



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission

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Executive Director

Yasmin Padamsee Forbes

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Minutes

Aug 17, 2021, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

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

*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.

Commissioners present: Chair Sam Hyun, Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Meena Bharath, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom, Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Commissioner Pralhad KC, Commissioner Vira Douangmany Cage, Commissioner Philjay Solar, Commissioner Mary Lee, Commissioner Megha Prasad, Commissioner Betty King, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel

Staff present: Executive Director Padamsee Forbes, Research and Public Policy Intern Lily Tang, Marketing Communications Coordinator Sheila Vo

Members of the public: None
The meeting is recorded.

Attachments:

- Two meeting minutes: Jul 20, Jul 28
- Youth Council PowerPoint
- FY21 state budget spreadsheet
- FY21 nonprofit budget spreadsheet
- Executive report
- Staff reports

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Hyun calls the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Chair Sam Hyun, Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Meena Bharath, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom, Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Commissioner Pralhad KC, Commissioner Vira Douangmany Cage, Commissioner Philjay Solar, Commissioner Mary Lee, Commissioner Megha Prasad, Commissioner Betty King, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel

2. Meeting Minutes – VOTE

Commissioner Meena Bharath motions, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom seconds

Jul 20 Monthly meeting

Ayes: Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom,



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Commissioner Meena Bharath, Commissioner Pralhad KC,
Commissioner Vira Douangmany Cage, Commissioner Philjay Solar,
Commissioner Mary Lee, Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Chair Hyun
Motion passes

Commissioner Meena Bharath motions, Commissioner Danielle Kim seconds

Jul 28 Special meeting

Ayes: Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Ekta Saksena,
Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel, Commissioner Meena Bharath,
Commissioner Vira Douangmany Cage, Commissioner Pralhad KC,
Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Commissioner Philjay Solar, Chair Hyun

Abstain: Commissioner Bora Chiemruom, Commissioner Mary Lee
Motion passes

3. Executive & Staff Reports

The Executive Director welcomes any questions on the executive and staff reports.

Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel asks if there has been any outreach from the U.S. Census about AAPI-specific data. Commissioner Bae Kupel says that he will look for contact info for individuals from the Census and update the Executive Director.

Commissioner Bharath asks about the minority leader appointments. Chair Hyun stated that the Governor eliminated these seats. Commissioner King asked if she missed a meeting on this issue. Commissioner Kim that the Governor signed the budget that did not include minority seats. The legislature made the decision, and the Governor signed it into law.

There was a discussion on identifying minority commissioners and then being removed from the budget by the Governor. Chair Hyun reiterates that this was a decision made by the State Legislature, and the AAPIC had no role in this. Also, the budget that the Governor signed did not include these two seats, and there is nothing that the AAPIC could do to change it.

Commissioner Bharath asks about the staff reports and questions about the work going on to gather work on AAPIC artists. Sheila responds that the AAC highlights at least one AAPI artist per month across all mediums. Sheila explains that this work is coming out of the Arts and Culture subcommittee.

4. Sub-Committee Updates

Education Committee

Lily shares that the Education Committee has been working on a Youth Council initiative. The goal is to elevate diverse AAPI voices and cultivate their leadership



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skills. Project ideas include tasking the Youth Council members in organizing town halls and open forums to bring together AAPI youth to discuss various issues. Lily presented a tentative timeline for this work and proposed project. The ED explains the position of the Youth Coordinator and their responsibilities coordinating the Youth Council members. Commissioner Bharath reiterates the importance of having young people at the table and empowering them to speak up. She proposes the idea of establishing a mentorship program between Youth Council members and current Commissioners.

Commissioner Lee asks why we're not considering primary and secondary school students for this program. Commissioner Bharath responds that this program is geared toward high school grades. Each of the 7 Youth Council members will be able to engage the broader AAPI youth community, including younger students. Commissioner Lee asks about the intended age of Youth Council members. ED states that the program is designed to target high school students. She explains that Commissioners can review the applications. Commissioner Bharath states that the Youth Coordinator position is geared toward a college-aged student. Lily explains ACDC's program AYOYCE is similar to this, supporting high school students and engaging them in various programming that affects the AAPI youth community.

Commissioner Lee states that many similar programs focus on high school-aged youth. She cites that many immigrant students need language access and college applications and asks what role the AAPIC can play in supporting AAPI immigrant students. Commissioner Bharath states that these are precisely the stories and issues that we hope the Youth Council members will explore and address through various strategies and programming.

Commissioner King asks how this program is different from the ACDC model. Commissioner Bharath states that she is uncertain, but the Education Committee reviewed several other youth council models, including the Framingham Youth Committee, of which Commissioner Syeda was a part. It showed Research identified the importance of compensating young people.

Commissioner Prasad commends the Education Committee for this vital work and proposal.

Chair Hyun thanks Commissioner Bharath, Intern Lily, Executive Director Padamsee Forbes, Program Director Jay, Western Mass Coordinator Kama, and Marketing and Communications Coordinator Sheila for their leadership and hard work on this project. He noted that this initiative is what the Commission should focus on to serve our community.

**Education Sub-Committee
Youth Leadership**



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Commissioner Solar's informed the commissioners that the YLS would be held virtually on Nov 6. Commissioners are welcome to reach out to Commissioner Solar to be involved.

Government, Finance, Communications

Chair Hyun noted he would convene a subcommittee meeting to discuss the FY22 budget.

Government Relations, Advocacy, Civil Rights

Commissioner Kim wants to convene the Govt affairs committee. The purpose of the meeting is to talk about opportunities to advocate that some of the federal relief funds are used to support the AAPI community directly. The AAPIC has a unique opportunity to advocate for these funds to support the AAPI community.

Health and Human Services: No new updates.

Small Business and Economic Development: No new updates.

Commissioner Bharath asked whether a Vote was needed to endorse the formation of the youth council. The chair agreed to have the Youth Council proposal on the agenda of the next meeting and take a vote.

5. Ideas for AAC Commissioner/staff informal gathering

(Dinner AUG 26 THU 5 - 8 pm)\

Chair Hyun states that Aug 26 has been identified as a possible date for an informal social gathering. He cites the many challenges that we have all been facing amidst the pandemic and the past year. He states the importance of building personal relationships with each other. Ensure that the location will be equitable for all commissioners.

Commissioner Chiemruom asks about the time of the gathering. Chair Hyun and Executive Director state that the proposed time is 5:00–8:00 pm and encouraged Commissioners to hold the date on their calendars. Executive Director states that the timing of the gathering is also a thank you for Interns Lily and Sarah, who will be finishing up their positions with the AAPIC.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

8. Next Commission Meeting: Sept 21, 2021

9. Other community updates & meeting adjourned.

Sam invites Commissioners and staff to share any community updates. None were raised. Further discussions were held on the minority seats and the approval



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process.

Commissioner Megha makes a motion to end - Commissioner Kim seconds.

Ayes: Commissioner Danielle Kim, Commissioner Meena Bharath, Commissioner Ekta Saksena, Commissioner Bora Chiemruom, Commissioner Haniya Syeda, Commissioner Pralhad KC, Commissioner Vira Douangmany Cage, Commissioner Philjay Solar, Commissioner Mary Lee, Commissioner Megha Prasad, Commissioner Betty King, Commissioner Nate Bae Kupel, Chair Sam Hyun.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:05 pm.