



## Board Meeting Minutes

Saturday, November 18, 2023 | 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM  
Together Center, 16305 NE 87<sup>th</sup> St, Ste #110  
Redmond, WA 98052

### I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Quorum reached at 9:59 AM. The meeting was called to order by Chair Faitalia at 10:04 AM.

*Present:* Chair Lydia Faitalia, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair Lalita Uppala, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Kendall Kosai, Cmmr. Chongsun Abbott, Cmmr. Ping Ping, Cmmr. Carrie Huie, Cmmr. Ping Ping, Cmmr. Ekkarath Sisavatdy, Cmmr. Kiana McKenna, Cmmr. David Phongsa, Cmmr. Scott Lehrman, and Cmmr. Sam Cho

*Staff:* Executive Director Toshiko Grace Hasegawa, Project Manager K'gnausa Yodkerepauprai, and Project Coordinator Brenda O'Brien

### II. Welcoming Remarks

Welcoming remarks were made by **Sen. Patty Kuderer** and **Together Center CEO Kim Sarnecki**.

**Sen. Kuderer:** I am impressed and inspired by the breadth of topics on the critical discussion list that CAPAA addresses. Kudos to the entire Commission for the hard work that you, the changemakers engage in. I am honored and humbled to be able to welcome you back into our space.

**Cmmr. Uppala:** Thank you, Senator for being here today and for your leadership. I want to commend you for the number of bills you have introduced and passed around middle housing and residential, inclusionary zoning. We all know that currently 73% of the workforce here live outside of Redmond due to housing unaffordability. That needs to change so that our families and workers can afford to live here and have hope for the future.

In the SE Asian community, we have been able to grant more than \$250,000 in rental assistance for those surviving domestic abuse. We urge you to continue leading those efforts to build the multi-use, inclusionary middle housing complexes and are curious to know what your plans are in the coming year.

**Sen. Kuderer:** As chair of the Housing Committee in the Senate, what you talk about is what really drives me. I believe housing is a human right. It is intertwined with other issues like income inequality and discrimination.

We are first in the nation in passing a bill that grants tenants the right to a lawyer in order to prevent eviction. It has already helped tenants in 50% of cases heard, to stay housed. We know this can be higher, but we need more attorneys to participate in this work.



Evictions have doubled since a year ago, and that's because the federal assistance ended, eviction moratoriums have lapsed, and the emergency rental assistance funds have been depleted. Since then, we have been able to create a permanent emergency rental assistance fund, but we are still working to build up that fund.

As part of a prostrate housing collaboration committee with Oregon, Hawaii, California, Alaska and Maine, I had the chance to visit Singapore and Hong Kong to view their social housing. There are two constants they do, that I think we can implement in Washington. The first is land banking. The second is to have a public infrastructure bank, which I happen to have a bill for modeled after a bill introduced by Sen. Hasegawa.

**CEO Sarnecki:** Thirty years ago in 1991, four nonprofits came together to buy this land (2.5 acres) for the first human services hub in the country. They combined their resources to create this hub that also included affordable housing. The land was first purchased for 1.6 million and it was paid off in 2018. Today it is worth over 18 million.

Two months ago, they were able to open this new campus of two buildings that encompasses 49,000 square feet. It includes community centers, full dental clinic, mental health counseling, disability services, and 280 units of affordable housing. I believe that this model can be replicated not only in our state, but also throughout the country.

### **III. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve: Cmmr. Sisavatdy

Seconded by: Cmmr. Abbott

*No abstentions or objections. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve: Cmmr. Lehrman

Seconded by: Cmmr. Uppala

*No abstentions or objections. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **V. Equitable Clean Energy Transition**

**Troy Hutson**, Director of Energy Equity Puget Sound Energy, presented on PSE's plan for an equitable clean energy transition. Full presentation can be accessed below.



PSE Presentation  
CAPAA.pdf



## VI. Climate Solutions' Legislative Outlook & Priorities

**Leah Missik**, Senior Policy Manager: [Climate Solutions](#) played a key role in many clean bills that passed during the last session. Amongst our priorities is cutting diesel pollution. It causes health issues like asthma and is the cause of death for over 1000 Washingtonians a year. It also impacts certain geographical areas more disproportionately, often those areas that are comprised of BIPOC communities. Greenhouse gas emissions, specifically diesel, have doubled since 1990.

