



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson

Samuel Hyun*

Vice-Chairperson

Philjay Solar*

Treasurer

Haniya Syeda

Secretary

Danielle Kim*

Jonjy Ananth
Meenakshi Bharath*
Bora Chiemruom*

Mary Chin
Vira Douangmany Cage

Gary Chu*
Cinda Danh
Pralhad KC*
Betty King*
Nate Bae Kupel*

Mary K. Y. Lee
Nina Liang*
Megha Prasad*
Dimple Rana
Ekta Saksena*

Executive Director

Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

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

Minutes

Dec 14, 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 Bora Chiemruom, Vice-Chair Philjay Solar, Commissioner Nina Liang, Commissioner Gary Chu, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel, Commissioner Betty King, Commissioner Megha Prasad, Commissioner Pralhad KC

Staff Present: Executive Director Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Program Director Jay Wong, Communications & Marketing Manager Sheila Vo, Development & Comms Coordinator Bonnie Chen

Attachments:

- Meeting minutes: Nov 16, 2021
- YLS Scholarship Recipient vote
- FY21 state budget spreadsheet
- FY21 nonprofit budget spreadsheet
- Executive/Staff reports
- AAC Elections Policy
- EC Candidate Statements

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Hyun thanks the AAPIC and all the Commissioners for attending the meeting. Chair Hyun calls the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. Thank all the EC members. Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Kim, and Commissioner Syeda for their time and commitment.

2. Meeting Minutes – VOTE

Nov 16 Monthly meeting. Commissioner King noted that she was wrongly quoted, and it was actually Commissioner Kim who asked the question to Vice-Chair Solar about the elections on Page 4, 5th paragraph.

Chair Hyun said that if it is ok with the Commission, he is happy to motion to suspend the rules for AAPIC's policy for meeting minutes and make the motion to amend this language unless one wanted to push it out to approve the minutes at the next meeting.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

Commissioner Solar noted that the issue is whether we are ok with removing Commissioner King's name from that statement and moving it to Commissioner Kim. But it also seems that Commissioner Kim wants to make sure it is all accurate and defer to review minutes outside of this meeting more accurately and proposed whether we should move the minutes to be approved at the next meeting. Commissioner Liang asked whether it was possible to propose an amendment to the meeting minutes and vote on the edits rather than the amended meeting minutes. Commissioner Solar noted that it is feasible. Commissioner Liang added that she defers to Commissioner King that this is a possibility she can select so we can move forward with the meeting minutes. Commissioner King noted that this also concerned Commissioner Kim as it is her quote. Commissioner Kim said that she does not have a preference on this matter and if it was amenable to the group checking the recording and, in the meantime tabling these minutes to the Jan meeting. Commissioner King said she agreed with Commissioner Kim. Chair Hyun said that he would move to table the minutes until the next month. Motion to approve and Vice-Chair Solar seconds.

Ayes: Commissioner King, Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Liang, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner KC, and Chair Hyun

Nays: None

Abstain: Commissioner Chu

Motion passes with 10 votes in the affirmative and 1 abstention.

3. Executive & Staff Reports

The Executive Director welcomes questions on Executive and staff reports. No questions or comments were raised.

4. Executive Committee – VOTE

- **Voting for new EC members**

Chair Hyun passes the Meeting to Vice-Chair Solar to preside over this agenda item. Vice-Chair Solar invites questions from any Commissioners regarding the elections policy and procedure. The Executive Director reads a statement from Commissioner Bharath that was emailed ahead of the meeting. Commissioner Bharath's statement expresses support for Chair Hyun's leadership and the candidacy of Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, and Commissioner Saksena for the Executive Committee.

Commissioner King comments that the privilege of serving on the Commission should not be taken lightly, and serving in the Executive Committee bears high responsibility that comes with power and prestige. She previously requested



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

responses via email to the Executive Committee candidates. She expresses concern that Chair Hyun accepted an honorarium to speak at a past event this year.

Chair Hyun states that any correspondence on that email chain may be considered a violation of Open Meeting Law due to having more than a quorum of Commissioners on the email chain. Therefore both he and Commissioner King may be in violation of the OML and will go through a proper process for that. Chair Hyun states that he accepted the speaking opportunity in his capacity, not via his role as a member of the Commission. Chair Hyun summarizes the key themes of his speaking engagement: how Asian hate has manifested throughout United States history. He also talked about how folks can be better allies and step forward for your community. Studies have shown when bystanders stand up to prevent hate, the victim feels safer, as someone was with them. He created his presentation, offered his work, put in his own time in his private hours. He notes that he previously reached out to the State Ethics Commission to verify that his engagement was permissible and abiding by CoI law. Also, Chair Hyun was speaking as a private individual as someone who understood DEI and his role in Hate is a Virus.

