



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

### COMMISSIONERS

#### Chairperson

Saatvik Ahluwalia

#### Vice Chairperson

Gary Yu

#### Secretary

Rakashi Chand

Moana Bentin

Karen Y. Chen

Emma Chen-Banas

Gary Chu

Richard Chu

Amy Goh

Christopher Huang

Bahara Hussaini

Danielle Kim

Bethany Li

Li Morrison

Marilyn Park

Jennifer Rubin

Philjay Solar

Ekta Srinivasa

Tuyet Tran

One Ashburton  
Place

12th Floor

Boston, MA 02108

aapicommission.org

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 15 · 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM EST

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

\*Please note this meeting will be recorded and held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law

### Attachments

- Corrected [Draft meeting minutes - 6/17/25](#)
- [Draft meeting minutes - 6/26/25](#)
- [Interim Executive Director Formal Job Description](#)
- [Staff FY 26 Inflation Adjustment Request](#)
- [Executive Director JD for Yasmin](#) (from 2021)
- [Draft FY26 budget](#) (most updated)
- [FY 26 budget proposal \(draft\)](#) (from Yasmin)
- [FY 26 Budget Tracking Sheet](#) (created by Eleanor - the contracted CPA)
- [FY26 Title & Hours Update Proposal for Coordinators](#)
- [Full Commission MEETING Notes Gov and Finance July 9, 2025.docx.pdf](#)

### Attendance

**Commissioners:** Saatvik Ahluwalia, Li Morrison, Philjay Solar, Christopher Huang, Danielle Kim, Bahara Hussaini, Rakashi Chand, Gary Yu, Emma Chen-Banas, Tuyet Tran

**Staff:** Shubhecchha Dhaurali, Leela Ramachandran

**Community Members:** Lena Ph., Lolan Sevilla, Jennifer Lin-Weinheimer

#### 1. Call to Order (1 min)

Bahara Hussaini motions, Li Morrison seconds.

**Yes: Li, Philjay, Danielle, Bahara, Emma, Raskashi, Gary Y., Chris, Saatvik**

#### 2. Public Comment

- Chair Saatvik opens the floor for public comment (no response, so keep moving forward through agenda)

#### 3. Approval of draft meeting minutes 6/17/25 and 6/26/25 - (VOTE) (5 min)

Philjay moves to approve minutes of 6/17/25 and 6/26/25, Danielle Kim seconds.

**Yes: Tuyet, Li, Saatvik, Philjay, Danielle, Emma, Rakashi, Gary Y., Saatvik**



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**Abstain: Chris**

Minutes approved (9-0-1)

#### **4. Update on Interim Executive Director (5 min)**

- [Interim ED Job Description.docx](#)
- Interim Executive Director Formal Job Description created (note: Interim ED job description does not include finding new ED)
- Former Commissioner and Commission Chair, Meena Bharath, accepted the temporary interim position and paperwork for hiring is processing at the Treasury (TRE).
- TRE gave official contract back, still need Meena Bharath to sign it and process - 3 month contract for ability to extend for up to 3 months more if ED permanent is not found

#### **5. Non-Profit Bank (10 min)**

- Commission needs to authorize the immediate establishment of a new bank account for the management of non-profit funds, and that new signatories be designated as soon as practicable, in anticipation of Chair Saatvik A.'s planned resignation 30 days prior to the submission of his application for the Executive Director position.
- The current Chair, Saatvik A., is in possession of all non-profit funds following the closure of the previous bank account, which had been held under the name of the former Executive Director prior to her resignation. To ensure proper financial oversight and continuity of operations during this leadership transition, it is necessary to open a new account and establish appropriate signatories without delay.
  - i. **NEED:**
    - 1. New signatories:
    - 2. New bank:
      - a. Philjay suggests Citizens Bank
      - b. Saatvik suggests possibly putting non-profit funds in High Yield Savings account
      - c. Rakashi asks about Leader Bank's rates

#### **6. Full-Time Staff Inflation Adjustment (VOTE) (5 min)**

- [Staff FY26 Inflation Adjustment](#)
- Proposing a 3.67% inflation adjustment for full-time staff in line with State guidance



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- Tuyet asks question clarifying whether the draft budget for this meeting reflects this inflation adjustment and Saatvik affirms that yes, the budget does reflect this shift.

