



The State of Washington
COMMISSION ON ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS

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Improving the lives of Asian Pacific Americans

Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs Board Meeting

Tacoma Community House
1314 South L Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
Saturday, March 19, 2016

Regular Business

INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME

CALL TO ORDER

Welcome and introductions were given. Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Ty Tufono, Lisa Dickinson, Zer Vue, Darren Pen, Ka`imi Sinclair, Tam Dinh, Lakshmi Gaur, Mohan Gurung, Lori Wada

Commissioners Absent: Tashi Khamshitsang, Didi Cabusao, Lynette Finau

Staff: Executive Director, Michael Itti, Project Coordinator, Brianne Ramos

Fellows: Bronson Purcell

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made at 10:03 a.m. by Commissioner Dickinson to approve the agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Wada. With no further changes, the agenda was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF January 16, 2016 MINUTES

Motion was made at 10:05 a.m. by Commissioner Wada and seconded by Commissioner Dickinson. With no further changes, the minutes were unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Itti provided the Director's Report overview including an update on the Commission's financial report, accountability audit, legislative session, agency outreach, community events, and issue areas.

View the full report here: <http://capaa.wa.gov/executive-directors-report-for-march-19-2016/>

Dinh: If there are excess funds, does that go back to the state?

Tufono: Is the \$1,000 included in the projected budget?

Gaur: I think \$1,000 is too much to keep reserved in the budget.

Tufono: Encouraged commissioners to request for travel reimbursement.

Director Itti responded that unspent funds, allocated by the state, are returned to the state. In regards to the aim to leave a remaining balance of \$1,000, DES has recommended this level since unexpected costs can arise. Many costs are out of the Commission's control since they are charged by other state agencies such as the Attorney General's Office. Projections can fluctuate. The Commission does not want to ever exceed its spending authority. Director Itti encouraged all Commissioners to request travel reimbursement since everyone is a volunteer and it is available to cover the cost of travel to meetings.

Legislative Update

Director Itti provided an overview of bills impacting Asian Pacific American communities that were delivered to the governor, vetoed by the governor, and did not pass the legislature.

Delivered to Governor: HB 1408, HB 1541, HB 2362, HB 2793, HB 2908, SB 5689

Vetoed by Governor: SB 6398

Did not pass the Legislature: HB 1390, HB 1745, HB 2682, SB 6180, SB 6530

Chair Tufono: Regarding suicide awareness and prevention, are there any studies being done on API communities? Why is this something we're focusing on?

Director Itti: Studies show that API communities are least likely to receive treatment. Some immigrants and refugees from war-torn countries experience higher rates of mental illnesses.

Commissioner Dinh: If you look at the risk factors, you'll see that API communities have high rates of suicide and mental illnesses that are untreated due to shame and stigma.

Chair Tufono: I think we should frame it from the perspective that we are focusing on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which could lead to suicide, rather than suicide awareness and prevention because it could send the wrong message to our communities.

Director Itti: We will look into that issue more closely.

Commissioner Pen: Regarding Senate Bill 6530, there is more support at the county level for notices of public health issues in languages other than English.

Director Itti: We sent a joint letter with CHA previously to the Emergency Management Division to comply with Title VI. In response, they sent letters to local jurisdictions reminding them of the federal guidelines.

Budget Overview

Director Itti provided an overview of CAPAA's current budget for FY2015-FY2017 and informed the Commission that from FY2008-FY2017, CAPAA's budget was reduced by over 11%.

Director Itti: One project idea we have is to renew our handouts/brochures, so we would like to create a new one for Commissioners to use. We are hoping that Commissioners will propose other project ideas that we can work on throughout the year.

Commissioner Wada: Right now, fuel costs are more affordable. When gas prices go up, how does that affect our discretionary funds?

Director Itti: Travel reimbursement rates change periodically, and OFM sends us the rate. Our overall budget does not change based on fuel costs.

Vice Chair Dickinson: Expressed concerns about CAPAA having to purchase non-refundable airfare tickets to attend board meetings, which increases the cost to the Commission.

