, the community mixer involved walking the trails while engaging in conversations, visiting downtown businesses, and exploring the mall.
- Technology: Staff proposed offering various technology classes and Holly suggested exploring the possibility of applying for a grant to support this initiative. She also mentioned the idea of a mobile learning lab that could travel around town.
- Public Transportation: The City is actively exploring transportation expansion efforts, including offering free rides on voting days and expanding the walking trails. Two grants from KDOT for projects connecting Comanche and Central and onto Avenue K are currently in the design phase. Another grant application is planned to further connect trails. Additionally, the City is considering adding bike racks at various locations and seeking sponsors for bus passes to enhance accessibility. Services are currently limited to weekdays and business hours.
- Initiatives: The Engage Dodge program is conducted in spring and fall, with sessions held during the lunch hour in Spanish and in the evening in English. To enhance its effectiveness, it was suggested to incorporate information from the County and District as part of the program. Additionally, Catholic Charities hosts quarterly events focusing on providing essential resources for new arrivals in the community.

ii. Civic Engagement

- Get Out the Vote: The aim is to break down barriers for individuals who may not have voted previously. The City's produced videos have been instrumental in educating the community about the voting process. To further this effort, Collin and Melissa will collaborate on creating another video that explains how to access the building and parking facilities for voting.
- Census: City staff is actively participating in webinars to enhance the understanding of the process. It's important to note that the City has been undercounted in the past, and one of the goals is to educate families about the Census process to alleviate any apprehensions they may have.

- Civic Mentorship/Local Leadership: It's essential to keep the Civic Mentorship and Local Leadership initiative on the radar. One crucial aspect of this pillar is encouraging community members to apply for city advisory boards. This serves as the first step towards greater civic engagement and participation on advisory boards.
- iii. Refugee & Immigrant Integration
- Welcome Center: Debbie reported that it's notable that there's an influx of new residents, with Catholic Charities providing substantial resources to aid in their settlement, including cash programs. Additionally, the refugee count is rising. As a community, it's imperative to extend the same warm welcome to newcomers as we do to new employees arriving from the cheese plant. However, there's a pressing need for affordable rentals and housing. Unfortunately, building costs are prohibitively high, leaving many unable to afford suitable accommodations.
  - Immigration Legal Assistance: It's been observed that local lawyers may lack expertise in handling cases involving individuals from Cuba. Catholic Charities offers legal assistance, highlighting the need to address this issue. Jeff and Debbie suggested a task force to discuss the matter. Additionally, efforts will be made to involve the Mexican consulate, along with scheduled visits from USCIS.
- iv. Safe and Healthy Community
- Healthcare Access: Victory Electric health fair proved to be a valuable resource for the community. Looking ahead, the Mission and Mercy Dental Clinic is anticipated to further enhance healthcare accessibility. LHEAT is actively involved in facilitating these initiatives.
- v. Education & Economic Opportunity
- Childcare: Eco Devo has submitted a grant application, and Cargill is expanding its operations with committed revenue bonds. Efforts are underway to involve districts, the YMCA, and other stakeholders in these initiatives.
  - Banking and Financial Services: Catholic Charities recently organized an event featuring a presentation by a banker.

- Housing Challenges and Opportunities: Eco Devo is doing a Revive the Block Project, with support from Mollea Wainscott. The city will play a more active role in assisting with this initiative.
  - Youth Mentorship Programs: Roxana will return in the summer to work on this project. She will create a youth council to gather information and insights to present to the commission.
  - Professional Recertification: There was a suggestion to create a workforce alliance or collaborate with an existing one to assist with this effort.
  - Adult Education: Increase involvement with the Adult Learning Center again. It's suggested to offer Spanish classes in addition to English learning classes.
- vi. Naturalization Scholarship: Naturalization scholarships are still available. Additionally, City Manager suggested that if we receive more applicants than available funds, we will seek out additional sponsors for this initiative.
  - vii. Civic Engagement Pillar
2. Welcoming Week Committee Update
    - a. International Festival 2024: All forms are now available on the website, and planning has already commenced.
    - b. Five Flags Video: Holly provided an update. She mentioned a 12-minute documentary project involving a group of local and non-local historians, which received funding from Humanities Kansas. They are currently in the process of creating a great video that encapsulates the community's rich history. The tentative plan is to hold a screening at the end of May.
  3. Immigration Attorney Informative Session: The library expressed interest in a similar session. To avoid duplicating efforts, CRAB has decided to extend its support to the library's initiative.
  4. Kansas Open Meetings Act (KOMA) & Kansas Open Record Act Training (KORA): If members were unable to attend the KOMA/KORA training, a video will be made available to watch soon.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Certified Welcoming City Discussion
  - a. Darlin presented the Cities interest in applying for the City of Dodge City to become a Certified Welcoming City. This process can take from 6 months to a year, and an audit will be performed. Holly made a motion to approve, and Brenda seconded it.

