



**ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2015**

The Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at City Hall in Austin, Texas.

Chair Richard Jung called the Board Meeting to order at 06:06 p.m.

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Vince Cobalis, Richard Jung, Miyong Kim, Sonia Kotecha, Thuy Nguyen, Shubhada Saxena, Richard Yuen

Staff in Attendance: Rey Arellano, Sarah Chen, Roxanne Evans, Marion Sanchez, Xavier Wan

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There was no change/correction to the December 9, 2014 regular meeting draft minutes.

Recommendation to approve the December 9, 2014 regular meeting minutes as presented in draft form was approved on Commissioner Vince Cobalis motion, Commissioner Richard Yuen second on a 6-0 vote (Commissioner Saxena arrived late).

**2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS**

There was no citizen communication at this meeting.

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Update on the AAQOL Initiative**

Executive Liaison Rey Arellano reported that the AAQOL Community Assessment Committee has been very involved with the Scope of Work of the Initiative and deferred the update to Committee Chair Richard Yuen.

**b. Update from AAQOL Community Assessment Committee**

Committee Chair Richard Yuen reported that Marion Sanchez and her colleague would be soliciting the assistance of UT graduate students enrolled in an outreach and engagement class, to select the AAQOL Initiative as a class project. She will be working with Dr. Jang on the type of project that will be helpful to the Initiative.

Commissioner Vince Cobalis asked about the graduate students' degree of involvement. Marion Sanchez replied the group of UT students have not defined the project yet, but want a project they can complete within very defined timelines. Commissioner Miyong Kim stated possible projects can be taking pictures of Asian Americans social gatherings or using GIS system to map out populations as supplemental information for the Initiative.

Committee Chair Yuen continued to report that Dr. Jang presented a proposal with the following revisions:

- age group expanded to include 25-85, with n=500 from each of the five major subgroup

for a total N=2500

- indirect costs for printing at UT have been waived in the event that City of Austin is unable to cover printing costs

Committee Members assessed the project is worth half a million dollars at the cost of a revised-down \$123,694, with the reduction of manpower and potential delays in completion. Committee Members discusses other avenues of funding. Two avenues were explored: 1) City of Austin internal sources of funding; 2) reach out to Asian American businesses for donations. Committee Chair Yuen also indicated that Roxanne Evans, who replaces Robin Otto due to reassignment of duties, would seek the Law Department opinion on direct donations and possible conflict of interest issues. There is also the possibility to work with the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (GAACC) and ask the GAACC to receive donations from Asian American businesses, and partner with the City of Austin in the AAQOL Initiative, to pay for part of the cost.

Commissioners discussed EMS interest in participating, timing for IFB, impact to timeline if reducing a graduate student, amount allocated as incentive to increase participation, and potentially accepting additional funding and related questions.

**c. Update from AARC Workgroup**

Commissioner Vince Cobalis reported that the AARC Workgroup received update from AARC Facility Manager Taja regarding PARD data collection: using Survey Monkey and at the front desk. It is difficult to get translations done and hard to identify the groups that do not know about the AARC. For large meetings, it is hard to collect demographics information since no registration is needed. Data is only available from small classes now. Though there is intent to match the American Community Survey data collection, it's uncertain if that would work with this community. Commissioner Richard Jung added that the input about different community sizes is needed, therefore holding off on categories now.

The AARC Kitchen went back to drawing board based on recommendations from the community. Volunteers are reviewing signage translations for quality and cost. The bridge between the AARC and the adjacent APD parking lot is cancelled, pending the booking facility.

**d. Update on 2015 Meeting Dates**

Staff Liaison Sarah Chen reported that the Commission approved the 2015 Commission meeting dates last month, and the Board and Commissions Room has been reserved for the year.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Community Immersion Program**

Commissioner Thuy Nguyen introduced Officer Ashley Edwards, Lead Instructor of the Austin Police Department (APD) Cadet Team, to discuss APD's Community Immersion Program. Officer Edwards and Sergeant Robin Henderson presented the history and requirements of the program. As part of the curriculum, cadets are divided into teams and placed in different cultural groups to gather information, meet with the community, and make a presentation at the end of the class. There is no specific component on community groups. APD designed this program beyond the State mandated curriculum to address specific needs.