For 2024, we are focusing on school buses transition to electric. The goal is for 10K buses to be electric in the state. Kids using the current buses are 4x's more likely to be impacted by pollution inside the bus than outside. Pair this with low-income students experiencing more disabilities and we have an equitability issue.

Diesel buses can be converted, but this can be very complicated. Our hope is to match NY State with 0% emissions, so we are requesting budget funding to minimize the financial burden to schools.

Next, we would like to hold oil companies more accountable. They are spending millions on ads and lobbying. We are asking for more transparency in the actual costs to provide fuel. Details are still being worked out.

On the housing side, we are striving for clean energy away from gas. This would include switching to electric heat pumps. In working with housing consortiums, they are voicing the need for funding, so it will include budget requests here as well.

The Governor's Office has been supportive, but there has been no commitment yet from the superintendent. We expect some schools to be nervous about the scope of transitioning to electric buses. There will be stakeholder meetings to walk them through the process and help to make it as smooth as possible.

Some oil companies have invested in clean energy, but they also counteract this by spending millions on exploring more oil sources and combatting clean energy bills.

## VI. ESL Community Engagement Strategies

**Carmen Rivera**, Community Relations Specialist for L&I presented on their community engagement strategies. Full presentation can be accessed below.



L&I CAPPA  
Presentation English.r



## VII. Department of Natural Resources Updates

**Hillary Franz**, Commissioner of Public Lands: I oversee 2.6 million acres of coastal lands in the state and 2 million acres of forest lands. All money generated from lands are dispersed to schools, affordable housing, etc.

In addition to covering geology, our agency also covers wildfires too. The ways we fight wildfires has changed, resulting in decreased loss of land. This year, Western Washington has had more wildfires than the eastern part of the state.

We have launched a new effort around heat and climate change which is the first in the nation. We have learned that in Seattle there is an average of 13% degree temperature difference between white, wealthy communities and those of low income. Trees are one effective way to reduce temperatures, minimize energy costs, clean the air, and grant communities access to more nature, so we have started mapping every census block to gauge how much tree canopy there is.

Our goal is to get every neighborhood to a tree canopy score of 85. Redmond neighborhoods have a score of 91, while those in a city like Yakima or parts of Seattle are around 60 or lower.

## VIII. Staff Report

**ED Hasegawa** gave an overview of the Staff Report and Golden Celebration preparations at 11:29 AM. Full reports can be accessed below.



November Staff Report.docx



Golden Celebration Presentation.pptx

## IX. Lunch

The Commission broke for lunch from 12:17 PM to 12:32 PM.

## X. Public Comment

**Angelie Chong, Director [Make Us Visible](#)**: When I was last here, Make Us Visible had 12 chapters. We now have 19 chapters across the country, with two more coming. Just a quick refresher that our organization is a national coalition focusing on community, advocacy, and education.

On the advocacy front, we have some exciting news. We have been working with Sen. Wellman, who serves on the Early Learning K-12 Education Committee, on bill language for the upcoming Legislative



Session. Once we have that completed, a formal announcement will be made, and we hope we will have CAPAA's support on that bill.

On the education side, we have a professional development workshop planned for educators across the state. It will be held virtually December 6<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-6:00 PM. There are fliers available for those who are interested.

We were able to meet with Rep. Santos back in January and had nearly a two-hour conversation with her. She gave us great ideas and some issues to think about. We have been working with educators and state agencies to ensure that all partners can see this through. It is a shorter Legislative Session, so most likely we will focus on a senate bill with a companion house bill.

**Cmmr. Emeritus Lakshmi Gaur:** I want to lift up and thank IACS and IAWW for their work in serving the SE Asian community. What they've done for domestic violence has been phenomenal. Our women don't talk about DV and abuse because they don't want to upset the apple cart, but through their efforts they have made an amazing impact. Their work with Covid relief has shown that the leadership is a force to be reckoned with as well.

I would also like to commend CAPAA on 50 years of service, but it has not always reached the communities' awareness. If I could make a humble suggestion, it might be helpful to feature 1-2 representatives of each community on CAPAA's webpage. This could help to show that CAPAA cares.

## **XI. Round Table Updates**

**Cmmr. McKenna:** There is an op-ed that one of our PICA interns wrote in the International Examiner. It is entitled "[Tourism Will Not Save Hawaii After the Lahaina Wildfire.](#)" I encourage everyone to read it.

Other updates of note are as follows.