## **BOARD PROGRAMS/DATES** (keep in mind):

- March 19, 2023, Presidential Preference Primary, Ford County Voting Locations
- April-Celebrate Diversity Month
- May 5, 2024, Cinco de Mayo

- June 17-23, 2024 Refugee Week
- National Hispanic Heritage Month September 15- October 15, 2024
- September 8, 2024, Dodge City International Festival, Wright Park
- September 13-22, 2024, Welcoming Week
- Human Rights Day – Tuesday, December 10, 2024

**COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS/STAFF**

Holly informed the group that Debbie will be at the library next Tuesday to discuss refugee education. Additionally, a college class is currently working on an oral history report, and anyone interested in participating in an interview should inform Holly. Debbie will also reach out to her contacts to gauge interest. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is seeking speakers for Women's History Month at DC3

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dodge City Welcoming Plan - Implementation Metrics					
Impact Indicators	2022		2023		2024
	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Goal
<b>Equitable Access &amp; Communication</b>					
<b>Language Access:</b> Encourage local public entities to adopt and implement a Language Access Plan with a comprehensive and current bank of qualified interpreters.		CRAB will draft a Language Access Plan (LAP) and LAP tools for service providers and for patients/visitors to use as well as hold conversations with relevant entities to encourage implementation of a LAP.	Work is ongoing, but currently, there is no specific plan in place. CRAB members recently met with Honorable Judge Theresa Watson to discuss language access implementations, aiming to gather ideas for implementation in their community.	CRAB will develop and implement a comprehensive language access plan to ensure effective communication across the city and affiliated entities, enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all community members.	
<b>Diverse Community Ambassadors:</b> Assemble, inform and engage key influencers, leaders, and potential leaders from the entire community to better understand how information is received by community members, ensure accurate information is disseminated and engagement is inclusive.					
<b>Connect Communities:</b> Community-building events bring newcomers, long-time residents, law enforcement officers, nonprofits and others together to learn from and about each other, share food and music and build trust.	① Crossroads Kitchen (International Festival) was held and featured community members from 10 different countries who shared their stories and a sample of food from their home country.		Crossroads Kitchen was a highlight of the International Festival, showcasing culinary delights from 10 different countries and regions. Each participant shared a sample of food representing their home country.	CRAB will continue Crossroads Kitchen and search for more diverse participants to include in the International Festival.	
<b>Technology:</b> Internet access and technology is equitable, affordable, and available to all residents. Basic computer skills classes and technical assistance are available and affordable. Community partners provide culturally relevant services.				CRAB will working project/lyers to inform individuals about the availability and locations of free access to technology.	
<b>Public Transportation:</b> is available at the times residents need it (including evenings and weekends), alternative transportation (walkability and biking) safety is improved.				CRAB will look at introducing alternative transportation options and expanding walking trails to significantly enhance the City's pedestrian-friendliness by finding grants to assist with projects.	
<b>Initiatives:</b> Such as the Engage Dodge Program that help residents understand, engage with and participate in local government and civic life are well-known and accessible to newcomers.	① Bilingual Engage Dodge program was held in partnership with the ESOL & Diversity program and the DCCC Adult Learning Center. Five 2-hour long sessions were held with a total of 30 attendees.		The Spanish-language Engage Dodge program was conducted in collaboration with participants from the Naturalization Conference, held over a seven-week period in the fall. The sessions lasted for two hours each evening, with a total of 17 participants.	CRAB will collaborate with the ESOL and Diversity Program to initiate another program in the spring. Another class will be held in the fall focused on the Recipients of the Naturalization Scholarship.	
<i>2022 Actual</i>		<i>2023 Goal</i>		<i>2023 Actual</i>	<i>2024 Goal</i>
<b>Civic Engagement</b>					
Voter registration and <b>Get Out The Vote</b> Efforts: Eligible voters are registered and informed on the issues and candidates, voting polls are accessible and voters know where to exercise their right to vote.	① The City of Dodge City made 6 posts about voting in lead up to the 2022 General Election. Posts began 3 weeks before Election Day. ② The City of Dodge City provided free transportation for voters to vote early or on Election Day.	CRAB will develop a Civic Engagement Strategic Plan that outlines outreach measures that should be taken to simplify/break down the voting process and mobilize voters to get out and vote.	In collaboration with Ford County, a series of six videos were produced in both English and Spanish, providing essential information to the public leading up to election day.	CRAB will coordinate with the Ford County Election Officer to update the voting videos and ensure continued awareness of important information to the public.	
Continuous education about the decennial <b>Census</b> , the American Community Survey, and the redistricting process occurs in the community.			City staff has started attending webinars to gain further insights and develop a strategic plan for the necessary actions.	City staff is actively participating in webinars to enhance the understanding of the process. It's important to note that the City has been undercounted in the past, and one of the goals is to educate families about the Census process to alleviate any apprehensions they may have.	
<b>Civic mentorship programs</b> are established: Current civic leaders are paired with community members to mentor them about civic leadership and encourage them to pursue leadership positions in the community.					
<b>Local leadership</b> positions are publicly advertised and all members of the community are encouraged to apply. Workshops and information sessions on how to run for local office and join local boards are held in multiple locations, times and languages.					