Philjay moves to approve the updated full-time staff inflation adjustment (3.67%), Emma seconds

Yes: Tuyet, Saatvik, Li, Bahara, Chris, Philjay, Emma, Rakashi, Gary Y., Danielle

Approved unanimously by roll call vote (10-0-0).

### 7. ED Role Support Staff Compensation (VOTE) (5 min)

- Proposing a \$2,500 stipend per staff member (Shubhecchha Dhaurali and Leela Ramachandran) for three months (July 1, 2025 - September 30, 2025) of expanded responsibilities and up to \$2,500 per staff member for additional three months if needed (October 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025).
- Tuyet asks what the mechanics are around this additional money and Saatvik says he would
- Philjay clarifies: It would considered a upfront flat bonus and taxable to my understanding
- Chris asks what staff think on the amount of \$2500- staff think its a good amount
- Danielle affirms that she supports this item because there will be an upcoming Chair and EC transition as well.

Philjay moves to approve \$2,500 stipend per staff member stipend, Danielle seconds.

Yes: Saatvik, Tuyet, Bahara, Li, Chris, Philjay, Emma, Rakashi, Gary, Danielle

Approved unanimously (10-0-0).

### 8. FY26 Title & Hours Updates for Coordinators (VOTE) (5 min)

- [FY26 Title & Hours Update Proposal for Coordinators \(1\).pdf](#) Proposing title changes to better reflect role, and hour changes discussed in prior community and Commission meetings
- [Summary of Proposed Changes](#)
  - i. Pacific Islander Coordinator title to be updated to Pacific Islander **Community Outreach** Coordinator,



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- hours remain at 10/week.
- ii. Youth Coordinator to Youth **Council** Coordinator, with hours increasing from 10 to 11/week due to Council expansion by 1-2 members.
- iii. Western Massachusetts **Community** Coordinator title change, with hours adjusting from 18 to 15/week starting September 1, 2025 until end of FY.
- iv. Interim Communications Coordinator hours reduction from 8 to 4/week starting September 1, 2025 until new Communications person hired.

Tuyet moves to approve Title & Hours Updates for Coordinators in FY2026, Li Morrison seconds.

Yes: Saatvik, Tuyet, Bahara, Li, Chris, Philjay, Emma, Rakashi, Gary, Danielle

Approved unanimously by roll call vote (10-0-0)

### 9. Discussion on Communications Manager (VOTE) (10 min)

- [Full Commission MEETING Notes Gov and Finance July 9, 2025.docx.pdf](#) Governance and Finance Subcommittee Recommendation:
  - i. Hiring a slightly more junior person (Manager level) for day-to-day communications management and considering hiring out for press-related tasks- would report to ED
  - ii. Discuss Unity Dinner responsibility and continuation
- Saatvik discussed the overview of what was discussed at the previous Gov and Finance July 9, 2025 meeting,
- Tuyet asks about hiring a company for the Unity Dinner, Saatvik clarifies that Governance and Finance Commissioners believed the cost would be too high to hire an external event coordination company or coordinator
- Danielle Kim summarizes the number of responsibilities the previous Comms Director had; Unity Dinner significantly more complex and staff capacity, so could re-imagine an event that costs less financially and is less labor intensive
- Chris clarifies what costs would be, Danielle says does not know specific numbers, but would be costly and comes from budget
- Shubhecchha (staff) suggests hiring one person or event coordinator with flat fee; suggests Cha Lor as someone who



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has event planning experience

- Philjay asks what complications arose during past Unity Dinners regarding planning and costs
- Tuyet suggests reverting the Unity Dinner tasks back to staff instead of having a Unity Dinner Chair; Leela responds that she actually really appreciated working with Unity Dinner subcommittee, most especially Commissioner Moana Bentin who spent a lot of time on this effort.
- Saatvik re-centers conversation back to Communications Manager
  - i. **NEED:**
    - 1. Scope of responsibilities:
    - 2. Salary range (budget purposes): 55K-65K/year

### 10. FY25 budget issues discussion (20 min)

- FY25 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025)
- Lack of visibility based on expenses
- Concerns were raised regarding lack of visibility into expenses and unanticipated costs
- Members discussed the roles of the Executive Director and Executive Committee in financial management and noted that oversight was limited in FY25 due to vacancies
- Surprise expenses that came up (vacation pay-out)
  - i. December, May, and June resignations of 3 staff members impacted the budget
- Dedicated line item on row 17 - PPO payout buffer for FY2026 to avoid this for future

Saatvik Ahluwalia  
leaves at 7:28 pm.

