



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

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Executive Director

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www.aacommission.org

Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2021, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82532905233>

*Please note this meeting will be recorded

Meeting will be held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law and COVID-19

Attachments:

12/16, 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/3 meeting minutes

Meeting minutes amendment proposal

EC/Staff Reports

FY21 & Non-profit Budget

List of sub-committee sign-ups

Commissioner compliance records

Pacific Islander amendment

OML complaints & response letter

1. Call meeting to order

Sam calls a meeting to order at 6:32pm.

2. Meeting Minutes – VOTE

Sam acknowledges the pain that the AAPI community has experienced recently, and encourages Commissioners to come to this meeting today with compassion and love.

Jay announces that the AAC's website is down right now, and the staff are working on it right now. A message was posted on the AAC's social media channels to inform the public.

Mary Lee expresses appreciation for greater detail in meeting minutes. Mary Lee states that the Nov 17 meeting minutes weren't attached with the Dec 15 meeting packet.

Jay affirms that we passed the Nov 17 meeting minutes in December.

Philjay asks if Mary Lee means that the Nov 17 meeting minutes were not attached to the Dec 15 meeting minutes.

Sam says that the Nov 17 meeting minutes were attached as a pdf for the Dec meeting. Sam shares his screen showing the Dec 15 meeting minutes.

Philjay clarifies that we already approved the Nov 17 meeting minutes. Jay affirms.

Mary Lee requests receipt of the amended meeting minutes from Nov 17. Jay encourages Mary Lee to call or email her about this matter.



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Mary Lee appreciates the new proposed meeting minutes policy. She asks if it can be applied retroactively for the Dec 15 meeting.

Danielle clarifies that we will present this new proposed policy at this February meeting, and will vote on it in March.

Mary Lee states that there is a clause that is inaccurate in the Dec 15 meeting minutes, Page 3, Item #7.

Danielle asks if she would like to propose an amendment to the Dec 15 meeting minutes.

Mary Lee says no.

For Dec 15 meeting minutes, Mary Lee proposes an amendment that it must accurately reflect what was stated.

Danielle clarifies that she needs to propose an exact text change for an amendment.

Mary Lee proposes an amendment stating Page 3, Item 7, states that during the 11/17/20 meeting, she was not present on the election date of 12/8/19 and she sent out an email before the 12/8/19 meeting

Meena states that this should be taken offline and encourages Mary Lee to contact staff about this matter. She reiterates that we have many important issues to get to during this meeting.

Meena - 1/19 meetings -- amendment "it is a significant issue and India's Supreme Court is involved." I had shared another example related to Kashmiri Hindus and asked then that we figure out when we speak to International matters.

Bora agrees with Meena.

Philjay motions to table the 12/15 and 1/19 meeting minutes. Megha seconds.
AYS: Danielle, Philjay, Mary Lee, Meena, Cinda, Megha, Ekta, Haniya, Vira, Bora, Mary Chin, Sam
Motion passes.

Vira motion to approve meeting minutes for 1/26, 2/2, and 2/3. Philjay seconds
AYS: Danielle, Philjay, Mary Lee, Cinda, Megha, Ekta, Sam, Vira, Mary Chin, Haniya, Meena
Motion passes

Danielle proposes a meeting minute policy that was drafted by the Executive Committee. Commissioners express that meeting minutes should not be a transcript



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but to check with OML about using transcription services but rather a summary of discussion.

3. Staff Reports

Jay recommends that we skip Executive and Staff reports to move onto the agenda items that require a vote

4. Chairs of Sub-Committees – VOTE

- Sam begins discussion of the selected Chairs of sub-committees by the Executive Committee.

