

**Final**  
**Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**

June 10, 2016, 1:15 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Chaldean Community Foundation, 4171 15 Mile Rd., Sterling Heights, MI 48310

**Attendance**

**Present:** Asim Alavi, Nasim Ansari, Connie Dang, Willie Dechavez, Lisa Gray, Jamie Hsu, Roland Hwang, Soraya Kim, Jin-Kyu Koh, Anand Kumar, Grace Lee, Guozhen Lu, Toshiki Masaki, Ryan Rosario, Jeffrey Vang and Tsu-Yin Wu

**Ex-officio and Guests:** Bing Goei, Director of MONA, Muhith Musabbir, MAPAAC Fellow, Kevin Ray, Communication -LARA, Nancy Short, Commissions Liaison – LARA, and Frank Waters, Director of Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs-LARA

**Staff:** Denise Yee Grim, Outreach Coordinator

**Unable to attend:** Scott T. Ayotte, David Long, Mahima Mahadevan, Kaushik Nag and Joe Tasma

**I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Jamie Hsu called the regular meeting of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission to order at 1:18 p.m. on June 10, 2016.

Jamie thanked Martin Manna, President of the Chaldean Community Foundation, for hosting the meeting and lunch for the commission. He welcomed our guests from LARA, Frank Waters, Director of Office and Policy and Legislative Affairs, Nancy Short, Commissions Liaison and Kevin Ray of Communications. Jamie also welcomed Muhith Musabbir, MAPAAC's Fellow.

Jamie acknowledged Roland Hwang for receiving the Champion of Justice award, Tsu-Yin Wu for receiving the US 2015 faculty award and Willie Dechavez for being selected as the community consultant for the Detroit Institute of Art's Asian Reinstallation Project.

Guozhen Lu submitted his resignation and is moving to Connecticut. Jamie presented recognition award for his service to MAPAAC.

**II. Presentation by Frank Waters, Director of LARA Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs (OPLA):**

Frank Waters presented a legislative overview PowerPoint presentation on the topics of the legislative process; general information and legislation of interest, OPLA and the partnership with the commissions. Following the presentation, there was a question and answer session. Frank encouraged the commission to connect the OPLA office staff to work through concerns on legislation bills. He also encouraged the commission to inform him on any bill that is a major concern to the APA community.

Jamie commented that SIG 1 should work with Frank's team to work out the legislative process and to address any bills that would affect the APA community.

**III. Approval of March 11, 2016 Meeting Minutes:**

Toshiki Masaki, Secretary, submitted the March 11, 2016 meeting minutes for approval. Willie Dechavez motioned to approve the meeting minutes and Ryan Rosario seconded. Motion passed.

**IV. Discussion on MAPAAC's Operating Principles and Priorities:**

Jamie commented that MAPAAC's operating principles. Whenever possible, we should support and work with the existing organizations and programs, so the community does not perceive that MAPAAC is duplicating their existing programs.

In regards to MAPAAC's engagement in legislative process, Jamie recommended the following degrees of engagement, depending on the Commission's interest level:

1. MAPAAC would work with legislator(s) in preparing a bill (on issues that are of particular importance to the APA community such as Korematsu Day bill)
2. MAPAAC would state its position on the bill (on its entirety or specific section(s))
3. MAPAAC would comment on the bill (on its entirety or specific section(s)). Commenting means expressing an opinion without taking a specific position.
4. MAPAAC would disseminate the information regarding the bill after the bill is passed, regardless of engagement prior to the passage (taking position, commenting, etc.)

At the next (September) Commission meeting, SIG1 will propose a process and requisite information for evaluating/ deciding on MAPAAC's engagement in a legislative process for a particular bill. Toshiki Masaki commented that one of the key information needed is a third party analysis of proposed bill language. (Such analysis will include: what the current law does, what the proposed bill is intended to change, pros and cons of the intended change, etc.) Frank Waters and OPLA Office will be a key resource for this but Frank remind everyone that his office will prioritize such analysis based on the likelihood that the bill will be considered.

Jamie reminded the commissioners that MAPAAC commission meetings must follow the Robert's Rules of Order. The Rules included: Focus on the agenda items at the meetings and other topics of business will be addressed in the new business section of the agenda. Commissioners must raise their hands to be recognized by the Chair to speak and to address a topic at the meetings. The agenda items is to be as informational, a discussion or to be voted on a decision.

With collaboration of other commissions, Jamie commented that MAPAAC will work together on common issues and have an open communication with them to learn from each other. We will continue to move forward in our initiatives as individual commissions.

Denise will email the Web sites of the commissioners to have access to their commission meeting minutes.

