



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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Tuyet Tran

Executive Director

Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

One Ashburton Place
12th Floor
Boston, MA 02108
aapicommission.org

Minutes

October 17, 2023, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

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

*Please note that this meeting will be recorded

The meeting was held via video conference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law and COVID-19.

Attachments:

- Draft meeting minutes: September 19, 2023
- Budgets
- Staff reports

Commissioners present: Commissioners Leo Hwang, Saatvik Ahluwalia, Danielle Kim, Karen Chen, Marilyn Park, Moana Bentin, Philjay Solar, Richard Chu, Gary Chu, Amy Goh, Tuyet Tran, and Christopher Huang.

Staff present: Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Diana Li

Guest: Dr. Heang Rubin

● Call to Order:

Chair Gary Chu called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

● Commissioners Check-in

● Approval of Meeting Minutes, September 19, 2023 (VOTE)

VOTE: Commissioner Saatvik Ahluwalia motions to approve the notes.

Commissioner Moana Bentin seconds.

YES: Commissioners Richard Chu, Tuyet Tran, Danielle Kim, Marilyn Park, Moana Bentin, Gary Chu,

Abstained: Leo Hwang, Philjay Solar

The motion passes.

● Public Comment

No public comments were made.



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New Business:

- **Strategic Plan update**

Dr. Heang Rubin asks everyone to fill out the [Strategic Planning Survey](#) for AAPIC.

- Program and Research Director and Executive Communications Specialist candidates

Executive Director Yasmin Padamsee Forbes presents a quick overview:

- Program and Research Director
 - The application opened for two weeks initially (September 14 – October 3, 2023)
 - Application Deadline: October 3, 2023
 - Received 37 applications and closed applications
 - 17 applications were from MA
 - Yasmin and Jennifer reviewed all application materials.
 - Shortlisted five candidates and sent invitations to all five
 - Four candidates were interviewed. One candidate did not reply.
 - Interviews conducted by Richard and Yasmin on Oct 12-13, 2023
 - The selection was completed with Richard, Gary, and Yasmin.
- Executive Communications Specialist
 - The application opened for two weeks initially (September 12 - 25, 2023)
 - Application Deadline: September 25, 2023
 - Received 53 applications and closed applications
 - Eight applications were from MA
 - Yasmin and Jennifer reviewed all application materials.
 - Shortlisted four candidates and sent invitations to all four
 - Three candidates were interviewed. One candidate did not reply.
 - Interviews conducted by Yasmin and Jennifer on October 5, 2023
 - The selection was completed with Yasmin and Jennifer.
 - Anne St. Marie Lizette, a UMass alumni with much advocacy experience, was selected as the final candidate and confirmed her availability.

Both salaries were included in the budget.

Commissioner Christopher Huang joins the meeting at 6:40

Project & Research Director, Salary \$71,000:

No vote took place, and no confirmation, as information on accepted candidates has yet to be sent out to commissioners.



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Executive Communications Specialist, Anne St. Marie Lizette, Salary [REDACTED]:

VOTE: Commissioner Philjay Solar motions to vote to confirm the Executive Communications Specialist. Commissioner Moana Bentin seconds.

YES: Philjay Solar, Richard Chu, Danielle Kim, Marilyn Park, Moana Bentin, Tuyet Tran, Leo Hwang, Saatvik Ahluwalia, Karen Chen, Amy Goh, Christopher Huang, Gary Chu

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Gary Chu suggests a new meeting to review documents for the Project & Research Director candidate.

- **Meeting Changes**
- Change the November meeting date to November 28 due to the proximity to the strategic planning meeting.

The meeting is confirmed to be changed to November 28 from November 21.

- **EC continuation until Feb 2024**

Commissioner Danielle Kim discusses that it would be preferable if EC continues until the end of December 2023. Commissioner Philjay Solar supports.

- **Update from Government Relations, Advocacy, and Civil Rights Subcommittee**
- [H.3119 Fred Korematsu Day Bill \(VOTE\)](#)

The Act recommends designating January 30 as Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution in Massachusetts.

VOTE: Commissioner Moana Bentin motions to support the Fred Korematsu Day Bill. Commissioner Philjay Solar seconds.

YES: Commissioners Philjay Solar, Richard Chu, Tuyet, Danielle Kim, Tuyet Tran, Marilyn Park, Saatvik Ahluwalia, Karen Chen, Bethany Li, Moana Bentin, Leo Hwang, Amy Goh, Christopher Huang, Gary Chu

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Discussion about H.1704 / S.996: An Act to reform the hate crime statutes**

As chair of the subcommittee, Commissioner Danielle Kim shares about both bills: the designation of January 30 and the concerns over how the hate crime statutes might disproportionately affect communities of color.

Additional context from Commissioner Bethany Li is that many Asian communities and organizations at the time of introduction opposed H.1704 / S.996, which Governor Maura Healey supported.



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Recommendation to further engage the Asian Caucus to ensure they're aware of the nuance and the adverse consequences of the bill's sentencing before AAPIC does any specific support for the bill.

Old Business:

- **Reports**

- Commissioners Report

No commissioners report.

- Sub-committees

Grants Subcommittee Discussion: ED Yasmin Padamsee Forbes gives an update on the status of the small grants application, which has now gone live and is receiving applications. Commissioner Tuyet Tran discusses the barriers to access and steps to remove them for small populations, such as the Burmese population throughout Massachusetts. Currently, AAPIC has received ten applications.

Arts & Culture: Commissioner Christopher Huang discusses his idea of having a performing arts showcase, combining that idea with a Unity Dinner or small grants for performers or artists. He maintains that we should preserve fair market rates to pay artists.

- **New Advisory Group for Surveys**

Commissioner Saatvik Ahluwalia gives an update on the meeting with Dr. Paul Watanabe on the process of developing and implementing the survey for the various AAPI communities in MA and their impact through the years. ED Yasmin Padamsee Forbes gives an update on the next meeting, which will occur on Friday, November 17, 2023.

- **Staff reports**

ED heard back from the auditor's office about the appointment of one commissioner. Staff has also been working on interviewing and appointing new staff members.

- **Future Agenda Items Suggestions**

Unity Dinner Subcommittee will be gathering together again: Chair Gary Chu suggests determining the purpose and strategy of Unity Dinner; what is the goal of the project now that funding has changed?

Commissioner Danielle Kim suggests considering Commissioner Christopher Huang's comments on whether or not the purpose of the Unity Dinner is best served by its format. Commissioner Philjay Solar suggested increasing hands-on involvement with other organizations.



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Chair Gary Chu discusses how conversations about data desegregation bills happen in silos; hopes to partner with other Commissions in the Commonwealth and share learnings at a communal meeting between various cultural or ethnic groups.

VOTE: Commissioner Philjay Solar motions to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Danielle Kim seconds.

YES: Commissioners Philjay Solar, Richard Chu, Danielle Kim, Marilyn Park, Moana Bentin, Saatvik Ahluwalia, Karen Chen, Amy Goh, Bethany Li, and Gary Chu

The motion passes unanimously.

Commissioner Gary Chu adjourned the meeting at 7:47 pm.

- **Next Commission Meeting: November 28**



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