



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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Beth Pioscos

Jennifer Rubin

Ekta Srinivasa

Gary Yu

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Draft Minutes

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm
Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85794609215>

* 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. This meeting notice is posted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §§18–25.

Attachments:

- Draft Meeting Minutes - June 24, 2026
- Subcommittee members and chairs
- Youth Council presentation
- Grantees event presentation

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Tuyet Tran called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM after confirming a quorum of 11 Commissioners. Commissioners were reminded to turn on their cameras during discussion and voting whenever possible to assist the Commission's new Executive Director in becoming acquainted with members.

- **Commissioners Present:** Tuyet Tran, Rakashi Chand, Moana Bentin, Leo Blandford, Emma Chen-Banas, Richard Chu, Vaishali Gade, Rajashree Ghosh, Christopher Huang, Bethany Li, Li Morrison, Beth Pioscos, and Gary Yu
- **Staff Present:** Amihan Matias, Shubhecchha Dhaurali, Anita Yip, and Pranim Magar

Motion to Open the Meeting: Commissioner Rakashi Chand

Second: Commissioner Moana Bentin

Vote: All Commissioners present voted **Yes**. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Commissioner and Staff Introductions

Chair Tran welcomed the Commission's new Executive Director, **Amihan**, to her first Commission meeting. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves, sharing their professional backgrounds, community involvement, and areas of expertise. Commissioners also welcomed Executive Director Amihan and expressed their enthusiasm for working together during this new chapter of the Commission.

3. Public Comment

No public comments were received.



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4. Approval of June 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Commissioner Rakashi Chand

Second: Commissioner Bethany Li

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote: All Commissioners present voted Yes. Motion carried unanimously.

5. New Business

A. Welcome Gathering for Executive Director

Commissioners discussed hosting a welcome lunch or dinner to formally welcome Executive Director Amihan and provided an opportunity for Commissioners and staff to connect in person.

A Doodle poll will be distributed to determine availability, with the goal of scheduling the gathering in **early September**.

B. Commission Retreat

Chair Tran discussed the need to schedule a Commission retreat during the new fiscal year to review and update the Commission's Strategic Plan. Commissioners discussed the value of holding a facilitated retreat similar to previous years and emphasized the importance of full Commissioner participation.

Motion to hold a Commission Retreat: Commissioner Rajashree Ghosh

Second: Commissioner Leo Blandford

Vote: All Commissioners present voted **Yes**. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Retreat Budget Authorization

The Commission discussed authorizing funding for the retreat. Chair Tran noted that previous Commission retreats had operated with a budget of approximately **\$10,000**, and Commissioners discussed maintaining a similar funding level for the upcoming retreat.

Motion to authorize up to \$10,000 for the Commission Retreat: Commissioner Rajashree Ghosh

Second: Moana Bentin

Vote: All Commissioners present voted **Yes**. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Subcommittee and Staff Reports

Program & Research Committee



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Program & Research Director **Shubhecchha Dhaurali** reported that the committee recently met to discuss priorities following recent staffing transitions, including recruitment for a new Youth Council Coordinator and planning for the upcoming program year.

Shubhecchha presented the **2025–2026 Youth Council Program Report**, highlighting the accomplishments of the Commission's second Youth Council cohort. The report summarized youth-led civic leadership projects focused on:

- Mental health and wellness
- Education and curriculum
- Cultural identity and storytelling
- Community engagement and civic participation

Commissioners also learned that Youth Council applications remain open for the next cohort, with strong interest already received.

Small Grants Partnership Forum

Policy & Advocacy Director **Pranim Magar** presented a recap of the **June 30, 2026 Small Grants Partnership Forum**.

The presentation summarized the FY2026 Small Grants Program, which received **142 applications** requesting more than **\$627,000** in funding. Following the Commission's review process, **27 organizations** received a total of **\$102,650** in grant funding.

Pranim highlighted several themes identified through grant applications, including:

- Cultural preservation and identity
- Mental health and trauma healing
- Language access and civic navigation
- Food security and emergency assistance

The presentation also reviewed the goals and outcomes of the Partnership Forum, which brought together Commissioners, grantee organizations, partners, and legislators to celebrate community work, strengthen partnerships, and gather feedback through the Community Voices initiative.

Survey responses indicated that participants valued the opportunity to build new relationships, exchange ideas, and strengthen statewide collaboration among AAPI-serving organizations.

Commissioners thanked staff, the Small Grants Subcommittee, community partners, grantee organizations, volunteers, and legislative partners for contributing to the success of the event.



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7. Announcements

Chair Tran reminded the Commissioner that the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 18, 2026**.

Executive Director Amihan thanked Commissioners for their warm welcome and expressed her enthusiasm for working collaboratively with Commissioners and staff. She shared that she looked forward to meeting individually with Commissioners to learn more about their experiences, expertise, and priorities.

8. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Commissioner Vaishali Gade

Second: Commissioner Leo Blandford

Vote: All Commissioners present voted **Yes**. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately **7:32 PM**.

The next AAPIC meeting is on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 6:30 pm.



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