	2022 Actual	2023 Goal	2023 Actual	2024 Goal
<b>Refugee &amp; Immigrant Integration</b>				
<b>Community Welcome Center:</b> Centralized location (both physical and virtual) for accessing information about community services relevant to newcomers. The Welcome Center also facilitates communication between service provider agencies in the community and there is follow-up on referrals made.		CRAB will work with Catholic Charities of SWKS to utilize their space as a Community Welcoming Center. Both organizations will identify frequently accessed services/resources to include information about within the space.	Catholic Charities and the City of Dodge City, in collaboration with several other entities, worked together to establish a warming shelter during severe weather days this winter.	
<b>Immigration legal assistance</b> including free clinics (DACA renewal and Naturalization consultations), United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and consular mobile services are held regularly, accessible and advertised widely. A permanent USCIS office be established in Southwest Kansas, with preference of a Dodge City location. Immigration legal services assistance capacity is expanded with additional funding support and community volunteers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① In conjunction with DCPL, the Mexican Consulate provided mobile services to community members in September.</li> <li>② UFCW Local 2 held their second annual, free citizenship assistance event for the community.</li> <li>③ USCIS visited Dodge City to present on "How to Become a U.S. Citizen." 36 participants attended.</li> <li>④ The Guatemalan Consulate was brought to Dodge City for the first time in November to provide mobile services. Over 300 community members were served.</li> </ol>	Guatemalan Consulate (Mar.), UFCW Local 2 Citizenship Clinic (April), Naturalization Scholarship (April), bi-annual DACA Renewal Clinic, Mexican Consulate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① In partnership with the City of Dodge City and the Dodge City Public Library, the Guatemalan Consulate provided mobile services to community members.</li> <li>② In partnership with Catholic Charities of SWKS and Gateways For Growth, the City of Dodge City offered twelve \$400 scholarships to community members to help pay fees related to becoming a U.S. Citizen.</li> <li>③ In partnership with the City of Dodge City and NOVO Legal, UFCW Local 2 held their third annual, free citizenship assistance event for the community.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① USCIS mobile services and outreach event (March, June, September, December)</li> <li>② Provide Scholarships for residents who want to get their Citizenships</li> <li>③ CRAB will join efforts being made by the DCPL to put together an informative session with Immigration Attorneys</li> </ol>
<b>Provide education and training about acceptable identification documents</b> commonly used by immigrants and refugees in the community, including documents produced by USCIS consular offices of foreign countries in the United States.			USCIS hosted an informative outreach event in the fall, offering valuable information on the citizenship process.	USCIS mobile services will come to Dodge City quarterly, along with USCIS outreach events for the public creating awareness on services and procedures.
<b>Positive stories and spotlights</b> about newcomers are regularly published in local news outlets and across the state.				
Regular opportunities for <b>newcomers to interact with long-term residents</b> and build neighborly friendships are coordinated intentionally; New arrivals are paired with long-term residents for mentorship and social connection. In addition, initiatives, and programs to build trust among New Americans and Law Enforcement are available and promoted. Volunteer opportunities are widely available.				CRAB will host "Meet Your Neighbor" type gatherings to engage the community, providing light snacks and refreshments to encourage social connections.
Governmental entities and community organizations advocate for <b>inclusive legislation, policies, and initiatives</b> at the local, state and federal level.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① The City of Dodge City and the Southwest Kansas Coalition have approved and supported Legislative Policy to create a pathway to sensible immigration reform including, but not limited to, a permanent solution and pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients.</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① The City of Dodge City and the Southwest Kansas Coalition have approved and supported Legislative Policy to create a pathway to sensible immigration reform including, but not limited to, a permanent solution and pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients.</li> </ol>	
<b>Safe &amp; Healthy Community</b>				
<b>Healthcare Access:</b> All Dodge City residents know when and where to access healthcare services, including dental and vision services, and are able to get the support they need regardless of insurance status, socioeconomic status, cultural concerns, language challenges or other barriers. Health education community outreach and clinics for basic healthcare needs occur frequently.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Genesis Family Health was present at the 2022 Guatemalan Consulate mobile services event and provided community members with local health resources and vaccines. Alce Su Voz was also present as part of their efforts to "Increase the Reach" for Indigenous Guatemalan community members.</li> </ol>	CRAB will support current efforts for health fairs and other measures to improve accessibility to healthcare and safety such as Beyond Barriers and Ford County Emergency Management.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Genesis Family Health and Alce Su Voz were present at the 2023 Guatemalan Consulate mobile services event and connected community members with health resources and language access information when seeking medical care.</li> </ol>	
<b>Mental Healthcare:</b> is available and accessible Bilingual providers are available. All providers are trained in trauma informed care. Mental health services are culturally competent. Community outreach assists with overcoming stigma of mental health diagnoses and treatment.				
<b>Disaster Preparedness:</b> Enhance outreach and support for disaster preparedness and emergency responses that are culturally and linguistically responsive through coordination with local disaster response agencies and Ford County Emergency Management. Interpretation services are immediately available for 911 calls.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Students from the ESOL &amp; Diversity program and from the Adult Learning Center shared with 911 Communications Director Elliot Linke reasons why immigrant/refugee communities are hesitant to call 911.</li> <li>② The City of Dodge City worked with Ford County Emergency Management to distribute Warming Shelter information in Spanish as well as English.</li> </ol>		The City of Dodge City worked with Ford County Emergency Management to distribute Warming Shelter information in Spanish as well as English.	