Chair Hyun explains that he recently accepted a new job, and after much consideration and thought, he decided to rescind his nomination as Chair after speaking with his family. He has not had much time to spend with his family in the past. He reiterates that his decision is not due to the question raised by Commissioner King. He thanked Commissioner King for her deep commitment and noted that the community was stronger for her leadership. Chair Hyun proposes some recommendations, including serving as Interim Chair until a new Chair is identified and approved. He commits to ensuring a smooth and equitable transition. He notes that this will be a strain on the Commission, but after considering his new role, his family, and his mental health, this is the best decision. He stated that he was open to more questions, comments, and feedback.

Commissioner King states that there was no violation of OML. It would have triggered a violation if there was a quorum. But Commissioner King notes that she emailed a personal email to Chair Hyun to which Chair Hyun decided to cc all the Commissioners, including the staff. Therefore as the email was sent to all Commissioners, triggering OML. Commissioner King continued that when the Chair sent her a personal email and said that it could be a potential OML violation triggering it, she stopped the communication. She requested her point to be on the record.

Commissioner King said that she takes her role very seriously. Commissioner King expressed appreciation and respect for some members of the outgoing Executive Committee that have done their due diligence. She noted that even if she disagreed with them, she still has high respect for this person. She said we are role models



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

for the AAPI community. She reiterates the need to be transparent, accountable, and have good governance.

Chair Hyun reiterates that his engagements were in his private capacity, and he expresses appreciation for Commissioner King's commitment to due diligence and transparency. He states that all Commissioners have joined this body to advance a shared mission of supporting AAPI residents across Massachusetts.

Vice-Chair Solar recommends that the Executive Director reviews the email correspondence issue with the Office of Open Meeting Law.

Commissioner KC thanks Commissioner King for being very thorough and wants to say a few things about Chair Hyun. He recollects a meeting with Chair Hyun to encourage him to join the Commission a few years back. He notes ups and downs in their relationship and expresses admiration for the Commission's progress over the past year. He acknowledges Commissioner King for her role in raising essential questions and serving as checks and balances for the Commission.

Commissioner Chiemruom said she joined this meeting to vote for Chair Hyun. She expressed appreciation for Chair Hyun's integrity and how he has reached out to support her during this challenging year.

Commissioner Prasad expresses thanks for Commissioner Chiemruom's continued support and commitment to the Commission. She notes that she was surprised to hear the Chair's news and acknowledges that how the questions were asked felt inappropriate and akin to harassment. Commissioner Prasad continues as she wanted to answer the questions Commissioner King raised over email as this conversation is on the discussion of elections. Commissioner Prasad states that she has not received any financial or monetary enumeration from her role on the Commission. She states that the Commission's nonprofit trust has never been used for inappropriate purposes to her knowledge to its 503c3 purpose. She says that this question should be referred to the Executive Director and not the Executive Committee members.

Commissioner King recollects her first time meeting Chair Hyun at former Speaker DeLeo's office and encouraging Chair Hyun to apply for the vacancy in Speaker's office. She states that her questions were not in bad faith but good faith. Public service comes with responsibility. Commissioner King says in response to Commissioner Prasad's question regarding the trust, the 501c3 status of AAPIC was not registered with the Secretary of State. Most nonprofits are registered with the Secretary of State; this is not a conventional 501c3; it is a charitable trust.

Commissioner Prasad asks how this question is pertinent to the matter of elected Executive Committee members. Vice-Chair Solar states that the Executive Director and the new EC members can investigate this matter.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

Vice-Chair Solar explains that since we do not have a candidate for Chair who has accepted the nomination, his understanding is that the newly elected Vice-Chair will stand as Interim Chair until a replacement is identified. Vice-Chair Solar reiterates the election policy.

Vice-Chair holds a vote on the election of Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel as AAPIC's Vice-Chair and Interim Chair.

Ayes: Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner KC, Commissioner Chu, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner King, Commissioner Liang, Chair Hyun, Commissioner Kim

Nays: None

Abstain: Commissioner Bae Kupel

Motion is approved unanimously.

Vice-Chair holds a vote on the election of Commissioner Megha Prasad as AAPIC's Treasurer.

Ayes: Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner KC, Commissioner Chu, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Liang, Chair Hyun, Commissioner Kim

Nays: Commissioner King

Abstain: Commissioner Prasad

Nine votes approve a motion in the affirmative, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

Vice-Chair holds a vote on the election of Commissioner Ekta Saksena as Secretary.

