



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

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Minutes Draft

Sept 21, 2021, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83421971270>

*Please note this meeting will be recorded

The meeting will be held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law and COVID-19

Commissioners present: Chair Sam Hyun, Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Megha Prasad, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom, Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Commissioner Gary Chu, Commissioner Mary Chin, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel, Commissioner Betty King, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Nina Liang, Commissioner Cinda Danh, and Commissioner Meenakshi Bharath

Staff present: Executive Director Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

Members of the public: None

The meeting is recorded.

Attachments:

- Two meeting minutes: August 17, September 9
- FY21 state budget spreadsheet
- FY21 nonprofit budget spreadsheet
- Executive/Staff reports
- Fy 22 Budget

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Hyun called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm 9/21/21

2. Meeting Minutes – VOTE on 8/17 Monthly Meeting

Approve August 17 Monthly Meeting minutes

Commissioner Kim motion, Commissioner Chiemruom second

Yes: Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner Kupel, Chair Hyun

Abstain: Commissioner Chin, Commissioner Chu

Chair Hyun called on Commissioner King to record her vote. There was no response. Motion passes with five votes in the affirmative, two abstentions, and one vote was not recorded. Motion passes.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

September 9 Special meeting regarding budget

Yes: Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Kupel, Chair Hyun

Abstain: Commissioner Chin, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Chu, Commissioner Prasad

Chair Hyun called on Commissioner King to record her vote. There was no response. Motion passes with three votes in the affirmative, four abstentions, and one vote was not recorded. Motion passes.

3. Executive & Staff Reports

The Executive Director welcomes any questions on the executive and staff reports.

Commissioner Kupel asks about the cross-Commission coalition (convening). Yasmin responds that this is a new effort that the Commission from Washington DC initiated, and it's been a great initiative connecting other AAPI-serving organizations from across the country. Currently, five commissions are participating, and the coalition is looking for other commissions to join from around the country. At the last meeting, TAF presented. Commissioner Kupel expressed interest in learning more about what we've been learning and hearing at those meetings. Yasmin agreed to meet with Commissioner Kupel about this offline and share more details.

Chair Hyun notes that today was our intern Lily Tang's last day starting a Fulbright program in Taiwan next week. He expresses appreciation for her dedicated service and leadership.

Chair Hyun welcomes further comments and questions regarding the Executive or Staff reports. There were none.

4. [Program and Advocacy Ideas for FY 22](#)

Chair Hyun welcomes discussion on ideas for the AAC's programmatic work for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Kupel suggests organizing programming on climate change and environmental justice, given the increased focus that the issue is getting at the federal and state level. He provides additional context about the idea and the importance of educating different communities across the state about the impact of climate change.

Commissioner Liang supports Commissioner Kupel's idea and encourages the Commission to consider partnering with the state around the need for green infrastructure, for example, tree planting and community garden initiatives across municipalities. She raises the idea that the Commission could help promote this



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

work and/or advocate that majority-minority communities should be targeted for such initiatives.

Chair Hyun affirms these ideas, highlighting the potential to engage young people in these efforts. Chair Hyun asks if there could be an opportunity to work with Chinatown organizations on this. Commissioner Chu proposes programming focused on restaurant workers, housing affordability, and immigration issues.

Commissioner Chin proposes increasing awareness around the high rates of sex trafficking among the AAPI population. Chair Hyun thanks Commissioner Chin for raising this issue. Commissioner Bharath, in chat, added the problems of domestic violence and mental health. Commissioner Saksena, in chat, says that May is Mental Awareness month, so that could be a good opportunity.

Commissioner Prasad affirms Commissioner Chu's idea about immigration and suggests providing immigration forms in different languages.

Commissioner Kupel suggests access to technology and digital equity, and workforce technology needs. Commissioner Kim agrees with the focus on workforce development and raises the importance of ensuring that job training programs are offered in multiple languages. Commissioner Prasad asks if we could partner with the state on such efforts for FY 21. Commissioner Kim agrees and proposes that the Commission could connect with the MA Dept of Labor and potentially collaborate with them to offer training in Asian languages.

