**Board Meeting Minutes**

Saturday, March 11, 2023 | 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Thurston County

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Quorum reached at 9:55 AM. The meeting was called to order by Chair Nguyen at 10:01 AM.

*Present:* Chair Nam Nguyen, 1st Vice Chair Lydia Faitalia, Cmmr. Lalita Uppala, Cmmr. Carrie Huie-Pascua, Cmmr. Kendall Kosai, Cmmr. Ekkarath Sisavatdy, and Cmmr. Sam Cho

*Absent:* 2nd Vice Chair Julio Diaz (excused) and Cmmr. Va’eomatoka Valu (excused)

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

1. **Welcome**

Welcoming remarks were made by Sen. Bob Hasegawa and Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos. We have 10 members of color now, and much can be accomplished as a result. A recent example was when all 10 members stepped out together in solidarity to vote on a bill regarding simple possession. It was noted by those in attendance, and they were able to compel law enforcement to consider alternatives to what was being proposed in the bill.

We are making progress in influencing legislation due to the increased members of color being appointed. There are more opportunities for our communities’ voices to be heard as a result.

Rep. Santos reported that there was a record amount of 358 bills that passed this session! She shared the context in why an education bill she is sponsoring is controversial. The “Transition to Kindergarten” bill is being opposed by OSPI and school districts but is one that is favored by early learning educators.

As a result of the McCleary decision, our state has an obligation to be in compliance with what is considered a ‘positive’ right of children to be educated. This is different from what is considered their constitutional right of learning starting at age five.

We, as a state, have made the decision to provide education as an entitlement by 2026, and have been funding this effort every year in increasingly larger increments to the budget for public school districts. In doing so, however, it grants more power for to the districts to be able to skim 4 year-olds from the small business sectors operating ECEAP programs, operated largely by immigrant women.

Santos’s bill sets the criteria for what qualifies one to be an early learning educator. It also aims to raise the reimbursement rates for ECEAP programs.

1. **Public Comment**

**Cmmr. Emeritus Rey Pascua** thanked Sen. Hasegawa for sponsoring SB 5685 in 2019. The bill became law in 2021 recognizing Filipino American History Month. Washington is only one of three states that officially recognizes their history. He also sent kudos to those that worked on the bill implementing Filipino American curriculum in the schools. Though it didn’t pass, he hopes to promote it in future legislative sessions.

Finally, in honor of CAPAA’s upcoming 50th Anniversary in 2024, Cmmr. Pascua presented a donation to Chair Nguyen in the amount of $1000 in honor of Sandra and Tiffany Pascua. He also shared a picture from May 1974 showing everyone present during the signing of the original Asian American Advisory Board. ED Hasegawa made a special point of recognizing Tiffany Pascua, who hand-rolled the lumpia provided during our 45th Celebration.

**Hakan Yilmaz**, the SCSEP Project Director at the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, reported that they had their first ceremony of graduates of the literacy program take place last Thursday. Representatives of Sen. Murray’s office were present, and graduates ranged in age from 65 to 73 years of age! They were also able to partner with some organizations to provide laptops and computers to the students.

**Lin Crowley,** Co-Chair of APIC-SPS Chapter, thanked the Commission for providing legislative updates.

They have been asked to host the AANHPI Heritage Month celebration at the Olympia Center. The event will take place May 20th, and she would like to extend an invitation to CAPAA to take part.

**IV. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to adjust agenda to move Sen. Hasegawa and Rep. Santos up, remove Rep. Doglio due to availability, and to move Sen. Trudeau to 12:45 PM: Cmmr. Cho

Seconded by: 1st Vice Chair Faitalia

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**V. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve: Cmmr. Cho

Seconded by: Cmmr. Huie-Pascua

*Motion carried unanimously.*

1. **Sponsorship Request**

A new request came in from the Filipino American Northwest Association in Spokane for $500. They will be hosting an ANHPI Heritage Month on May 7th.

Motion to approve: Cmmr. Diaz

Seconded by: 2nd Vice Chair Faitalia

*Motion carried unanimously.*

1. **Commissioner Community Updates**

Cmmr. Abbott shared that current crime rates and the homeless crisis are the main concerns being voiced by the Korean community in Pierce County. A recent incident where a dog and its homeless owner were killed by another homeless person had caused the city to clear the whole area to the other side of I-5. Since the move, however, there have been increased incidents of home invasions, including an instance of one under the influence wielding a machete during a church service. Law enforcement has either been slow to respond or have not showed up at all.

KWA will begin groundbreaking on an 88-unit, affordable housing complex on March 30th. Applications will be accepted next year and it will be located by the UW campus downtown.

Cmmr. Ping has been involved with curriculum development at the local school districts, to include Asian American community perspectives. On March 4th, there was a statewide event, Make Us Visible, that took place to discuss how important these perspectives are. There were 160 people who attended in person, and 30 present via Zoom. Cmmr. Sisavatdy was also there, in addition to CAPAA representative Sui-Lan Ho’okano, who served as one of three panelists.

