Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2013, 9:00 a.m. – noon.
International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit
111 E. Kirby, Detroit, MI 48202

Attendance

Present: Asim Alavi, Nasim Ansari, Connie Dang, Willie Dechavez, Mumtaz Haque, Jamie Hsu, Soraya Kim, Toshiki Masaki, Henry Tanaka, Ehsan Taqbeen, Jeffery Vang, Ramesh Verma, Sook Wilkinson, Peter Wong, Tsu-Yin Wu.

Attended over Phone: Jeffrey Vang

Excused Absence: Guozhen Lu, Anand Kumar, Mamatha Chamarthi

Absent: Hannah Feikema

Guests: Denise Yee Grim, Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood, Japan Consul General Kazuyuki Katayama, Mary McLellan, MDCR Director Matthew Wesaw

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Jamie Hsu called the regular meeting of Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission to order at 9:15 a.m. on December 6, 2013.

II. Welcome and Introductions

All of the commissioners gave self-introductions. New commissioner Soraya Kim was introduced. Ms. Kim is an attorney in mergers and acquisitions. The other new commissioner Ryan Rosario, president of FILAMCCO was not present.

III. MDCR Welcome and Introduction – Director Matthew Wesaw

Director Matthew Wesaw introduced himself to the Commission. He spoke about equal access for all people. He will try to attend all Commission meetings. He will pull in other people for strategic planning.

IV. Introduction of Honorable Guest – Consul General of Japan, Dr. Katayama

Consul General Kazuyuki Katayama introduced himself. His office covers Michigan and Ohio. He has been assigned to People’s Republic of China, Malaysia, Belgium. He stated there are 12,000 Japanese in Michigan, and 480 Japanese companies are located here, translating to 35,000 jobs. The office handles economic exchanges, cultural events, education.
V. **Introduction of Public Observer, Denise Yee Grim**
Denise Yee Grim was introduced. She has been executive director of Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce.

VI. **Approval of September 6, 2013 Minutes**
Willie Dechavez moved to approve the minutes. Nasim Ansari seconded. Motion passed.

VII. **Chair’s Comments**
Chair Jamie Hsu reported that he has visited 6 or 7 organizations since becoming chair. He reported the Commission now has a second banner. He stated that whenever the Commission sponsors or co-sponsors and event, use the banner. He reported on Council of Asian Pacific American’s Leadership Summit, co-sponsored by MAPAAC. It was a successful summit.

Willie Dechavez gave a report on FILAMCCO Foundation’s fundraising for Typhoon Haiyan victims. The foundation has raised $60,000, and prepared 80 boxes for shipment.

Henry Tanaka asked about a list of organizations with their respective missions. Connie Dang responded by directing to the White House Asian American Pacific Islander (WHAAPI) list of organizations.

Mary McLellan circulated a commissioner roster for updating.

VIII. **Strategic Initiative Groups (SIGs) Discussions and Reports**
   a. **SIG I: Asim Alavi - Bullying and cultural insensitivity**
      MAPAAC SIG I is cooperating with the Race Equity Initiative (REI). REI is making progress in implementation of anti-bullying programs in Troy and Hamtramck. There are two coordinators hired by REI funded by Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum - APIAHF. REI met with Troy’s consultant Jay Marks on December 2. Marks runs a social justice program. Sook Wilkinson mentioned that she is newly elected to the APIAHF board. APIAHF works to influence health policy.

