



Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission
Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
March 5, 2021, 4:00 pm - 5:50 pm

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The regular meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Ayesha Ghazi Edwin of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission at 4:05 PM on March 5, 2021. The Chair and Coordinator informed attendees that the meeting was being recorded.

Present:

Commissioner, Chair Ayesha Ghazi Edwin - Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Grace Lee - Bloomfield Hills, Oakland County
Commissioner Chandragupta Acharya - Canton, Wayne County
Commissioner Joseph Tasma - Livonia, Oakland County
Commissioner Roland Sintos Coloma - Detroit, Wayne County
Commissioner Sharon Dow - Rochester Hills, Oakland County
Commissioner David Han - Plymouth, Wayne County
Commissioner Amina Iqbal - Canton, Wayne County
Commissioner Leena Mangrulkar - Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County
Commissioner Mike McAskill - Pinckney, Livingston County
Commissioner Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish - Sterling Heights, Macomb County
Commissioner Laura Misumi - Hamtramck, Wayne County
Commissioner Jenny Mualhlun - Battle Creek, Calhoun County
Commissioner Kumar Palepu - Grosse Pointe, Wayne County
Commissioner Ryan Rosario - Sterling Heights, Macomb County
Commissioner Aditya Sathi - Novi, Oakland County
Commissioner Soma Sekhar Suryadevara - Novi, Oakland County
Commissioner Angela Wang-Beasinger - Fenton, Oakland County

Absent:

Commissioner Mehruba Akhtar
Commissioner Hoa Dinh
Commissioner Reginald Pacis

Others: Administrative Coordinator Mai Xiong, Former Outreach Coordinator Denise Yee Grim, MAPAAC Alumni Kavy Lenon, Roland Hwang and Sook Wilkinson, State Senator Stephanie Chang and Legislative Aide Emily Nuygen, State Representative Ranjeev Puri, State Representative Padma Kuppa, Washtenaw County Commissioner Justin Hodge, Deputy Director of Michigan Department of Civil Rights Mary Engleman, The Honorable Judge Mark Slavens, Sherry Anderson (LEO), Marcy Hickman (DTMB), Executive Director of Office of Global Michigan Fayrouz Saad, Director of Office of Global Michigan Karen Phillippi, Leslie Stambaugh, Chair of Ann Arbor Michigan Department of Civil Rights

- After the roll call, Chair Ayesha Ghazi Edwin invited the Honorable Judge Mark Slavens to administer the Oath of Office for the new commissioners: **Laura Misumi, Roland Sintos Coloma, Mika McAskill, Jenny Mualhlun.** Judge Slavens thanked the commissioners for the honor of administering the oath.
- The Chairperson congratulated the new commissioners, each new commissioner introduced themselves and welcomed the former commissioners and dignitaries. The Chairperson also thanked Denise Yee Grim for her

many years of service and is retiring from the position of Outreach Coordinator and welcomed the new Administrative Coordinator, Mai Xiong.

- Denise thanked the new and retired commissioners and said everyone is doing great work, honored to be part of MAPAAC, wished everyone much success, in keeping the APA community abreast, educating the state and agency departments about the APA community
- Mai has been training with Denise for the past month and is very grateful for the opportunity to serve the APA community and work with MAPAAC. Mai is from the Hmong American community and she was also newly elected in November as Macomb County Commissioner and works in a part-time capacity with the County.
- Chairperson thanked the outgoing executive committee: Interim Chair Grace Lee, Secretary Chandru Acharya and Trustee Joe Tasma for their service and introduced the new executive committee, Vice-Chair Angela Wang Beasinger, Secretary David Han and Trustee Reggie Pacis.

2. Approval of December 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Chandru Acharya proposed a motion to approve the minutes of the last committee meeting from December 4, 2020.

- **Motioned by:** Chandru Acharya
- **Seconded by:** Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish
- **Motion Passed.** Vote Summary: 18 - 0 - 0
 - **Aye:** Ayesha Ghazi Edwin, Grace Lee, Chandragupta Acharya, Joseph Tasma, Roland Sintos Coloma, Sharon Dow, David Han, Amina Iqbal, Leena Mangrulkar, Mike McAskill, Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish, Laura Misumi, Jenny Mualhlun, Kumar Palepu, Ryan Rosario, Aditya Sathi, Soma Sekhar Suryadevara, Angela Wang-Beasinger
 - **Nay:** None
 - **Abstain:** None

3. Approval of Special Sponsorship Request Application

Commissioner Grace Lee shared the Special Sponsorship Request Application with the Commissioners. A special 1-year special sponsorship was structured by fellow Commissioners due to COVID-19. No comments or changes were requested at the meeting. A Leadership Forum is scheduled for March 17 with APA Leaders and organizations to discuss the Special Sponsorship Application. EC will approve application requests.