APIC-Spokane has been issuing a public health needs assessment within the ANHPI community, that includes Chinese immigrants. Next, United We Stand hosted a Lunar New Year celebration and Asian Business Expo on January 28th. Over 20,000 people attended and over 100 booths were present. The highlight was when 40 Marshallese students performed for the first time on stage.

United We Stand has also been providing trainings to the ANHPI community on tax returns and to help them understand the Working Family Tax Credit program. Lastly, the Chinese community has been voicing concerns about the recent chemical spills from the Ohio derailments, as well as SB 147 in Texas, that could result in prohibiting certain ethnic groups from land ownership.

Cmmr. Cho has attended three major events since the last meeting. There was the Chinese Expulsion Remembrance event that took place in CID, The Asian American Journalists Association banquet, and The Korean American Bar Association dinner. On March 30th, there is a WHIAANHPI hosted Economic Summit taking place at the Seattle City Hall, and he hopes to see other commissioners there.

Cmmr. Faitalia has been focusing on vetting the data from EOGOAC on mastery-based learning. There have been some families who have expressed instances of bullying as well as some harm being done in the education system. She, ED Hasegawa, and EOGOAC have connected with some of those families.

Next, Cmmr. Faitalia had the opportunity to meet with the Governor’s Health Disparity Council. The meeting went very well, and they’d like CAPAA’s input on helping to shape its mission and purpose. Finally, there has been some requests for CAPAA to host something that discusses our committees and who they can connect with to voice their needs and concerns.

Cmmr. Huie-Pascua shared that she participated in Legislative Days with both NAMI (February 20-21) and APIC-Yakima (February 28th). Her main focus has been with Legislative Districts 14 and 15, along with meeting with Chinese American families in King County.

There will be an in-person spring banquet in Seattle to celebrate Lunar New Year. It is the first time since the pandemic, that the banquet is reconvening. She has also been serving as chair on a scholarship committee for the Filipino American Association and assisting with reelections that recently took place. On May 7th, a sukiyaki dinner event commemorating 60 years will take place, and she will be cooking!

Lastly, Cmmr. Huie-Pascua is pleased to report that the Dept. of Commerce identified 27 organizations that are serving communities impacted by economic poverty. Of those organizations, 19 applied for the grants that were being offered to more effectively serve those communities. She knows that the listening forums that took place were instrumental in helping these funds be available.

Cmmr. Kosai was able to attend the APCC event at the Tacoma Dome. It was very packed, which spoke to their presence and power in the community. He also attended the “Stop AAPI Hate Legislative Preview” in Sacramento. The discussions really focused on a comprehensive, holistic approach in finding solutions for the issue.

In May, there will be a walking tour that highlights the history of redlining that took place in the CID. If you’d like more information, please reach out to him. Finally, in July there will a large convening of AAPI commissioners on the East coast taking place in Washington DC, that he will be attending.

Cmmr. Sisavatdy participated in a fundraiser for the Fung Foundation and the Maple Valley Temple that raised $16K for both organizations to continue their activities. He has also been continuing to meet with someone who is hoping to start a senior support services program. Through their meetings, it was decided that she would expand services to all SE Asian seniors, and Cmmr. Sisavatdy has been asked to be a part of the Board.

Benefits have ended for many of their citizens in February, so this is the first month they are being impacted. They will be needing resources to help them.

Cmmr. Uppala conveyed that the APIC legislative session just ended, and they are now working on a follow up meet-and-greet with the elected officials of East King County for April. Their aim is to discuss mental health, economic development, transportation, and education.

The second thing she is working on is planning a listening forum with Commerce where small businesses identify the gaps that exist. She also has been involved with helping hospitality businesses apply for relief opportunities.

The City of Seattle recently passed a ban on caste discrimination in the workplace, which is a significant achievement particularly for the SE Asian community, that is steeped in the caste system.

From July 12-17th, the OCA is having their 50th anniversary in Washington DC. He has been helping to plan the event, and there are plans to invite commissioners from around the country to participate in a roundtable discussion.

**VI. Lunch**

The Commission broke for lunch at 11:41 AM and reconvened at 12:09 PM.

**VII. Lt. Governor’s Legislative Update**

**Lt. Governor Denny Heck** provided an overview of his role. It is not a part of the Executive Branch, nor the 50th state senator, but is President of the Senate. He is primarily responsible for enforcing parliamentary rules and ensuring a respectful tone is set.

There are three areas of issues that were voiced as concerns of the state. First, we need a better regulatory environment conducive to quality enforcement throughout the state. Second, there are workforce alignment issues, where the needs of the workplace by employers are not being precisely matched by the skills of the workers being brought in. Third, we have a housing crisis in the state. There has not been multi-family apartment complex built in Clallam County in ten years.