Commissioner Saksena, in chat, suggests health access and prevention efforts. Commissioner Kupel mentions that he has experience in workforce development and can offer some intros for collaborative programs.

Commissioner Lee mentions that State Rep Tackey Chan previously raised an AAPI Got Talent and suggests asking him about that idea.

Yasmin asks if we should also offer to program focused on AAPI holidays. Commissioner Bharath suggests Diwali, and Chair Hyun mentions Chuseok. Commissioner Chu suggests Lunar New Year.

Commissioner Kupel states that it could be helpful to develop a calendar of holidays. Commissioner Syeda responds in chat that Sheila has developed a calendar of events.

Commissioner Lee raises the idea of mobile clinics (i.e., through vans) to bring healthcare services to AAPI communities.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

Commissioner Chin suggests that the AAC sponsor some basic ESOL classes for residents. She states that not many programs are free and have long waiting lists, and the need is great. Chair Hyun raises the opportunity to bring this issue to the awareness of legislators for the state budget.

Commissioner Kupel proposes the issue of food security, which is a big issue in the AAPI community in Malden and likely other municipalities.

Chair Hyun thanks everyone for their thoughtful and impactful suggestions.

5. Sub-Committee Updates

Education - Commissioner Bharath states that they have been meeting with Lily and Yasmin about the Youth Council. She thanks the Commission for approving funding for the Youth Council in the FY22 budget. She thanks Lily for her service and advocacy to bring the Youth Council to fruition. Yasmin said that the new Youth Coordinator will be joining the first week of October. He's an international student from Pakistan and brings a wealth of experience overseeing and launching youth coalitions. She says that we will invite and welcome him and our Development and Communications Intern, Bonnie, at our next meeting.

Governance, Finance, and Communications - Chair Hyun states that the Committee approved recommendations for the AAC's FY22 budget, then brought to the full Commission on the 9th for approval.

Gov't Relations

Commissioner Kim states that Asian American Commission provided anti-racism and education bill and language access bill. The AAC plans to meet with the Asian Caucus to plan on activities for the federal funding. Significant resources need to be provided to the AAPI community. AAC developed a shortlist of asks.

6. Old Business

Commissioner Lee said she joined the meeting late and asked about the August 17 minutes. Chair Hyun states that the minutes were approved. Commissioner Lee notes that a portion of the conversation (~ ½ hour) was not included in the minutes. Chair Hyun reiterates the AAC's approved policy of providing any comments and concerns on the minutes to Yasmin. Chair Hyun thanked Commissioner Lee for bringing this to the Commission's attention and noted for the record.

Commissioner Chin clarifies that Commissioner Lee was not looking for changes to the meeting minutes. She wanted to raise the point that a portion of the meeting was not included in those minutes. Chair Hyun notes for the record that all meetings are recorded for transparency (with full audio and word), and our meeting minutes are not transcribed word for word.

Yasmin states that they are not on the website but available upon request of the public. Commissioner Kim clarifies that it would be a public records request, and there's a process through the state that any member of the public can pursue.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

7. New Business

Chair Hyun asked if there was any new business, but no one brought up any. Chair Hyun reminds everyone that the next Commission Meeting is October 19, 2021.

Commissioner Bharath asked how the new Commissioner applications. Yasmin states that there were 20 applicants, and they will all be sent to the Appointing Authorities by the end of the week.

Commissioner Chin asks if the Executive Committee screens or vets the applications. Chair Hyun states that the Executive Committee does not review any applications, and the Executive Director presents all of them to the Appointing Authorities.

8. Next Commission Meeting: October 19, 2021

9. Other community updates & meetings adjourned at 7:19 pm

Chair Hyun motions to adjourn this meeting. Commissioner Bharath motions to adjourn. Commissioner Kim seconds.

Yes: Commissioner Chin, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner Chu, Commissioner Liang, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Kupel, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner Danh, Commissioner Bharath, Commissioner Syeda, and Chair Hyun.

Motion passes. The meeting is adjourned at 7:19 pm.