



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
LANSING

SUSAN CORBIN
DIRECTOR

Commission Meeting Minutes
Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission
April 25 2025 3:00PM – 5:00PM
Rochester City Hall
1000 Rochester Hills Dr, Rochester Hills, MI 48309

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

Vice Chair Rebeka Islam
Secretary Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish, Ph.D.
Snehasis Ganguly
Laurel Capobianco
Ronny Chiang
Sharon Dow
Aimee Jachym

Sumaiya Ahmed Sheikh
Anu Gopalakrishan
Peggy Du
Hoa Dinh Thai
Caroline Polly
Anterjot Singh Bains
Annum Ghayas

Officials and Staff: Deputy Director Ben Cabanaw, Administrator Samantha Loo

Absent: Chair Ayesha Ghazi Edwin

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Secretary Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish, Ph.D. at 3:15 PM ET, roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

New Commissioners Introduced:

Aimee Jachym, attorney from Miller Johnson's Corporate and Mergers & Acquisition practice representing businesses in commercial transactions, mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, and compliance matters.

Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Agenda approval

- Motion made and seconded to approve the agenda
- Unanimously approved.

Minutes' Approval

- Minutes from Jan 30th, 2025 meeting were electronically distributed.
- No corrections; approved unanimously.

Motion made by Secretary Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish Ph.D and Seconded by Vice Chair Rebeka Islam the Commissioners approved the updates. *Motion carries.*

UPDATES:

THE OFFICE OF GLOBAL MICHIGAN

Deputy Director Ben Cabanaw provided the following information:

1. **Language Access Website Launched**
 - Visit: michigan.gov/LanguageAccess
 - Central hub for language access complaints, guidance, and contacts.
2. **Policy Monitoring**
 - OGM tracks immigration-related policies.
 - Commissioners invited to biweekly policy briefings.
3. **Upcoming ECBO Funding**
 - New RFP coming soon; prior recipients not eligible.
 - Details to be shared by OGM.
4. **Digital Literacy & ESOL Expansion**
 - Focus on employer partnerships and on-the-job training.
 - Referrals welcomed.
5. **Workforce Development**
 - Engaging employers/universities; offering technical assistance.
6. **Employer Seminar**
 - Materials available on hiring immigrant talent—contact Roger Tijerina.
7. **Afghan Initiative – Phase II**
 - Training begins April 28 in Grand Rapids with Boston College.
8. **All Commissions Convening – July 23–24**
 - Day 1: Relationship building and panels.
 - Day 2: Breakout sessions on education, health, safety, and economic growth.
9. **Immigrant Heritage Month Events**
 - *Talent Show*: June 21, Lansing – Prizes up to \$500.
 - *Storytelling Night*: June 28, Detroit – Cultural sharing event.
 - Event details coming soon.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Treasurer Annum Ghayas, provided the financial update for current spending for FY25 to date. MAPAAC's annual budget is \$223,600, which includes the Administrator's salary, benefits, allocations for LEO, telecommunications, information technology, travel, office expenditures, contracts, and fiscal sponsorships.

Budget Overview

- Initial FY Budget: \$223,600.
- Additional funding: \$50,000 from the Office of Global Michigan.
- Total FY budget: \$273,600

Expenditures & Current Financial Status

- A detailed breakdown of current expenditure (sponsorships and other key expenses) is included in the meeting packet.
- No additional sponsorships are being considered at this time Total FY budget: \$273,600
- Estimated remaining funds: \$40,000

Remaining Funds – Allocations

The remaining budget is earmarked for:

- Collaboration with APIA Vote MI for Advocacy Day 2025
- Annual Leaders Appreciation Event
- Meeting and travel expenses related to ongoing MAPAAC initiatives for the rest of the year

Future Considerations

- Reassessment of fund allocation may occur later in the year
- If funds remain unused, options such as reopening sponsorships or reinvesting in community initiatives will be evaluated.