Chair Tufono: We should travel to other cities to serve API communities that we have not previously worked with before.

Commissioner Gaur: Suggest continuing discussion during Committee Updates.

TACOMA COMMUNITY HOUSE

Liz Dunbar, Executive Director, Tacoma Community House

Welcome to Commission

Mission and Vision: Mission is to create opportunities for immigrants and other community members in the Puget Sound region through comprehensive services focused on self-sufficiency, inclusion and advocacy. Vision is to be a pathway to change leading to generations of self-sufficient people and a region welcoming of immigrants and refugees.

Background: Began in 1910 by Methodist women to welcome immigrants and refugees who lived in the neighborhood at that time. TCH has been giving ESL classes since the 1920s and had the first preschool and kindergarten in the community. Previous Executive Director realized that there were no groups in Tacoma that served API communities, so TCH shifted focus to provide ESL, interpreter, and employment services to respond to the needs of immigrants that were coming from Southeast Asia. TCH has a history of adapting to the needs of the community.

Services

- ESL classes
- GED classes: Serve immigrants and American born citizens
- In-school tutoring program for children in the Tacoma School District: Work with struggling readers one-on-one
- Adult employment and job training
- Youth Empowerment and Employment: Encourage youth to stay in school, help them find paid internships and jobs
- Immigration & Citizenship Assistance: Board of Immigration Appeals accredited, federally recognized to help people with immigration and citizenship (over 200 people gained citizenship through program last year)
- Client Advocacy Services: Provide legal services and immigration advice for clients who are survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence

TCH Success

- Safiah from Yemen: Took the ESL class and learned English, became a citizen, and received her driver's license.
- Jania from Guatemala: Attended TCH's citizenship class and passed the citizenship test with a perfect score.

Announcements: TCH Annual Luncheon on April 1 (Guest speaker is Gov. Inslee), 2015 Annual Report is available online at www.tacomacommunityhouse.org

Q & A

Chair Tufono: I know that there are many ex-offenders in this area. Does TCH provide any services to ex-offenders for job training?

Director Dunbar: Yes, we have a program called Crash Course, which is an intensive two week class that helps give basic skills to ex-offenders such as resume, job training, and job placement.

Commissioner Gaur: Is there any room for TCH to collaborate or partner with different community organizations?

Director Dunbar: Yes, you can refer individuals to us or we can discuss further about a more formal partnership.

Commissioner Gurung: Regarding the arrival of undocumented immigrants, do you help people who live in Pierce County or do you help people who live in other areas as well?

Director Dunbar: We primarily serve Pierce County, but we also receive people from South King County, Mason County, Thurston County, and sometimes Kitsap County.

Commissioner Wada: You mentioned earlier that there is a fee for certain classes. What are those fees?

Director Dunbar: Classes charge \$25 per quarter, but we are able to waive the fee for good attendance or if someone is on public assistance. We also have state funding to serve refugees and a fee schedule that is slower than an attorney's schedule.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA RACE & EQUITY INITIATIVE

Hannah Wilson, Access Services Manager, UW Tacoma Library
William Towney, Graduate student, UW Tacoma

Background: The initiative was created by President Ana Mari Cauce and is implemented on all three campuses. The goal of the initiative is to identify issues of race and equity and improve campus climate. The UW Tacoma campus specifically serves more urban communities than the other campuses. At UW Tacoma, Asian communities have the second highest population of communities of color, after African American.

Goal 1: Provide opportunity for faculty, staff and students to acquire shared language and practices on race & equity.

Programs on campus:

- SEED
- Start Diversity Research and Teaching Institute

Goal 2: Address institutional racism and bias.

Strategies:

- Create staff position dedicated to recruiting staff of color
- Address retention, recruitment, and resources for students of color
- Conduct a Campus Climate Survey
 - Is the initiative actually making a difference on campus?
 - Understanding the needs of non-traditional college students

Goal 3: Assess our campus climate and our ongoing initiatives

- Objective: to accurately assess the climate of the campus so as to initiate effective programming
- Asses the experiences for students who attend class after 5 PM
- Assess the programs and events already taking place around issues of Equity on campus – student organizations and clubs

Q & A

Vice Chair Vue: Thank you for the data and the work you are doing. I heard from your presentation that you would want to recruit professors, but I would suggest focusing also on retaining professors through mentorship program and resources. Regarding the Diversity Resource Center, is that similar to the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity at UW Seattle? I encourage a partnership with UW Seattle because UW Seattle has a Southeast Asian recruiter and I think it could be a wonderful partnership between campuses.