On the last issue, it has been found that when we are compared to other states, we place 49 out of 50 in terms of number of housing units per household. The number one barrier to growth is lack of housing. Numerous medical professionals have ended up backing out of hospital positions, when they have not been able to find housing in the area.

Study after study has shown that the number one cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing. On that front, there have been more bills related to housing passed in 2023 than ever thought imaginable. This has been due to the collective efforts of Sen. Hasegawa and his colleagues.

Cmmr. Faitalia inquired about the ties to generational wealth to housing bills. The Covenant bill has the biggest potential to address that issue. The bill sets up loan assistance for down payments that can be tied into home equity to first generation homebuyers that can trace their ancestry to those who have been impacted by redlining. It will be the first bill of its kind in the nation.

We need to provide homes for all types of housing. It’s not enough just to provide affordable housing, but we also need to provide more home for all kinds of housing for all types of people.

**VIII. Legislative Update from Rep. Daria Farivar**

**Rep. Farivar**, from the 46th LD, provided an overview of her HB 1541, “Nothing About Us Without Us**.”** The bill has been worked on for three years, and the concept is simple. If people are going to be making decisions for us, we need to be a part of that discussion.

Under the bill, any statutory group that is created that will impact underrepresented communities, must have individuals who have lived experience included in that group. We have to make sure that people who are ground level experts be included in any group that will impact their futures.

It is also not enough to have those people included. There needs to be meaningful engagement with those individuals as well. That includes providing adequate access to participate in the work, such as translation, childcare, transportation, etc. It includes working with the Office of Equity and other ethnic commissions to provide a toolkit on how to implement the bill practically.

The final component of the bill addresses accountability. We need to make sure this work is doing what they say they will do and that all aspects of inclusion are present.

**IX. Community Reinvestment Plan**

**Shaun Glaze**, the lead researcher on this plan, presented an overview of the work they have been engaging in. The research began in September, where they invited community leaders throughout the state to participate in an informal survey group. They then talked with many community members throughout the state which included intergenerational groups. Full details of the project can be accessed below.



**X. Legislative Update from Sen. Yasmin Trudeau**

**Sen. Trudeau**, from the 27th LD, shared what she has been involved with this year. Currently, she serves as Vice Chair for the Law & Justice Committee, which provides a lot of opportunities to discuss equity and lift up perspectives that have not previously been a part of that conversation. She is also serving on a new committee involving environmental policy, where she is learning as much as she can about to champion legislation that is important.

Her biggest focus has been on housing this session. Of note, she highlighted three bills she wants CAPAA to be aware of in terms of how comprehensive they are. The first one is the subsidy bill, which is the Governor’s referendum to utilize the funding allocated for housing in a way that most truly meets the needs caused by the housing crisis.

The next bill pertains to rent stabilization. It unfortunately did not move past either chamber this session, but it does address the soaring costs of rent and its impacts on our communities. Lastly, the other bill she has been focused on has to do with supply, which not only looks at supply for middle-income housing, but seeks to reverse the course caused by a form of redlining which only allowed zoning for single-family housing.

Two new bills Sen. Trudeau has been working on centers around jury diversity (Bill 5128) and baby bonds. She is piloting a program in Pierce County that will look at jury pay and its barrier on attracting more voices of color to serve on juries. She would love to involve CAPAA in that conversation.

Baby Bonds, also known as Washington Future Fund, is a bill that promotes the idea that when we invest in people early, there is an opportunity for capital investment to allow that to happen. The bill would allow each child born into poverty, to have a trust set up for them in the amount of $4,000, which they can invest with. If they still fall under the poverty level between the ages of 18-35, they can access those funds towards a purchase of a home, a small business, or their education.

**XI**.  **Staff Report**

**ED Hasegawa** gave a verbal overview of the Staff Report at 1:14 PM. Cmmr. Satpal Sidhu did submit his resignation this last week, due to competing priorities. We were truly enriched during his short, but fruitful time with the Commission, and respect his decision to leave. This leaves us with a vacancy that we will need to fill soon. The full report can be accessed below.



**XII. Legislative Updates from PM Yodkerepauprai**

PM Yodkerepauprai continues to update our [Legislative Tracker](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Q9NgEnowXlQxir4IeMb3oJNV2i7RBUOoHC_0SXKoukg/edit#gid=0) daily. The bills in red indicate that they have not moved past their house of origin and are considered dead. HB 1240 was introduced late, but it didn’t pass. It does have a bright future, however.

We are currently watching the “Nothing About Us Without Us” and Jury Diversity bills, but if the Commission would like to support it, we can move to add it to our legislative priorities. Cmmr. Kosai moved to amend our current list of priorities to include these two bills. Cmmr. Huie-Pascua seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**XII. Good of the Order**

Cmmr. Abbott felt this meeting went very well, and especially appreciated all the informative legislative updates. Cmmr. Kosai agreed and expressed his deep appreciation for the number of legislators that attended today, which is a great testament to the relationships that CAPAA has been able to foster.

**XIII. Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 1:39 PM.