- **Motioned by:** Aditya Sathi
- **Seconded by:** Angela Wang-Beasinger
- **Motion Passed.** Vote Summary: 18 - 0 - 0
 - **Aye:** Ayesha Ghazi Edwin, Grace Lee, Chandragupta Acharya, Joseph Tasma, Roland Sintos Coloma, Sharon Dow, David Han, Amina Iqbal, Leena Mangrulkar, Mike McAskill, Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish, Laura Misumi, Jenny Mualhlun, Kumar Palepu, Ryan Rosario, Aditya Sathi, Soma Sekhar Suryadevara, Angela Wang-Beasinger
 - **Nay:** None
 - **Abstain:** None

4. Budget Update

- Commissioner Joe Tasma shared the 2021 budget report as of February 22, 2021 for the period October 1, 2020 - September 20, 2021. The allocated budget for Community Outreach and Sponsorships is set at \$50,000. Similar budgets for SIGs compared to last year.
- Mai made an announcement about the TEVs reimbursement forms but did not anticipate receiving any since we are not meeting in person

5. Office of Global Michigan Report

Fayrouz Saad, Director of Office of Global Michigan was present to give updates from OGM. Fayrouz thanked Denise for her work and has been in this role for over a year and is very sad to see her go but excited to work with Mai.

- She shared that the **Sixty by 30** program is a priority, discussing potential workforce development programs to ensure that the community has access to the feature
- Futures for Frontlines Program announced by Governor in Fall of 2020. The program is specifically for frontline workers as defined by the executive order required to work, tuition payment allows them to go to school and have their entire tuition covered

- There were 121,000 applications, 85,000 were accepted, 15,000 currently enrolled in the Sprint/Winter Semester
 - Demographic data of those enrolled:
 1. 1% are American Indian, Native American, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander
 2. 1% is Asian
 3. 26% Black or African American
 4. 5% Latino
 5. 59% Caucasian
 6. 4% no answer
- The Future for Frontlines program is no longer an option, but the **Reconnect** and **Sixty by 30** announced in February is for adults, ages 25 or over can return to college to get a post-secondary degree, tuition reimbursement program
 - OGM can work with MAPAAC to get the information out about **Sixty by 30** into the community and can provide language materials regarding this new program
- **Protect Michigan Commission**, was established by the state to coordinate COVID-19 vaccinations and distribution of information. Several working groups were created, including an APA working group chaired by Dr. S. Bobby Mukkamala, M.D. in Genesee County, inclusive of members of the communities who wish to be part of it
 - Working group is similar to the Commission, helps coordinate vaccination, information and response with the overall general community, listen, take feedback and learn what the challenges are in accessing information, signing up etc
 - If Commissioners are interested, they can email Fayrouz to participate or discuss further
 - An invite was sent to join an information session for Wednesday, March 10 for community leaders to attend
 - Fayrouz is trying to get the Governor to the next MAPAAC meeting. Ayesha and Denise have been instrumental in advocating for MAPAAC. She is hoping the next Commission meeting is when the Governor will attend to give an update on her budget and COVID-19
- **Comments**
 - Commissioner Mika McAskill says regarding the Reconnect program - they are very excited about it, she works with the Washtenaw Community College as the Vice President. In-district tuition is paid by the state, but there are plenty of community colleges that have online programming, even if you are in a different county, you can just pay the difference. There is additional CARES money where students can apply for the additional grant. Affordability in Michigan is accessible and attainable for the community