Towney: Regarding your questions on staff and faculty, there is a pipeline issue.

Commissioner Dinh: As a professor, I'm finding that although there are some professors of color, students of color are not registering for those classes. They are in the classes with middle aged white men, and the cycle continues.

Commissioner Gaur: The difference in salary is another barrier for recruiting and retaining faculty of color, especially women who are faculty of color.

Towney: With new leadership at UW, changes in the system are beginning to happen.

Commissioner Wada: I serve on the UWT advisory committee, and when I look at the student body and faculty, I see that UWT is doing a great job of creating campus diversity. My concern is that the advisory committee consists of all white members, and we need more people of color in the advisory committee to advocate for the needs of the community. We need to encourage diversity in all areas of the campus initiative including the advisory committee.

Wilson: Hearing these suggestions is important to us in figuring out more ways to create equity on campus.

Director Itti: I encourage you to report out disaggregated data for Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. It will help show where the disparities are and what resources the students need so you can create targeted strategies for each of the groups on campus.

Wilson: Thank you, I will be sure to bring up that concern and request for disaggregated data for API communities.

Towney: The student body itself does a lot of work, and we fund various student programs on campus to support their needs.

Chair Tufono: I would encourage your students to create more cross-cultural dialogue and have them work with other communities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tiva Aga, Samoan Cultural Celebration Scholarship Program

Thank you to Commissioners and Chair Tufono.

The 6th Annual Samoan Cultural Day will take place in July. Under the Samoan Cultural Day planning committee, there is another committee that coordinates the Samoan Cultural Celebration Scholarship Program.

The scholarship is available for graduating seniors in state of Washington and there is \$10,000 of funding available for multiple scholarships. Applicants must be part Samoan, have a minimum 3.0 GPA, and have an acceptance letter from a higher education institution.

Scholarships will be handed out on July 9 at a dinner.

Vice Chair Vue: Is the application available online?

Aga: Yes, the application is on the APCC website, under the Samoan Scholarship Program.

Commissioner Gaur: What is the process for accepting students?

Aga: We have a review committee, and I invite you all to join the review committee.

Chair Tufono: Are students who are accepted into accredited training programs, technical schools, and community colleges eligible to apply for scholarship?

Aga: Community and technical colleges, yes. I need to check with the committee to see if it covers accredited training programs.

Vice Chair Vue: How are you outreaching to students who don't go to the churches?

Aga: The scholarship information has been distributed to the school districts and the schools, reaching as far north as Marysville.

Commissioner Wada: How many people are you expecting to attend Samoa Cultural Day?

Chair Tufono: Last year we had around 5,000 people. At the sponsorship dinner, we had around 350 people and it was sold out.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND SPONSORSHIP POLICY

Project Coordinator Brianne Ramos proposed an online reporting form for Commissioner activities and an amendment to the Sponsorship Guidelines in CAPAA's Administrative Policies.

Commissioner Gaur: I would like to mention that with every activity I do, I'm not necessarily representing myself with CAPAA. But I believe that these events need to be accounted for because I still carry the knowledge and resources of CAPAA with me. I am still sharing these resources.

Ramos: Logging the hours is important. You put in a lot of volunteer time to advance CAPAA's mission. We want to be able to track that and be able to speak clearly on activities our commissioners take part in.

Commissioner Dinh: In order to get accurate data from this form, everyone needs to utilize it or else it will be ineffective.

Chair Tufono: The whole effectiveness of this is in logging hours because we've never done that before.

Commissioner Dinh: I think it would be good to have a training session once this form has been more tailored to CAPAA's work. We want to have a better and clearer idea of the information we are trying to capture. I am willing to help you with this.