## **V. SIG's Initiatives Report and Recommendations**

**SIG 1:** Toshiki Masaki reported on behalf of Mahima Mahadevan, leader of SIG 1. He shared that SIG 1 provided an executive summary of the key findings and recommendations to address the issues from SIG 2's community town hall meetings and survey. The summary was distributed at the APA Heritage & Legislative Day networking lunch on May 10th. Next step is to continue working with SIG 2 on their open house forum to get additional information and prioritize them. The summary is available on MAPAAC's Web site. In addition, SIG 1 will work on the process with Frank Waters on legislative issues.

Jamie shared on a conversation with Bing Goei and LARA's new director, Shelly Edgerton, on an idea of having a formal interactions with the APA organizations leaders, APA legislative caucus and state agencies. Possibly an annual forum to discuss issues of the APA communities and this will provide access for the APA community leaders to the state agencies and legislators. The executive committee is considering this idea and to examine if we may be able to work on this in the future.

**SIG 2:** Tsu-Yin Wu, leader of SIG 2, shared the table of content of the tool kit to the commissioners and asked for feedback. Denise and Muhith will finalize the tool kit that provides resources to address the top issues. The draft will then be submitted to LARA communication for final approval. It will be posted on MAPAAC's web site and distributed to the APA community leaders. Also, SIG 2

is working on creating an open house forum to provide information back to the communities. The forum format is an information session then a round table discussions for the attendees to interact with state department representatives to address their concerns.

The toolkit will be shared with the APA community leaders to use as a reference guide and they have an option to translate the information into their languages. MAPAAC will ask the community leaders to attend the open house forum and to provide translators to support the state department representatives during the program and round table discussions.

Jamie shared his thoughts and concerns of the timing in getting back with the communities to share the top 10 issues in which we are addressing. We will provide a toolkit that may answer some of their concerns and it is to use as a personal reference guide. The toolkit is a living document and should be used as a reference guild. It should be an electronic format and be available through MAPAAC's Web site.

Jamie's concern that it has a long time since MAPAAC interacted with the APA community and SIG 2 should respond back to the community very soon and not wait for the tool kit to be completed.

Jamie hopes that LARA would look at the tool kit and come up with a Q & A communication from MAPAAC/LARA rather than relying on the tool kit. The Q & A would be easier for the community to receive answers quickly and it could be translated into their ethnic language.

Jamie requested from LARA for a one pager explaining what each state department can do for the APA communities and then have a Q & A section (FAQ) on the Web site for people to go to. Nancy commented that LARA would help in supporting MAPAAC initiatives.

**SIG 3:** Roland Hwang, leader of SIG 3, gave a recap of the anti-bullying and building self-esteem forum at the King Elementary School in Ann Arbor. Kaushik Nag has secured a forum in Grand Rapids on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1-3 pm at the Kent ISD auditorium and they are seeking assistance form Spectrum Health for a psycho-therapist to be a speaker for the program.

There are plans to continue the Korematsu presentation in 2017: January 27, 2017 at Fordson High School in Dearborn and January 30<sup>th</sup> at the Canton High School. There is a potential event at Western Michigan University.

Connie Dang informed the commission that she met with Curtis Chin, producer of the movie *Vincent Who*, and invited Mr. Chin to Grand Valley State University (GVSU) to facilitate two events – to commemorate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vincent Chin and to show his new film, *Tested*, during the second week of January 2017. She asked if SIG 3 would like to collaborate in the showing of the movie, *Tested*.

With respect to the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vincent Chin in Southeast Michigan, Roland is in discussion with SIG 3 about the anniversary activities on June 24, 2017, the day after the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Vincent Chin with ACJ and ACA. The commission supports the plan.

In regards to the showing of the movie, *Tested*, Jamie suggested for MONA to discuss this opportunity for all three ethnic commissions to collaborate of the showing of the movie at GVSU.

Jamie commented that SIG 3 has done a lot of activities surrounding Korematsu and anti-bullying forums. He purposed a question to SIG 3 to consider tying these activities in one big umbrella with a common theme in 2017. The theme can be equal rights, fair participation or anti-discrimination.

**SIG 4:** Soraya Kim reported on behalf of Joe Tasma, leader of SIG 4. She gave a recap of the APA Heritage and Legislative Day on May 10<sup>th</sup> at the State Capitol and networking luncheon. Our keynote speaker was Frank Wu.

Denise will contact APIA-Vote-Michigan to ask if they would like to co-sponsor with MAPAAC in 2017 and lock in the date for the event in May.