6. **James White, MDCR Executive Director & Mary Engleman, Deputy Director**

Regarding a joint statement from MAPAAC and MDCR on the rise of hate crimes against AAPIs, Jame White was unable to attend. Mary Engleman, Deputy Director was in attendance in his place. Mary is half Asian and spent half of her life in Korea. Regarding the recent events happening, she states that it has been atrocious and unacceptable. SHE also believes incidents in Michigan - Feb 17, issued a strong statement calling out an alarming wave of bias incidents and hate crimes against Asian Americans. Check michigan.gov/mdcr "Latest News" She along with the Commission and Director have been working on this statement. Incidences that have happened in Michigan, numbers are on the rise but numbers are still low. Public Accommodations in 2018, person going into public/restaurant/store, In 2020-2021, there were 5 complaints. What is disturbing, numbers are in single digits, very involved in the Asian community, knowing what MAPAAC does, the Asian community is not speaking out as much as they can, believe it's a trust issue, they want to build a trust, looking forward to partnering with MAPAAC, community engagement, uses resources, regarding Denise Grim, and with her support and complete dedication, they were able to create Know Your Rights Flyers, in Bengali,, Hmong, Thai, Burmese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese. MDCR wants to continue partnering to let people know if they are being discriminated against that it is not ok and in Michigan it is illegal, criminal offenses will be referred to AG. Elliot Civil Rights Act, to get the message to the Asian Community. Over 250,000 Asians in the state.

- **Comments**
 - Commissioner David Han mentioned that David spoke that may be the tip of the iceberg if not addressed it could get a lot worst, that Asians are Americans, and asked if the State could create an Inclusion Campaign that puts Asian American in the positive light, because there is very little coverage in the media, proactively communicate how valuable and contributing Asian Americans are.
 - Commissioner Ryan Rosario: As a Commissioner, as community leaders it's our job to let our community know and relay it back to the MDCR or to come to you, we can't change society the way it

is, there are too many issues, increase the # of complaints through us, to get the word out about walking with numbers or safety.

- Senator Stephanie Chang (in chat box): My office is in touch with Stop AAPI Hate (the national group) and they have **received 16 reports from Michigan**. (This is the group that received 2800 reports nationwide from March to December.) They are working on an updated report for next week and will be sending me the Michigan numbers. Rep Puri and I are hoping to introduce resolutions condemning AAPI hate crimes in a couple weeks.
- Commissioner Mika McAskil (in chat box): We need to get the message about AAPI Hate up north. There are low numbers of APAs, but they are the ones that need to know this exists almost more so than us (who live in more densely populated areas). Speaking from experience!
- Rep. Padma Kuppa (in chat box): Our offices have also worked on the Lunar New Year with the Gov. and the Lunar New Year at the Pistons and have put it on social media, to ensure that such events are normalized. Here is the video of the hate crimes town hall from last year <https://fb.watch/42o5tPpZl8/> If you are a victim of a hate crime or have credible information about a hate crime, please contact the Department of Attorney General at 313-456-0200. https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82917_92147---,00.html
- Sook Wilkinson (in chat box): Thank you, Mary, for your comments. Your presence brings back the wonderful memory of working with the MDCR staff when MAPAAC was housed within MDCR under Gov. Granholm. It was a very positive experience and the staff provided solid support. Sook Wilkinson (Founding Chair of MAPAAC)
- Sook: What's the best way for an individual to report such a crime at MDCR?
- Grace Lee: was in a meeting earlier with many AAPI National Organizations. We are putting together a campaign #AAPIStrong.
- Chair Ayesha reminds that SIG 3 is organizing an Anti-Asian sentiment event and will be talking about it later in the meeting.

7. State of Michigan Email Address

- **Commissioners are now required to use Michigan emails**
- Sherry Anderson - IT Liaison for LEO State of Michigan, Commissioners will be getting Lightweight Accounts.
- Marcy Hickman - from DTMB, technology department.
 - In 2019, Governor Whitmer issued EO 2019-05, prohibits the use of Private email accounts to conduct state business. DTMB opened a path to give Email Accounts to boards and commission members so that they can conduct business using State resources.
 - Will benefit you greatly in your communication with each other, to collaborate the business of the state in one place; will have to juggle another email account. Each commission member has an email account with an michigan.gov extension, use the email to conduct business for the commission.
 - Email will have the account email address, temporary password and link to register account. Users will be asked to change your password and set multi-factor authentication configuration, recommended using cell phones to authenticate. Email accounts will be on a 90-day password life cycle, prompted to change pw every 90 days. Recommends going in before the 90-days to change the password so the account does not get locked. A full Microsoft 360 Account, Email, OneDrive (storing files), Create Teams Space, Sharepoint space to give more flexibility to collaborate, during the life cycle, ability to install locally Microsoft products on a local machine: Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
 - Put together a small guide to show users the functionality, if anyone has logging problem they can reach out to the administrative coordinator, Mai Xiong.
- Chair mentioned this would be great for protecting your data in case of FOIA requests
- Chair recognizes Sharon Dow for serving her 2nd term