Vice Chair Vue: If we have that discretionary fund, I wonder if we can choose one CAPAA project to work on and direct our efforts. I think it would be great to do something as a whole group as opposed to being solely present at events.

Commissioner Gaur: I think it would be good for all of us to set aside time to get together and share what we know with one another, cover various topics together to expanding our knowledge. This is my passion. I had a personal experience about 20 years ago that helps me understand the urgency behind this work getting done.

Vice Chair Vue: It's important to build relationships with each other and the community. I believe this new way of reporting our activities will allow us to share with one another in a more uniform way what events we are participating in.

Commissioner Dinh: There are two budgets. Part of the problem is that we haven't been intentional about the overall CAPAA budget. We have been focusing on the fixed things. One idea would be to dedicate \$10,000 or more to our subcommittees to work directly on projects and to have a board retreat.

Vice Chair Dickinson: We need to ask for more and explain how this lack of funding is the reason why putting on community events is difficult. We know there will be resistance, but if we show that we have a plan and show initiative—really take that on—then we raise our chances of receiving more funding.

Commissioner Pen: If we have a goal and plan, then they will be more comfortable providing us with more funding.

Vice Chair Dickinson: I think it's appalling that the Commissions are not funded equally. We never ask about that.

Chair Tufono: We are the one ethnic commission that needs the most in translating resources, we are the most diverse, and yet we fall through the cracks because of our passivity.

Chair Tufono: We have the means to travel. We have money to go to Spokane. To Bellingham. We are alienating a lot of API communities. I'd like to see us go to Pullman someday and have a meeting while school is in session for student engagement there. We need meetings in Ellensburg.

Commissioner Dinh: If we are representing CAPAA, should there also be a fund for CAPAA to pay for our attendance there?

Chair Tufono: You can do that. You can put in reimbursement for that. But this wasn't clearly communicated so that's why I wanted to open a dialogue about these uncommunicated funds available to us. Now we're more aware. It doesn't mean we get a spending spree because we still have strict policies.

Ramos: Thank you for your input. I would like to go over a proposed change in our sponsorship guidelines.

Commissioner Dinh: Beforehand, can you tell us the best way for us to propose projects for the upcoming year? Should subcommittees get together and meet with you? Do we want a yearly retreat? What's the best way to get things moving?

Director Itti: One way is to work in your committees and have a small group discussion. It's harder to fund 12 different ideas but Committee projects are more feasible.

Commissioner Gaur: I think the very first meeting of the year should be used to set our goals.

Sponsorship Policy

Brianne Ramos provided an overview of the proposed sponsorship policy which sets guidelines on which activities CAPAA is able to sponsor.

Vice Chair Dickinson: Who decides what CAPAA related projects we can fund?

Director Itti: That's not addressed in the proposed sponsorship guidelines, but we will look into that question more.

Chair Tufono: We need to decide who approves the spending of the donation account and how it may be used for us here.

Commissioner Gurung: Suggestion to continue conversation later in the agenda.

CITY OF TACOMA EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE, LINCOLN DISTRICT REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Mayor Marilyn Strickland, City of Tacoma

[Introduction of Commissioners and Staff]

The Mayor provided a brief personal background.

Tacoma Background: Tacoma has a majority minority school district, 65% of students are on free and reduced lunch, there's an effort to be a more inclusive city that provides jobs for all people.

Tacoma 2025 Strategic Framework

- Livability
- Economy and Workforce
- Education
- Civic Engagement
- Equity and Accessibility

Sister Cities Program

- Tacoma has 13 Sister Cities, 5 are in Asia
 - Davao City, Philippines
 - Fuzhou, China
 - Gunsan, Korea
 - Kitakyushu, Japan
 - Taichung, Taiwan
- Sister Cities in Asia are the most active programs

Equity and Empowerment Goals

- Diversify City workforce
- Improve outreach efforts to marginalized communities
- Equitable distribution of resources
- Commit to racial and cultural equity
- Chinese Reconciliation Park: Tacoma is one of few cities on the West Coast without a Chinatown. 100 years ago, a group of men went down to the waterfront and ran the Chinese

community out of town and burned down their residences. This group was made up of city leaders. One way Tacoma has tried to address this history is by creating the Chinese Reconciliation Park.