In regards to the MAPAAC recognition & appreciation dinner there was a conflicting of dates with September 21<sup>st</sup> with one of our strategic partners and asked the commissioners their opinion on moving the event to September 14<sup>th</sup>. In regards to nominations for the champion awards, we gave the first opportunity for the commissioners to nominate for the champion awards and only received six nominations. Jamie encouraged the commissioners to take a serious consideration of nominating people from their community.

In conclusion, MAPAAC will proceed with the event on September 14<sup>th</sup>. SIG 4 needs to consider if and how we should do the event next year and SIG 4 will meet on June 25<sup>th</sup> to determine the details of the September 14<sup>th</sup> event that may include some form of recognition, networking and discussion forum and celebration.

#### **VI. Budget Update:**

Ryan Rosario, Trustee, gave a budget report. The total expenditure as of May 31, 2016 was \$42,847.20, which leaves a balance of \$68,052.80. He encouraged the SIGs to send in their requests for funding of their initiatives to the executive committee with the next few months. The end of our 2016 fiscal year is September 30<sup>th</sup>. Ryan reminded the commissioners that we can sponsor events as partner, but we cannot be the sole sponsor of events.

There was a question on the state of Michigan allowance for dinner meal per person at a MAPAAC event. Denise will check with Al Pohl on the maximum allowance for future events.

Denise informed the commission that the executive committee has approved a \$2,000. sponsorship request from National Association of Asian American Professionals – Detroit Chapter for their initial networking event and announcement of their chapter in September. The commissioners will receive complimentary tickets to the event.

#### **VII. Administrative Update**

Nancy Short, Commissions Liaison, shared the LARA commissioner's handbook and explained the content. MAPAAC's new business cards were handed out and the revised MAPAAC's brochures. If any of the commissioners who was assigned a state of Michigan email address, they should call Nancy to setup their email. She extended her services to the commissioners for any of their needs.

Denise will follow up with Nancy to send out the commissioner's handbook electronically to the commissioners.

Denise will compile the commissioner's email addresses as a group and email the commissioners.

Denise announced that MAPAAC has a cell phone number and a new email address which became in effect as of June 11<sup>th</sup>. All email message content are the property of the state of Michigan.

Jamie asked the commissioners to encourage any persons they felt who would be a good candidate to be on the commission and to apply. The governor's appointment office looks at the geographic location of the person, age group and ethnicity of the candidates. The person needs to apply online directly.

### **VIII. Discussion on potential event in Kalamazoo and next commission meeting**

The decision was made that the next commission meeting will be on Saturday, 10, 2016, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, with an option for the commissioners to have an overnight stay at a hotel and to attend the Friday evening gathering, which Nasim will coordinate and host, to meet the community leaders in Kalamazoo.

### **IX. New Business:**

a. Joint Legislative/Advocacy Committee: Bing Goei shared that the chairs of the three commissions agreed to appoint three of their members of the commission to serve on the joint legislative advocacy committee. The committee will focus on public policy issues and looking at bills that may impact immigrants. The numbers of meetings will be limited on what going on the legislation. The committee will get together in person or by phone to get their opinions on any legislation that may be coming up that may have an impact on our immigrant communities.

The four commissioners to serve on the joint legislative advocacy committee are: Toshiki Masaki, Mahima Mahadevan and Anand Kumar.

b. Bing reviewed the hand out of the Global Michigan, Ethnic Cabinet meeting and Global Detroit and explained the function of each group. Jamie asked for volunteers who would be interested in attending the MONA meetings to represent MAPAAC, if Jamie and/or Denise are unable to attend.

Global Michigan meeting are three times a year: Asim Alavi will attend on behalf of MAPAAC.

Ethnic cabinet meeting meets quarterly: Ryan Rosario and Lisa Gray will attend on behalf of MAPAAC.

MONA will send the meeting invitations to Denise and Denise will email it to appropriate commissioners to RSVP.

**Ethnic commissions networking event in September 2017:** The commission meeting will be in the afternoon and the networking event will be in the evening in southeast Michigan. The executive committee will determine the one of the suggested dates: September 11, 12, 13 or 14th.

### **X. Public Comments:**

Anand Kumar shared the May 22<sup>nd</sup> Indian community event where they honored 31 talented Indian children. He has copies of the video available.

He also shared a pattern of child abuse in the Asian communities, which there is a disparity of understanding the cultural differences with fostering children of their own race and possible discrimination in the foster care system.

### **XI. Announcements – None**

### **XII. Adjournment:**

A motion from Willie Dechavez and seconded by Ryan Rosario. Motion passed.

The meeting concluded at 4:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Denise Yee Grim, June 27, 2016

Minutes submitted by

---

Toshiki Masaki, Secretary