Sponsorship Opportunity Update

- All applicants not awarded MAPAAC sponsorships this year have been encouraged to apply for the Michigan Immigrant and Refugee Council's sponsorship
- Application deadline: April 30th

MAPAAC Administrator Update:

Community Engagement & Outreach

- Supported over three major Lunar New Year events in Detroit.
- Partnered with Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce for programming.
- Hosted three listening sessions (SE Michigan, Battle Creek); Grand Rapids upcoming.

Partnership Development

- Collaborated with MSU and U-M student associations on civic/youth engagement.
- Sponsored East Meets West business networking event to support AAPI entrepreneurs.

Internal Updates

- Welcomed two new commissioners.
- Exploring a website update to enhance community resources within LEO guidelines.

Legislative Engagement

- Participated in April 16 APA Caucus meeting.
- Key topics: Alien Land Law (HB 4233/4234) and AAPI history curriculum legislation.

Closing & Q2 Priorities

- Strong start to the year; continued focus on equity and community support.
- Upcoming: MAPAAC Signature Event planning (May & September) and expanding West Michigan partnerships.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE GROUPS

Operations (SIG2) leader Anu Gopalakrishnan presented the first quarterly report:

- **Locations:** Canton, Battle Creek, Southfield.
- **Findings:**
 - **Communication Barriers:** Difficulty in accessing language services.
 - **Cultural Preservation:** Intergenerational gaps and challenges in passing down heritage stories.
 - **Healthcare Navigation:** Limited understanding of Medicare/Medicaid, discrimination in healthcare settings.
 - **Resource Distribution:** Need for equitable resources, culturally appropriate housing, and workplace translation services.

OLD BUSINESS:

Re-Cap

Vietnamese Student Conference – Commissioner Dinh
 American Chinese Association LNY – Commissioner Du

International Women's Day Event – Commissioner Dow
AAPI Mixer in Marquette – Commissioner Capobianco
Macomb Commissioner Open House – Vice Chair Islam
Song Kran – Secretary McKeithen-Polish PhD
Hmong National Development Conference – Commissioner Polly

Motion made by Secretary Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish and Seconded by Vice Chair Rebeka Islam
the Commissioners approved the updates. *Motion carries.*

NEW BUSINESS:

- Approval of Executive Committee Slate
 - Outcome: Approved unanimously without contest.

Guest Presentation

Legislative Update

- **Presenter:** Casey Adams (Legislative Director for Representative Xiong)
 - **Representative Song:**
 - **Bills Introduced:**
 - **Textbook Tax Credit:** Refundable tax credit for low-income Pell Grant-eligible students.
 - **Safe Youth Sports Act:** Statewide standards for youth sports leagues, including training and background checks.
 - **Payroll Fraud Reporting (HB 4321):** Facilitate anonymous reporting of payroll fraud.
 - **House Bills 4233 and 4234:** Anti-Asian land laws targeting seven countries under national security pretexts.
 - **Advocacy:**
 - **Veterans Resource Fair:** May 12.
 - **Coffee Hours:** Occasional meetings for outreach and support.
 - **Support Needed:**
 - Promote Veterans Resource Fair.
 - Boost awareness of Representative Song's initiatives.
 - **Presenter:** Dr. Tsu-Yin Wu and Dr. Xi Ning Yang
 - **Topic:** Firearm Violence in Asian American Communities.
 - Study Highlights:
Methodology: Photovoice and GIS mapping to identify risk and protective factors
Findings:
 - Risk factors: Mental health issues, lack of safe firearm storage, community violence, discrimination.
 - Protective factors: Education on gun safety, healthcare resources, community understanding.
 - Current Status: Funding terminated but efforts to continue research and advocacy.
 - **Upcoming Events:**
 - Exhibit: Farmington Library, May 3 -31

- Reception: May 22nd

Motion made by Secretary Dr.Suchiraphon Seconded by Commissioner Aimee Jachym, the Commissioners approved the updates. *Motion Carries*

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: Aug 22, Miller Johnson Firm, Detroit

Samantha Loo
MAPAAC Administrator

Ayesha Ghazi-Edwin
MAPAAC Chair