8. SIG Report

- SIG 1 - Commissioner David Han report on APA Day at the Capitol, coleading with Commissioner Adi Sathi, the SIG focuses on public policy issues, communicating with the Governor and Legislature regarding policies and issues facing APAs, bringing awareness to the State, taking public policy and implementation from the State and communicating and helping the APA community learn how to benefit from the programs.
 - APA Day at the Capitol, virtual legislator visits, together with APIAVote has been helping to facilitate interaction with legislators. In the past, it was a face-to-face opportunity to meet with legislators at the State Capitol at the House and Senate, APA Caucus members and all those who have an interest in engaging with the APA community, opportunity to inform issues in the community and provide constructive information. Throughout the past year SIG 1 has interacted with both the House and Senate and their staff to develop an Asian American Engagement Coalition throughout Michigan to

interact, collect and understand the broad and deep issues that we face. A document was developed and shared with MAPAAC regarding the category of what the topics shared with legislators and how to get support in these areas:

1. Rising Hate/Discrimination especially during pandemic
 2. Continued language access for civic participation and healthcare services
 3. Cultural and Education Awareness K-12 and Adult Education
 4. Continuing Education, upskilling, talent retention
- Leadership Changes - Both David and Adi will be stepping down as co-leaders of SIG 1, David will be serving as the Secretary. Laura Misumi will be taking over as SIG 1 Leader. (1:08)
 - SIG 2 - Commissioner Angela Beasinger stated objects, solicit and listen to the concerns of the APIA, track notable issues raised at town halls, develop actions accordingly
 - Mika is the new SIG 2 Leader
 - March 17, SIG 2 is hosting an APA Leaders Forum. The objective is to learn about the APA organizations and what they are doing and to announce the one-time Special Sponsorship to provide support for the community due to the pandemic
 - Planning vaccination town halls along with Protect Michigan and had ongoing conversations with the Michigan Food Security Council to capture needs of the APA community
 - Angela would like to recognize the former commissioners, Kavy Lenon and Toshiki Masaki
 - Next SIG 2 meeting is next Friday, March 12 from 11-12pm and all commissioners are invited to participate in the SIG
 - SIG 3 - Commissioner Reggie was unable to join but Commissioner Kumar is providing an update
 - Regarding the Korematsu Recognition event, it was streamed to Dearborn schools and proclamation from the Governor was read
 - For SIG 3, in the chat box, Roland Hwang wrote: "to report that the Governor proclaimed January 30 Fred Korematsu Day, We co-sponsored with Dearborn Schools a presentation about the life of Fred Korematsu and Korematsu Day, and showed Korematsu Story - Civil Wrongs and Civil Rights. It was broadcast to all of the Dearborn high schools. MAPAAC co-sponsored with Michigan Asian Pacific American Law Students a panel with professors Michael Stineberg and Margo Schlanger, ACLU associate director Rana Elmir and former incarcerated Mary Kamdoi on January 29. The panel discussed the denial of due process and equal protection during WWII and drew analogies with the denial of due process for refugees and asylees in light of the Trump v Hawaii case and the anti-Muslim travel ban. See you on March 26 for the anti-Asian racism panel on March 26."
 - Planning a web seminar March 26 will be covering the Asian AMerican experience and historical aspects such as the Vincent Chin Case and addressing the ANti-Asian hate during pandemic. Confirmed speakers include Professor Melissa Borja, Roland Hwang, Sunita Doddamani from AG office, Lori Vinson MDCR
 - Not just educating ourselves but those around us so that they can report incidences of they see them
 - Addressing community policing when they come into contact with Asian Americans and reaching out to others across the state to find out their strategy when addressing needs in the AAPI community. Hoping to do an in-person seminar and looking forward to meeting everyone in the future.
 - SIG 4 - Sharon & Sue shared purpose of SIG 4 as recognizing and celebrate APA achievements
 - Discussed the planning APA Capitol Day on Tuesday, May 11 for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month to celebrate the achievements of the community in Michigan, the annual APA Day is one of the primary task during the year with SIG 1 and APIA Vote, traditionally to host the event at the capitol but will be held via Zoom this year
 - The event is two parts with performances and keynote speakers, followed by a discussion with legislators. So far there are 3-4 performances confirmed
 - Chair ayesha shared that commissioners can move to/from another SIG if they want to or they can participate in any meeting and Mai will email new SIG list by Tuesday

9. Administrative Update

- MAPAAC Brochure - Commissioners should review the new brochure and let Mai know if there are any errors
- Commissioner's Business Cards - The Michigan.gov email will be added to the business cards. Commissioners who want to include a different number on their business cards can email it to Mai otherwise the public 517 MAPAAC number will be used

10. Next Commission Meetings

- The next virtual meeting date is Friday, June 11, from 4-6pm

- Followed by the meeting on September 18, 9am-11am, tentatively planned in West Michigan, followed by lunch. Chair Ayesha stated that MAPAAC is overdue for a Strategic Planning session. Looking for consultants to help do a Strategic Planning Meeting after lunch; to help talk about what are the goals, meeting the goals and what we would like to achieve in the future
- The last meeting of the year will be on December 10 from 4-6pm.