	2022 Actual	2023 Goal	2023 Actual	2024 Goal
<b>Education &amp; Economic Opportunity</b>				
<b>Child Care:</b> Quality child care is affordable and available at the times parents need to work (including 2nd and 3rd shifts), go to school, or engage in the community. Newcomers are empowered, educated and are aware of resources available to become certified child care providers.	① Dodge City/Ford County Development received the Office of Rural Prosperity Rural Champions grant to drive childcare efforts. A Childcare Champion will fill in gaps to ensure progress.	CRAB will work with and support the Dodge City Childcare Coalition through efforts such as elevating community member concerns and needs.	The Child Care Coalition has collaborated on a grant application to secure funding for a new child care facility.	CRAB will explore the requirements and steps needed to secure the grant funding essential for initiating the design work on a new child care facility.
<b>Banking and Financial Services:</b> Lending institutions offer products and services that are appropriate and accessible across cultural, religious, and national origin status. Banks and financial institutions recognize and accept identification documents and immigration status (other than exclusively citizenship and/or green card status) while catering these services.				
<b>Housing Challenges and Opportunities:</b> Affordable, appropriate housing is available, families are educated about tenant rights and responsibilities, local governments and nonprofit organizations are partners in improving housing opportunities and families are able to become homeowners.				CRAB will work with partners such as the Dodge City Ford County Development Corporation, Community Housing Association of Dodge City and similar entities to promote and provide information to residents for their programs and grants such as Revive the Block.
<b>Youth Mentorship Programs Are Established:</b> Current community leaders and professionals are paired with youth (with intentional outreach to immigrant and refugee youth) to mentor them about post-secondary opportunities, specific career paths and encourage them to pursue staying or coming back to Dodge City after college graduation.				Roxana will create a Youth Council to gather information and insights to present to the commission.
<b>Clear paths to professional recertification</b> exist for foreign-educated professionals through local and state education institutions				
<b>Adult education</b> is available and accessible for all newcomers and meets their needs, including English as a Second Language and trade certification programs.				