      MAPAAC Chair Jamie Hsu talked about citizen complaint letters that complain about discrimination and cultural insensitivity. An example was copied to the MDCR. Director Wesaw mentioned that there is a 9 day response time at MDCR. There should be a response back to close the loop.
Ehsan Taqbeem spoke about an absentee ballot case whereby an individual was charged with having 14 absentee ballots without his having authorization as part of a family. He indicated the Secretary of State is pursuing 10 individuals, 4 of whom are in Hamtramck.

b. SIG II: Tsu-Yin - APA Community and Advocacy
   i. Tsu-Yin Wu: Primary focus - Health, Immigration and Education, connecting model groups with immigrant groups.
      1. Affordable Care Act presentations – There have been several presentations: to the Association of Chinese Americans, Bangladesh community with Bangladeshi American Public Affairs Committee., Burma Center in Battle Creek, and two to the Vietnamese American community.
      2. The next presentation is to the Filipino community on December 7 from 11 am to 2 pm at Philippine American Community Center of Michigan.
      3. Mumtaz Haque stated that the International Institute helps immigrants with ESL, and immigration matters.
      4. Ehsan Taqbeem stated that Aziz Khander is a certified ACA navigator through ACCESS.

c. SIG III: Henry Tanaka - Equal Access
   i. Continuation of data collection regarding college entrance/admissions within major Michigan universities and their acceptance/cap of Asian American students for each year.
      1. The colleges have been sending the data to the SIG III by commission request.
      2. SIG III is working on a database for information. No trends are emerging that are problematic.
   ii. Met with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding discrimination impacting the APA community in the work place and housing. Not sure how to proceed with voluminous available data. Should the commission hire someone?
   iii. Wrote to Michigan College Access Network (MICAN) - to advocate/illustrate disparities of APA college students, colleges have responded with statistics regarding the Asian American community. Rates for college admissions vary widely – 18% for Hmong and Bangladeshi communities vs. 77% among East Asian American populations.

Miscellany: Tack Young Kim or Anand Kumar of the media committee should get involved.
Jamie Hsu suggested that help should come from community outreach for employers on how to hire, and to students on how to be hired.

Sook Wilkinson will work with Mary McLellan and Matthew Wesaw on which Departments to focus on as critical departments for speakers and input.

Henry Tanaka stated that the Commission needs more people to work on economic development councils and initiatives.

Roland Hwang stated that the Commission should broaden its call for volunteers to cover many statewide and county level boards and commissions, for example the various foster care advisory boards around the state.

Connie Dang stated we should develop our liaisons with MEDC and Global Detroit.

IX. Discussion – Annual Strategic Planning Retreat
Sook Wilkinson suggested that a committee be formed for the retreat. The following dates were suggested: January 10, January 17, January 24, 2014. Roland Hwang moved to choose January 17 as the retreat date. There was discussion about which day of the week is best. **Friday January 24** was chosen on an 8 to 5 advisory vote. **January 31 is a snow backup date.** The Friday day of the week chosen is for only the strategic planning session.

The Executive Committee will work on the meeting calendar for 2014.

X. Election of the 2014 Executive Board
Ramesh Verma announced a slate – Connie Dang vice chair; Asim Alavi secretary; Tsu-Yin Wu trustee.

The slate passed by consensus.

XI. Old Business – Budget Update
Mary McLellan reported that MAPAAC has spent about ½ of its $100,000 budget; about $15,000 was to salary. The 2013-14 appropriation is $103,800. MAPAAC will need a budget.
Jamie Hsu reported that Mitch Diep resigned as coordinator for health and personal reasons. MAPAAC will be reposting the position. Interviews should be held in December or January. Connie Dang will work with Mary McLellan on the job description and posting process.

Jamie Hsu appointed Peter Wong to work with the Executive Committee on a budget.

XII. New Business
Toshiki Masaki reported on the Saturday Japanese school. The school outreaches about once per year.

XIII. Public Comments
None.

XIV. Announcements
Business card requests should go to Mary McLellan.

Ramesh Verma suggested MAPAAC do more for retiring commissioners. A resolution of thanks from the Legislature is one possibility. Director Wesaw noted that the Civil Rights Commission gives a gavel and a resolution.

Tack Young Kim and Dr. Ernestine Mac are retiring from MAPAAC, but no definitive word from the Appointments Office.

XV. Adjournment
Peter Wong moved to adjourn. Sook Wilkinson seconded. Motion passed. Adjourned at 12:22 pm.

Transcribed by:

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Roland Hwang
Secretary

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Jamie Hsu
Chair