11. New Business

- Commissioner Sharon shared that there will be an DIA APA Heritage virtual event that she is helping to organize, they will also be contributing a performance for APA Day event.

12. Public Comments

- Leslie Stambaugh, Chair of Ann Arbor Michigan Department of Civil Rights - appreciates being invited to join the meeting today. Ann Arbor has a large Asian population and they appreciate it. She is concerned about issues raised today, the Commission takes complaints of harassment or hate issues and they are concerned about lack of reporting of crimes and situations by Asian Americans. She said she would be available if anyone wants to contact her for more information
- Justin Hodge, Washtenaw County Commissioner, District 5, supportive of the commission, here to help commissioners, to provide awareness and response to discrimination and violence in the APIA community, a social worker, at the U of M, professionally, provided contact information to Chair and asked commissioners to reach out if they needed any help
- Senator Stephanie Chang, great to see everyone, highlighted and reintroduced the Fred Koramastus bill in January by her and Padma and introduced a bill about language access, priorities that are important. STOP AAPI Hate is an informal group that reported a total of 16 incidents from Michigan and now over 3,000 reports across the country. In the process of introducing a resolution with Rep Puri to condemn anti-Asian Hate, stating hot line number in the resolution about how to call, importance of language and using respectful language, condemning harmful rhetoric, the resolution is primary symbolic, but in a way can be a way to raise awareness and get an official recognition from the legislature about this issue and garnering news media; may be something that can be replicated by Commissioner Hodge and Xiong across the state could be very powerful.
- Rep Ranjeev Puri - Congratulated new commissioners, the work that MAPAAC does is so important, regarding anti-AAPI hate, is deeply troubling, happy to join colleagues in the legislature to fight against inequalities that exist. Can't stress how underrepresented how our communities are and important to uplift the voices, that these are not just AAPI issues but these are American issues; they want to make the resolution as local as possible; if anyone has any stories they can share related to anti-AAPI hate in Michigan, the stories their offices are collecting so that their statements include what is happening locally in our communities
- Rep. Padma Kuppa, shared in the chat box: <https://www.dragoneagle.tv/pistons-lunar-new-year-celebration> is to normalize ourselves in our communities, not just getting elected but volunteering in civic organizations, starting at city boards and commissions. During Lunar New Year, Governor hosted virtual reception for Diwali and Lunar NY, inclusive member of the Executive Branch; the 5th annual NY at the Pistons, was honored to be part of that; whatever city you are in, volunteer to be on a board or a commission, get involved at that level, people see the bias that we experience and will automatically become our allies, they encourage us and stand by us when there is a hate crime or microaggressions that many become damaging, eventually. Rep Kuppa represents Troy & Clawson as the first immigrant, foreign born.
- Hon. Mark Slavens is distraught at the actions that people that look like him, the way they are acting; shared that many people don't know that Chandru and he share the 99.8% of the same DNA, what are we fighting about, what is wrong that we are fighting over physical appearances; asks that we not be afraid to reach out to allies. His son Patrick lives in NYC, works at the UN, his fiance is from Japan, so Hon. Slavens and his wife are terrified for her safety right now due to the random acts of violence, don't assume that someone that looks like him is not interested in the same problems, we must work together to stop the hate.

13. Announcements

14. Adjournment

- **Motioned by:** Chandru Acharya
- **Seconded by:** Sekhar Suryadevara
- Vote Summary: 18 - 0 - 0
 - **Aye:** Ayesha Ghazi Edwin, Grace Lee, Chandragupta Acharya, Joseph Tasma, Roland Sintos Coloma, Sharon Dow, David Han, Amina Iqbal, Leena Mangrulkar, Mike McAskill, Suchiraphon McKeithen-Polish, Laura Misumi, Jenny Mualhlun, Kumar Palepu, Ryan Rosario, Aditya Sathi, Soma Sekhar Suryadevara, Angela Wang-Beasinger
 - **Nay:** None
 - **Abstain:** None