Ayes: Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner KC, Commissioner Chu, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Liang, Chair Hyun, Commissioner Kim

Nays: Commissioner King

Abstain: Commissioner Saksena

Nine votes approve a motion in the affirmative, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

Vice-Chair Solar yields the Floor back to Chair Hyun to continue the rest of the meeting. Chair Hyun congratulates the newly elected Executive Committee and expresses gratitude for the outgoing Executive Committee. Chair Hyun thanks



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

Commissioner KC and Commissioner King for recounting their past engagements with him.

Congratulations via text from many members. Message from Commission Liang: Congratulations, new EC, and much gratitude to the outgoing EC! Thank you for your grace and leadership through a challenging time for our community.

5. Sub-Committee Updates

- **Unity Gala Fri, May 6 and need to show proof of vaccination if attending in person**
- **YLS scholarships - VOTE**

Vice-Chair Solar states that UMass Lowell (the previously confirmed 2020 Unity Gala location) responded and said that May 6 is the only open date they have available in May 2022. The Executive Director affirms that this is the only date available in May. Vice-Chair Solar asks if the date and location work for other Commissioners.

Commissioner King states that the Commission needs to start working on this event soon; otherwise, we may need to push the date back past the summer. Vice-Chair Solar says that he's committed to serving as the Chair of Unity Gala and ensuring that this event is successful.

Commissioner Liang thanks Vice-Chair Solar for his leadership and hard work. She notes that May 6 is the Friday before Mother's Day and asks if Commissioners have any conflicts around this weekend.

Vice-Chair Solar responds that he noted this consideration and expresses hope that people would still be able to attend the Unity Dinner and participate in Mother's Day celebrations later that weekend.

Chair Hyun motions to confirm May 6 as the Unity Dinner date. Commissioner Liang seconds.

Ayes: Commissioner King, Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner Chu, Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Liang, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner KC

Chair Hyun

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion passes unanimously.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

Vice-Chair Solar asks the Executive Director to reach out to UMass Lowell and confirm that date with them.

Vice-Chair Solar states that the YLS Scholarship Committee met last week to offer recommendations on scholarship winners. The members of the Committee were himself, Chair Hyun, Commissioner Bharath, and Commissioner Saksena. Vice-Chair Solar reviews the submissions for scholarship recipients, as shared via the meeting packet. He notes that for the Young Leaders Scholarship, the Committee originally planned to award one recipient a \$1,000 scholarship. But given the strength of the 32 scholarship applicants, Commissioner Bharath proposed to donate an additional \$500 personally, and the Executive Committee approved another \$500 from the nonprofit budget to cover a second Young Leaders Scholarship Award recipient.

Commissioner Kim motions to approve as proposed, Chair Hyun seconds
Ayes: Commissioner King, Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner Chu, Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Liang, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner KC, Chair Hyun

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion passes unanimously.

Vice-Chair Solar expresses appreciation to Commissioner Bharath for her generous contribution to support a second scholarship recipient. Chair Hyun reiterates appreciation to all the YLS Scholarship Committee members and Vice-Chair Solar.

5. Old Business

No old business is raised.

6. New Business

No new business is raised.

7. Next Commission Meeting: Jan 18, 2022

8. Other community updates & meetings adjourned

Proud of how far the AAPIC has come, people have recognized how far the Commission has come. Chair Hyun thanked all the staff for their incredible service and work.

Chair Hyun thanks all the Commissioners for their diverse experiences and



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

backgrounds and states that it's been an honor to serve as Chair. He expresses gratitude for the other Executive Committee members: Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Kim, and Commissioner Syeda.

Chair Hyun thanks Commissioner Chiemruom and Commissioner KC for their longstanding commitment to the Commission and the community. Chair Hyun expresses appreciation to Commissioner Bharath for her leadership, ideas, and passion. Chair Hyun thanks the staff, including Yasmin, Jay, Sheila, for their hard work and commitment.

The Executive Director expresses admiration and appreciation for the partnership of the outgoing Executive Committee and cites the inspiring dedication of all the Commissioners.

Commissioner Liang motions to adjourn. Commissioner Chu seconds.

Ayes: Commissioner King, Commissioner Bae Kupel, Commissioner Prasad, Commissioner Chu, Vice-Chair Solar, Commissioner Chiemruom, Commissioner Kim, Commissioner Liang, Commissioner Saksena, Commissioner KC, Chair Hyun, Commissioner Bharath

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned at 7:48 pm.