



In This Issue

- ICO Leaders Meet with New LBPD Police Chief
- St. Lucy's Sponsors 7th District Candidates Forum
- Pictures from March Washington, DC, Immigration Rally

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Contact Us

www.greaterlongbeachico.org
info@greaterlongbeachico.org
5600 North Linden Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90805
(562) 984-2727

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tom@greaterlongbeachico.org

ICO Leaders Meet with New Long Beach Police Chief; Press on Immigration, Community Policing Issues

New Long Beach Police Chief Jim McDonnell met with 23 immigrant rights activists and ICO leaders on Monday, May 10, to discuss the Police Department's relationship with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other police-community relationship issues. Commander Jorge Cisneros was also at the meeting.

The meeting had been six months in the making, prompted by several ICE home raids and public staging incidents held in partnership with the Long Beach Police Department that have terrorized the Long Beach immigrant community and caused considerable distrust of the Police Department.

ICO leaders pressed Chief McDonnell on whether there was a protocol governing ICE-LBPD relations and what steps he was going to take to rebuild trust between the immigrant community and the LBPD that was lost in the wake of the raids. Chief McDonnell stated that the LBPD was required to cooperate with ICE and other law enforcement agencies, and that there is no written protocol governing these relationships. While he did not concede that the ICE raids had damaged LBPD-community relations, ICO leaders did feel that they had laid the foundation for the beginnings of a dialogue.

ICO leaders also pressed Chief McDonnell and Commander Cisneros on U visas, checkpoint traffic stops and car towing, and community policing. Specifically, they:

- Asked for data on how many cars are towed after checkpoint traffic stops for unlicensed driver rather than DUI-related reasons;
- A dedicated liaison in the LBPD to help with the U visa (temporary visas issues to crime victims) application process; and,
- Language included in the revised LBPD Manual that addresses the relationship between community policing and the immigrant community.



St. Lucy's Holds 7th District Candidates Forum

ICO leaders from St. Lucy's Catholic Church are sponsoring a candidates forum for the run-off election for the 7th Long Beach City Council seat. The forum will start at 4:00pm in the Parish Hall, at 2344 Cota Street in West Long Beach.



The two candidates who emerged from April's city election, incumbent City Councilmember Tonia Reyes Uranga and James Johnson, will field a series of questions covering such issues as: immigration reform, air quality, railyard expansion, homelessness, youth, and other topics.

Reyes Uranga and Johnson defeated three other candidates, but neither gathered more than 50 percent of the vote, necessitating the run-off election. Under City laws, Reyes Uranga was required to run as a write-in candidate for the first election, as she is seeking a third term. For the June 8 election, however, her name will appear on the ballot. It is Johnson's first run for elective office.

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Pictures from Washington DC Immigration Rally

Three ICO leaders joined fellow immigration reform activists from across California for a cross-country bus pilgrimage that culminated in a rally in Washington DC on the Capitol steps on March 21.



The ICO participants carried with them a poster of the American flag signed by dozens of Long Beach residents who had gathered for an immigration prayer vigil at St. Athanasius Catholic Church. In place of fifty stars, the flag instead had fifty faces representing the rich diversity of Long Beach, and of the nation.

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[\[Return to top\]](#)