Lincoln Revitalization Project

- Made it a priority in 2014
- Brought back the Lunar New Year Festival in 2016 for the first time in a long time
- Looking to improve housing and local small businesses in the neighborhood
- A city office is located in the Lincoln District
- Local business owners are willing to work with the City because there is a staff person who is bilingual and is reflective of the communities.
- Goals: Work with property owners, infrastructure improvements, and streetscape improvements.

Q&A:

Tam: I'm volunteering with friends in Little Saigon in Seattle. Developers are hoping to build huge buildings in that district. Do you have advice for addressing this issue in other cities?

Mayor: What is going on in Seattle is different from what is going on in Tacoma. Seattle is booming and more people are moving to Tacoma due to affordability. It's important for communities to have a voice in the process and in how the neighborhood is being shaped.

Gurung: Is there an opportunity to have a sister city with Nepal?

Mayor: Yes, it is possible. Sister Cities happen because someone in the community has an interest or connection with the city abroad. We look at the benefits – education, arts and culture, economic development and determine if we can make that partnership.

Dickinson: I'm excited to see a mayor like you, and I am wondering what your personal background is.

Mayor: My father was stationed at JBLM. I graduated from Mt. Tahoma HS and lived in Atlanta for 5 years. Growing up, I did not dream to run for mayor. I got involved in public service because of my high school guidance counselor who encouraged me to run for the library board. My mom then encouraged me to run for mayor, because she told me that I had a responsibility to serve the citizens of Tacoma and service is not about me, it is about the community.

Tufono: What advice do you have for people who are interested in running for public office?

Mayor: I encourage people to think about whether you are going to be a barrier to progress or will you be an innovator in a dynamic and changing world. You have to do two things – 1) You have to be able to interact with every person in the community and 2) You have to demonstrate that you are competent and capable.

Wada: Thank you, I'm so impressed with the turnaround of the City of Tacoma, and I give a lot of that credit to you [Mayor]. However, the last time I looked at the workforce in Tacoma, the Asian numbers were very low and the process for applying for government positions was difficult. How can we mitigate this issue? Also, how do we retain higher education students in Tacoma?

Mayor: Discussed strategies to remove barriers and will examine how the standardized test could be a barrier for applicants.

Pen: Can you tell me more about the 253 Summer Jobs Program?

Mayor: This summer, we have accepted around 220 students and more students and businesses are joining the program. Students work 30 hours per week, make minimum wage, receive job training, resume building, have networking opportunities, dressing for success training, and financial literacy classes. We connect them with employers and give them resources so students leave with experience and references.

COMMITTEE UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

Education:

- Commissioner Vue: The Education Roundtable went really well and it was great working with other Commissions. We need to have different people attending our events to have more voices at the table.

Health and Human Services:

- Commissioner Dinh: I have about 75% of the needs assessment completed. I am requesting input and feedback about what questions to ask, the methodology, and what communities we are targeting. Please review questions for inclusivity, cultural understanding, and ease of translation.

Economic Development:

- Commissioner Gurung: It's hard for small businesses to get a loan to run businesses. Communities are having problems with financing.
- Commissioner Wada: We can host a community event for small business owners and ways to contract with state government.
- Director Itti: Attended Department of Commerce (DOC) Minority Business Roundtable meetings. DOC provides a lot of local pass-through funding and grants to their partners. Unfortunately, many of the opportunities don't incorporate targeted strategies to include people of color, women, or veterans. Recent change for Associate Development Organizations to measure their outreach to these groups so they can become more inclusive about which communities they reach out to and serve.

SPONSORSHIP POLICY

Motion was made by Commissioner Pen to approve the sponsorship guideline and seconded by Commissioner Dickinson with no amendments and unanimous approval.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Motion was made by Commissioner Gaur to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Pen with no further discussion and unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 PM.

Minutes prepared by Brianne Ramos.