### 11. Discussion on Executive Director Hiring (VOTE) (20 min)

- Current Chair Saatvik A. to leave for this discussion as he intends to apply for the position.
- [Executive Director JD for Yasmin](#) (from 2021)
- [Full Commission MEETING Notes Gov and Finance July 9, 2025.docx.pdf](#) Governance and Finance Subcommittee Recommendation:
  - i. Based on perceived or appearance of Conflict of Interest, important to hire external consultant to lead and guide the hiring process for the Executive Director



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- ii. This consultant would then be in-charge of putting together hiring committee of past/present Commissioners and/or staff and begin hiring process
- iii. Time-bound consultant to review all applications, bring people into interview round
- iv. Commissioner Tuyet wants to consider the budget implications and integrate it in FY26.
- Previous ED hiring method

### 1. Interim Appointment

- An interim executive director was appointed to fill the role temporarily during the transition period.

### 2. Job Posting

- The position was publicly posted to invite applications from interested candidates.

### 3. Formation of Hiring Committee

- A hiring committee was formed, consisting of six commissioners.
  - The committee chair led the process and was deeply involved in reviewing candidates.

### 4. Initial Application Review

- The chair reviewed all applications personally.
- A shortlist of candidates was identified for first-round interviews.

### 5. First-Round Interviews

- The chair conducted first-round interviews individually.
- Detailed notes were taken during each interview.
- The hiring committee then discussed the interviews and applications together.

### 6. Second-Round Interviews

- A smaller group of approximately five candidates was invited for a second round.
- The entire hiring committee participated in these interviews.



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- Extensive notes and deliberations were recorded.

### 7. Selection of Finalists

- Based on the second-round interviews, the committee selected two finalists.

### 8. Final Public Interview and Decision

12. A public meeting was held where all commissioners could participate.
13. Both finalists were interviewed in this meeting.
14. The full body of commissioners discussed and made a recommendation for the final hire.
  - Vote: approval of hiring external consultant to lead ED search, review applications, put together a hiring committee, interviews- important that consultant never worked with or knows current Commission chair
    - i. Drafting job description
    - ii. How many hours of work over timeframe
    - iii. Who's the liaison for the consultant- who will they be reporting to?

Chris motions to approve up to \$15,000 for a consultant to lead the Executive Director search, application review and process and review, Danielle seconds.

Yes: Tuyet, Bahara, Li, Chris, Philjay, Emma, Rakashi, Gary, Danielle

Approved unanimously (9-0-0).

- Shubhecchha + Leela to work on consultant JD

### 15. Discussion of FY26 budget - (VOTE)

- [FY 2026 Budget based on Team Suggestions](#) (most updated)
- The budget is comprehensive with room for unexpected costs factored in.
- Tuyet asked about the Treasury budget not including vacation payout in a line item.
- Chris advocates for artist grants

Rakashi moves to table the FY26 budget vote, Philjay seconds.

Yes: Li, Chris, Philjay, Bahara, Emma, Rakashi



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Abstain: Gary Y.

*Danielle Kim leaves at 8 pm.*

*Tuyet Tran leaves at 8:01 pm.*

### **16. Any other action item not listed in agenda (if time)**

### **17. Future agenda items**

- Budget vote
- JD for consultant
- JD for comms manager

### **18. Adjourn Meeting**

**Rakashi moves to adjourn; Emma seconds.**

**Yes: Saatvik, Li, Chris, Philjay, Bahara, Emma, Rakashi**

**Abstain: Gary Y.**

**Approved by roll call vote (7-0-1).**

*The next AAPIC meeting is Tuesday, August 19th at 6:30 pm EST.*





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