



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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Executive Director

Amihan Matias

One Ashburton Place

12th Floor

Boston, MA 02108

aapicommission.org

Meeting Agenda

Community Engagement & Visibility Subcommittee Meeting

Tuesday, August 4, 2026, 3:30 - 4:30 PM

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82545512816>

The meeting will be held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 PM by Commissioner Chand, upon a motion made by Commissioner Blandford, seconded by Commissioner Gade, with quorum confirmed.

II. Attendance

Present: Leo G. Blandford, Rakashi Chand; Vaishali Gade; Anita Yip (AAPIC staff)

Absent: Moana Bentin (had notified via email unable to attend); Christopher Huang (no response)

III. Introductions & Member Contributions

Each member shared contributions they bring to the Subcommittee:

Rakashi Chand: Event organization, AAPI history events, venue sourcing, social media, flyer production.

Leo Blandford: Community health and well-being, storytelling intertwined with broader narrative, particularly for Cape Cod, alignment with Wampanoag community, brainstorming for Outer Cape region.

Vaishali Gade: Event organization, health visibility, bringing community together, exploring paths forward after receiving community input

Anita Yip (Staff): Bridging gaps between meetings, creative event production, navigating state-level processes, executing committee vision.

IV. Cadence: How Often and When to Meet

Decision: Monthly meetings approved — first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 PM.

- All members confirmed availability for the next 3-4 months.
- Agreed that if goal is to increase awareness; regular cadence would be helpful



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

V. Role of CE&V Subcommittee

Context & Challenges:

- **Visibility Gap:** The Commission's existence is largely unknown across the Commonwealth, limiting community engagement.
- **Lapse in Subcommittee Activity:** This Subcommittee had not convened in over a year, attributed to staff departures and leadership transitions.
- **Relationship Gap:** Regular meetings with the House Asian Caucus paused for approximately one year due to staff transitions and leadership changes.
- **Capacity Constraints:** Staff resources are limited; community event submissions have nearly ceased, requiring active outreach to rebuild the pipeline.
- **Engagement Boundaries:** The Subcommittee identified a need to define the appropriate scope of its outreach — including whether and how to engage appointing authorities and legislators — before pursuing those avenues.

Past Initiatives:

- **Shared calendar of holidays/celebrations:** A shared calendar of AAPI community holidays and celebrations was drafted but never launched.
- **Commissioner social media presence amplification:** A plan to amplify Commissioner social media presence and adopt an "AAPIC Commissioner" public identity was discussed but not executed.

Ideas Brought Up:

- Pursue a **meet-and-greet or thank-you event** between Commissioners and the Asian Caucus, in-person at the State House or virtually.
- Discuss **virtual community office hours** — converges with prior staff ideas for mobile, regionally present in-person engagement.
- Staff Actions (Outside Subcommittee Scope):
 - Staff to resume relationship with the House Asian Caucus; a meeting with Representative Chan is already scheduled to



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

address communications and the Commission's 20th anniversary.

- Staff to explore a "legislative tour" to introduce the new Executive Director to legislators across the Commonwealth.

VI. Unity Dinner and/or 20th Anniversary Discussion

- The Commission was founded in October 2006; the 20th anniversary is best celebrated in the 2026–2027 fiscal year.
- **Decision:** Plan a single combined Unity Dinner and 20th Anniversary Gala targeting May 2027 (AAPI Heritage Month).
- **Cost and Sustainability:**
 - The Subcommittee acknowledged that the Unity Dinner carries significant expenses — venue, food, performers, and production — funded through ticket sales and nonprofit reserves rather than state appropriations.
 - Past discussions questioned whether the full gala model was sustainable
 - The group identified two options for the 20th Anniversary event:
 - a traditional ticketed gala with tiered sponsorship, or
 - an invitation-only event at the State House
 - A final decision was deferred pending Moana's participation at the next meeting

VII. Next Steps

Next Meeting: Monthly meetings approved on the first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 PM.

Asian Caucus Engagement: Anita to follow up after the upcoming meeting with Representative Chan and report back to the Subcommittee and Executive Committee.

Unity Dinner / 20th Anniversary: Planning to target May 2027 (AAPI Heritage Month); full discussion to continue at next meeting with Moana present.

Report back and explore more at another subcommittee meeting:

- **Community Office Hours:** Subcommittee to explore virtual community office hours model; any physical presence to be routed through Executive Director and eventually full Commission for approval, especially if money is required.
- **Shared Calendar:** Commissioners to begin contributing to a shared Google Doc of AAPI community holidays, celebrations, and upcoming events.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

- **Social Media Presence:** Commissioners to consider adopting an "AAPIC Commissioner" public identity on social platforms to amplify communications.
- **Meet-and-greet or thank-you event** between Commissioners and the Asian Caucus: explore idea feasibility.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Blandford and seconded by Commissioner Gade. The meeting was formally adjourned at approximately 4:35 PM.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