Governance, Finance, Communications: Sam

AYS: Mary Lee, Danielle, Meena, Cinda, Megha, Vira, Bora, Ekta, Haniya, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam

Government Relations, Advocacy, Civil Rights: Danielle

AYS: Bora, Danielle, Mary Lee, Ekta, Meena, Megha, Cinda, Vira, Haniya, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam

Small Business and Economic Development: Pralhad

AYS: Ekta, Mary Lee, Bora, Cinda, Danielle, Meena, Megha, Vira, Haniya, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam

Development: Philjay

AYS: Danielle, Bora, Cinda, Ekta, Mary Lee, Meena, Megha, Vira, Haniya, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam

Health and Human Services: Haniya

AYS: Bora, Mary Lee, Vira, Cinda, Ekta, Meena, Megha, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam, Danielle

Bora asks if Development encompasses Unity Dinner. Sam says yes. Bora affirms that all

AYS: Commissioners are responsible

Education and Leadership: Meena

AYS: Bora, Danielle, Mary Lee, Cinda, Ekta, Meena, Megha, Haniya, Mary Chin, Philjay, Sam

Arts and Culture: Cinda

Bora, Danielle, Mary Chin, Mary Lee, Ekta, Megha, Vira, Cinda, Haniya, Philjay, Sam



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5. AAC Name Change Amendment – VOTE

Commissioners propose various ideas on how to incorporate an inclusive name that does not exclude other Asian groups. Many Commissioners expressed concerns with many Asian groups feeling underserved and unseen under the terms “Asian American” or “citizen”

Danielle motions to extend the meeting to 8:30, Megha seconds

AYS: Mary Lee, Danielle, Megha, Bora, Cinda, Ekta, Meena, Haniya, Philjay, Sam

Mary Chin states that she needs to leave at 8:00

6. Commissioner Compliance Records

Jay presents the Commissioner Compliance Records spreadsheet that was included in the emailed meeting packet. Jay will circulate the forms again tomorrow, and encourages Commissioners to complete these forms as soon as possible.

Danielle affirms that the Compliance spreadsheet is very important. Other public bodies during audits have been identified as being in violation of these required forms -- therefore, it's important to ensure that all Commissioners

7. OML Complaints

Sam begins discussion on the two complaints that were received. Sam updates Commissioners that a response was sent out to the complainants. If AAC's response is insufficient, further action must take with the AG's office by the complainants.

8. Sub-Committee Updates

- Government, Finance, Communications - Deferred
- Government Relations, Advocacy, Civil Rights - Deferred
- Small Business and Economic Development - Deferred
- Development - Deferred
- Health and Human Services - Deferred
- Education and Leadership Development - Deferred
- Arts and Culture - Deferred

9. Old Business

- - Commissioners begin discussion on addressing international crisis that was brought up at the January monthly meeting. Commissioners and staff acknowledge the complexity of addressing international issues that affect the Asian community in Massachusetts. Recommendations are made to provide a space such as an open forum or community space to provide space for comfort to community members. Vira recognizes that AAC has taken controversial stances in the past and it is important to consider and uplift the



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- multitude of needs facing our community. Haniya acknowledges importance of AAC's role in raising awareness of international issues that may impact residents in terms of mental health.

Megha suggests creating an advisory committee to address anti-Asian hate across the Commonwealth, as well as internationally.

Danielle motions to nominate Megha to chair that committee. Sam seconds.

AYS: Danielle, Bora, Vira, Cinda, Ekta, Haniya, Megha, Philjay, Sam

Motion passes

Vira asks for clarification on AAC's new name.

Sheila states: Commission on the Status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders "CAAPI"

Danielle acknowledges that we are limited by the bill filing deadline of Friday, 2/19, and the name change may not be perfect -- however, it will be an improvement on our current name that is limited to Asian Americans. Danielle thanks Kamalani for her leadership on the issue

Megha motions to change the AAC's name to Commission on the Status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Ekta seconds

AYS: Danielle, Cinda, Vira, Ekta, Haniya, Philjay, Megha, Bora, Sam

Motion passes.

6. Next Commission Meeting: March 16, 2021

7. Other community updates & Meeting adjourned

Meeting adjourns at 8:29pm



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