- FSM Micronesia citizens can now declare dual citizenship there while remaining in the US.
- PICA has offices opening in both Vancouver and Spokane. We can now serve in a greater capacity.
- Ways to strategize language access is being discussed.
- Housing continues to be a high need.
- UTOPIA released a report around queer and trans PI data. A larger NHPI report will be released by PICA in January in partnership with UTOPIA. This will include more disaggregated data on gender and various ethnicities.
- Pasifika Village Council of Washington is expanding and focusing on becoming more inclusive.

**Cmmr. Ping:** Spokane will have a new mayor in January, Lisa Brown. She has a different philosophy on improving the homeless situation and I hope she will work on affordable housing.

Spokane's United We Stand organized a Diwali event, that took place over four weekends in October.



The Office of Civil Rights, Equity, and Inclusion along with community-based organizations are urging Spokane's City Council to pass the budget funding language access.

I assigned my students to watch the Make Us Visible Launch. Many reported that they did not know very much about ANHPI history or culture and felt that most history they were being taught made America look better. They also felt that much of their history was being cut out.

From September to now, I have observed how slowly or in a biased manner state institutions in power have been responding to hate crimes towards Asians. After nine windows were smashed at the Wing Luke Museum recently, it took the Seattle Police Department 45 minutes to respond. When they finally arrived they basically wrote it off as just another act of vandalism and didn't place more importance on it because no one got hurt. Responses to harassment reports by faculty have also been extremely slow by those in higher education.

**Cmmr. Nguyen:** Friends of Little Saigon was able to secure a contract for land to build a new community center. It will be built in the historic district of Little Saigon, just east of the I-5 bridge. This has been a long time coming to help preserve their community and build more of the International District up.

**Cmmr. Phongsa:** I have been working with Cmmr. Lehrman to try and connect with Asian groups in the Tri-Cities. As Chair of the Economic Development Committee, I am also working on a listening session for small businesses on the Eastern part of the state, similar to what the committee hosted last June.

As a Port of Kennewick employee, I had the opportunity to work with Native American groups to create artwork on land owned by the port. Recently, the CEO developing some land owned by the port approached me to connect him to some Asian groups that could create artwork for them as well.

There is an interesting documentary I watched entitled "Richland." It touches on Hanford and the effects of plutonium on the Japanese community. The local high school there is still known as the "Richland Bombers," and they use an atomic cloud as their mascot. Resistance to changing their mascot has been strong, and those suggesting it are ostracized.

**Cmmr. Sisavatdy:** I have been working with a couple Lao leaders to figure out how we get communities engaged with grants. This has resulted in me in teaming up with some other leaders to provide a grant writing workshop.

Being involved with Make Us Visible has been amazing. It's a real grassroots effort and everyone is working so hard. Through them, a show-and-tell type event was hosted at a yacht club in Bellevue. It really engaged the youth and community in showcasing their talents, and I want to thank Angelie for her leadership and efforts.



I recently lost my father and it has been tough for us. I would like to remind everyone that the pandemic has not stopped. It continues to affect people, and I encourage everyone to keep the community and our elders safe.

**Cmmr. Uppala:** I agree that Covid is not over. It is not over for our small businesses. They still struggle. Many barriers still exist and there are not quick solutions. How do we continue to give hope to them?

We have been working with the ACLU on HB 1845 as result of Seattle Police running into Jaahnavi Kandula and causing her death. It's an investigative bill giving the Attorney General additional powers in stepping into police offices. I will be testifying on it when the next session starts.

On the east side, there is an epidemic of stress, anxiety, and depression amongst the youth. We have reached out to many MH services like NAMI about offering a culturally sensitive approach to mental health.

The last thing I will report on is on early childhood development support and screening and a shortage of providers.

**Cmmr. Faitalia:** A lot of our paraeducators are having difficulties surviving on current wages. Also, many in our NHPI communities are struggling with fentanyl and opiates. The elders are concerned as they are being called on to watch their grandchildren.

I want to thank ED Hasegawa and Cmmr. Sisavatdy in really keeping tabs on the EOGOAC and AA & NHPI studies.

**Cmmr. Kosai:** On May 29<sup>th</sup>, there is an event called the Hate Crime Overview. It will cover what topics such as what a hate crime look like and how to respond to them. It will take place at Seattle University and everyone is welcome to join.

Next session, there will be a bill establishing a hate bias hotline. It will allow victims of hate crimes to report it and receive resources whether it's needing social services or getting compensation as a victim.

