



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

### COMMISSIONERS

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Gary Chu

Saatvik Ahluwalia  
Moana Bentin  
Meenakshi Bharath  
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Richard Chu  
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Danielle Kim  
Bethany Li  
Marilyn Park  
Jennifer Rubin  
Philjay Solar  
Tuyet Tran

#### Executive Director

Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

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#### Agenda

Time: 5:00 pm to 5:45 pm

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83729453099>

\*Please note that 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: Meena Bharath**

**Staff Present: Policy & Communications Director Jennifer Best, Executive Communications Specialist Lizette Sta. Maria**

#### **Agenda**

1. Determine the allocation of complimentary and discounted tickets.
  - a. Commissioner Meena Bharath would like these tickets to be need-based, not first come first serve
    - i. Last year, aside from tickets for elected officials and staff, all complimentary tickets were need-based. Only a handful were fully complimentary
  - b. PCD Jennifer Best asks if we want to keep the standard ticket price at \$100 or decrease it to \$75.
    - i. If we keep it at \$100, we can have more discounted tickets
    - ii. \$75 is more accessible overall
    - iii. Commissioner Meena Bharath would like to keep it at \$100 but have more discounted tickets due to inflation all around.
  - c. We can open up more discounted tickets as we get more sponsorships
    - i. Commissioner Meena Bharath will be sponsoring 2 tables.
  - d. In terms of percentage increase - Commissioner Meena Bharath tells PCD Jennifer Best to let it be what she thinks is appropriate, but not more than 25%
  - e. Commissioner Meena Bharath recommends doing extra outreach to communities we haven't touched for the complimentary tickets
2. Organize a 'Save the Date' and set up registration for the Unity Dinner. We should consider selecting a theme and designing a thematic web page for the event, extending the chosen theme through to the dinner itself, and ensuring translations are available in various AAPI languages. Themes could include **Island Bazaar Fiesta: Highlight the vibrant marketplaces. Think tropical décor, bright colors, and an emphasis on AAPI cultures. The bazaar could feature handcrafted items and partners' work; we could also have different booths in the bazaar that could represent a different country or culture, offering traditional goods, clothing, and food items. (Could we approach various Embassy to sponsor these booths and tables? )**



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- a. Overall response to Island Bazaar Fiesta theme suggestion
    - i. Perhaps not the word "Fiesta"
    - ii. The word "Island" could exclude some groups
    - iii. "Bazaar" could allude to a marketplace for showcasing, not selling
    - iv. Need to think about the logistics of a bazaar (which entails roaming around) vs. a traditional sit-down dinner – will it be worth the set-up and dismantling of booths?
    - v. Overall, this could be an event of its own at a different time. Want the Unity Dinner to be a dinner instead of a fair
  - b. Commissioner Meena Bharath's approach: Make "Unity Dinner" a theme of its own. Everything has to align back to unity.
    - i. Make sure to include a diverse geographic (across MA) and demographic representation.
    - ii. Perhaps do outreach to Black and Latinx communities
3. Discuss and finalize our speaker lineup. While I've extended an invitation to the Governor (at Meena's suggestion), it's a good idea to have a list of alternate speakers ready.
- a. Commissioner Meena Bharath briefly met Chief of Staff for Governor Healey - will write him back (maybe call) to follow up on Unity Dinner
  - b. Commissioner Meena Bharath's second choice: Senate President Karen Spilka
  - c. Commissioner Meena Bharath's approach: one (1) keynote speaker, others will be dignitaries handing out awards
  - d. Internal theme to guide us: Intergenerational connectedness
    - i. AAPI seniors can give awards to the next generation of AAPI leaders
      1. Auntie Helen - Named one of Boston's 50 Most Influential Asian American & Pacific Islanders (In her 90s)
      2. Puran Dang - Named one of Boston's 50 Most Influential Asian American & Pacific Islanders
      3. Gita Gopinath - First Deputy Manager of the International Monetary Fund (?)
4. Please can the subcommittee develop a preliminary schedule to allocate time efficiently for speakers, awardees, dinner, performances, and dancing.
- a. Commissioner Meena Bharath will reach out to Commissioner Moana Bentin and Commissioner Saatvik Ahluwalia to be emcees
    - i. PCD Jennifer Best clarifies that staff wrote the material for the emcees last year
  - b. For the awards section, Commissioner Meena Bharath would like to bring back more prominent awards from years prior
    - i. Three (3) major awards and five (5) unsung heroes
    - ii. We can develop a theme for the awards (ex. educators, people who work the homeless, people who work with seniors, people who work with survivors of domestic violence)
      1. Commissioner Meena Bharath leaving it to PCD



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Jennifer Best to recommend a theme

- c. For the dancefloor, Commissioner Meena Bharath would like a bollywood DJ or “someone who’s actually showing the moves”
  - d. Commissioner Meena Bharath asks PCD Jennifer Best to keep us in check if we’re leaning towards one group and leaving some out
  - e. Performances - Commissioners Christopher Huang and Leo Hwang would like to have discussions with Arts & Culture subcommittee about making performances more intentional
    - i. Youth Council is also coming up with recommendations
    - ii. Commissioner Meena Bharath suggests giving Arts & Culture subcommittee and Youth Council an outline for direction on these performances:
      1. Because the tickets will be \$100, you’ll want it to be a certain decorum - make sure it reflects the entire community
      2. Timing: give them a specific number of performances for the lineup
5. Identify VIP guests to invite, including legislators and all appointing authorities.
- a. Commissioner Meena Bharath would like to invite:
    - i. all former chairs
      1. ECS Lizette Sta. Maria will make a list of all former chairs
    - ii. caucus members
    - iii. AAPI public servants in local level (towns) - select board + school committee (larger names, mayors, councilors)
6. It would be good to organize a "marketplace" where our AAPI grantees can present their work to the attendees. I had invited our grantees, who received funds and not, to let us know if they wanted to participate, and Lizette can share the list of groups RSVP so far.
- a. Have decided not to do a “marketplace” but grantees will still share information on their organizations
  - b. Commissioner Meena Bharath believes that we should be reasonable in what we ask at a sit-down dinner when people are so busy socializing (having booths that have to be staffed by grant organizations may be too overwhelming logistically)
7. Add to approve a budget of \$30K from our nonprofit at the January commission meeting. This is crucial for securing necessary arrangements like deposit to UMass Boston in Jan, photographers and a DJ. We will need to add it to our Jan agenda by Thursday's cob due to OPL.
- a. \$30,000 budget sounds good to Commissioner Meena Bharath



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