The Washington Security Grant program is now open for applications. It allows nonprofits, places of worship, etc. to apply for grants to help with security measures to keep their communities and buildings safe. If you are interested in learning more, I can provide the webinar link.

The JACL Puyallup Chapter is raising funds for an exhibit at the Washington State Fair, which used to be Camp Harmony. This is where Japanese immigrants were brought as an assembly center before being sent to their incarceration camps. They're taking this opportunity to build a





memorial and have secured some funding but will be asking for more funding at the next session as well.

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the OCA will be hosting its Golden Circle Dinner. Lastly, the Asian Jewish Initiative in King County helped draft a statement against a rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia. The effort was led by CISC, JACL, and the Wing Luke Museum.

**Cmmr. Abbott:** On October 7<sup>th</sup>, a Korean grocer, Mr. Chu was killed by two teens. They were caught. They were targeting Asian grocery store owners. Now that I know about the crime victims assistance, I will refer them to L&I.

At the Civic Health Summit last month, I learned that Mr. Chu's case has not really been covered by the news. How do we get increased visibility? The Korean community does not really gather after something like this happens. They don't want to make a big deal or cause a fuss, but it's only by coming together in an event like a candlelight vigil and inviting media do we get more visibility and raise awareness.

There are no memory care centers in Pierce County for the elderly in the Korean community. My friend had to pay \$11,000 per month for her husband because it is not covered by Medicare. Only long-term care insurance covers these types of costs.

**Cmmr. Cho:** Last quarter has been busy with gala season. I attended the celebrations at the ACRS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Korean Community Service Center, and the 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the found of the People's Republic of China. It has been uplifting and encouraging to see our communities come together and celebrate.

I started a new job with Mayor Bruce Harrell's Office as the Director of Strategic Initiatives, which focuses mainly on economic development. It just so happens that there are two projects that pertain to our communities. The first one is that the CID is really suffering. Part of my charge is to figure out how we can develop economically. One possibility is to expand the CID to include Little Saigon.

For those of you who don't know the CID officially formed in 1996, and it's never been updated since then. It's long overdue for a policy overhaul.

The other project is that India is opening a consulate in Seattle. It will service 10 states. The goal is to have it up and running by Q1 next year. I will be helping to facilitate the project.

**Cmmr. Lehrman:** Cmmr. Huie has been serving as my mentor on the Board and I want to thank her. I've appreciated her time and look forward to working more with her. I learned at dinner last night that PM Yodkerepauprai has a Karen background, and that he has only met a few who speak that in the US.





I remembered that my wife had mentioned she had some students in Pasco that are Karen. There are three families and there are no translation services or language support for them in that area. It again shows just how important having resources in place for our communities are. I am looking at starting a parent support groups for ANHPI's.

Pasco opened an NAACP charter. Their first meeting was last night and my wife was able to attend. In conversations with members, they have expressed interest in partnering with ANHPI communities.

I took my kids and we attended the Mid-Autumn celebration in the Tri-Cities. It was held at a local park in late September. Cmmr. Phongsa and I have been trying to find more organized groups for ANHPI in the area but it has been a little scarce.

Lastly, I have been appointed to the Social & Emotional Learning Advisory Committee. I look forward in supporting Cmmr. Sisavady there and to working on the committee.

**Cmmr. Huie:** SS Bill 5304 requires Washington to look at language access. DSHS was charged with leading the [workgroup](#) to examine the certification process and make recommendations to the Legislature in December. The aim was to ensure that there was great representation participating in the workgroup. I felt very honored to be a part of that workgroup and to weigh in.

Commerce recently pushed out some dollars for a childcare partnership grant. The grants were not for direct services, but it looked at what agencies need to partner with other childcare agencies to help strengthen childcare. Funding included monies for consulting and even grant writing. I participated in reviewing the 56 applications received.

Lastly, I have been able to present on the Chinese Exclusion Act through Make Us Visible. One presentation was in Kittitas County and the other was given online to Bellevue.

## **XII. 2024 Legislative Session Look Ahead**

**PM Yodkerepauprai** gave a condensed overview of the upcoming Legislative Session. Full presentation can be accessed below.



Legislative Session  
Presentation.pptx

## **XIII. Good of the Order**



**Washington State Commission  
on Asian Pacific American Affairs**

**ED Hasegawa:** This will be my last Board meeting for the next quarter. I will be on maternity leave beginning the week of December 11<sup>th</sup>, and will only be available eight hours a week starting the week of January 8<sup>th</sup>.

**XIV. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:06 PM.