Commissioners were interested in the lesson plan approval process, and whether content was standardized. They were concerned about the content being culturally competent and presentations include true culturally sensitive knowledge, and offered to provide insight and assistance to help cadets learn about the Asian American community. Asked about how many cadets looked at the Asian American community, Officer Edwards responded though only 9 of

the 43 cadets were assigned the Asian community, the full class will see all the presentations. Chair Richard Jung expressed that the community needs to be more involved to assist cadets in understanding Asian American cultures.

There were questions regarding recruitment of Asian Americans, but that is the responsibility of the recruitment division. Commissioners asked about formal continued education or follow-up in this area. APD works through the Asian Community Liaison.

Though 2010 Census demographics information is used, cadets need to go out to locate the community and gather information. They are not allowed to consult current officers or previous presentations. The current Cadet class presentation will be at 7PM on February 23, 2015 at the Training Academy on Shaw Lane.

Chair Richard Jung asked if the program is flexible to allow the community to come talk to cadets in addition to cadets going out. Officers welcomed the suggestion. Commissioner Thuy Nguyen would like to invite APD recruiters to talk about community outreach.

**b. Visioning Process (Part II)**

Marion Sanchez reviewed briefly what was accomplished during the last meeting, and presented the “Wall” - notes and comments from the last meeting grouped and categorized into themes. She asked Commissioners to review the comments and themes, and to rearrange or add comments as needed. Commissioners exchanged thoughts on new categories emerging, difficulties in selecting priorities, and defined ‘short-term project’. The “Wall” will become a guide during community outreach and for reevaluation and reassessment in the dissemination process. Commissioners also shared long-term vision such as benchmarking representation in systemic civic organizations (hiring in APD, AFD), putting systems in place for civic engagement, building the foundation for desired future state, and obtaining a level playing field. Of concern is the changing major cultures and number of subcultures for effective community engagement.

Executive Liaison Rey Arellano stated the more specific measurable: 1) all Asian Americans are aware of services the City of Austin offers, and 2) representation in certain areas relative to the community. Chair Jung suggested measuring progress realistically and move on to other endeavors as needed. Commissioners discussed collecting community leaders’ visions and strategies (can be done in guided conversations), creating a dashboard and wishlist of critical needs, garnering buy-in from all levels of extremely diverse community, side projects besides the survey, and marketing the Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission and its work to the Asian American community. Discussions ensued regarding ways for community exposure, including Commissioner interviews with specific language media, City articles for publication in local news media, but most importantly, providing concrete information to the community. Executive Liaison Arellano suggested utilizing the City’s communication process and providing updates when close to launching the survey.

Next Step: Marion Sanchez will draft a report of findings for Commissioners to provide feedback. She acknowledged and thanked the big team that helped the visioning process. Chair Jung thanked Marion for her efforts. Executive Liaison Arellano thanked all for the unprecedented cooperation, as well as the AARC Workgroup and the Community Assessment Committee.

**c. Review and discuss City of Austin diversity report and possible recommendation**

At the request from Commissioners, Staff Liaison Sarah Chen distributed the FY14 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Representation reports, both including and excluding Civil Service. The Asian

American percentage of representation is lower than the percentage of population in the community. Chair Jung wanted to ensure Commissioners are looking at the right areas for improvement for recruitment purposes. Commissioner Miyong Kim proposed to table for discussion. Chair Jung requested that Human Resources Department provide summary representation reports for 10 years for comparison.

**b. Information Sharing (Standing Agenda Item)**

- Commissioner Sonia Kotecha asked about possible additional seats on this Commission. Executive Liaison responded the current term expires on 6/30/2015 and that Commissioners who are interested in continue to serve need to contact Council Members for sponsorship, which is not limited to the Council Member in the same district one resides. He encouraged all Commissioners to approach a Council Member for nomination. Chair Jung stated that all interested to continue to serve need to resubmit an application to secure a seat. An application must be in place before a Council Member can nominate. Executive Liaison Arellano asked Staff Liaison Sarah Chen to send the link to the application and a list of Council Members to Commission Members. Chair Jung asked if a Council Member drew a two-year term then the Commission nominee also would serve the same term. Executive Liaison Arellano will follow up on this question.
- Marion Sanchez shared there is a Minority Media event at City Hall on April 15, 2015. Since the Initiative will be in full force then, we can be added to the agenda. Marion will create a packet with tools for Commissioners to use when going to the community.
- Commissioner Sonia Kotecha shared that 1/24/2015 is Republic Day of India celebration banquet at the AARC. Commissioners can contact her for tickets.
- Commissioner Thuy Nguyen shared that Summit Elementary will host a Tet celebration on 2/13/2015 at 6PM. She will send the invitation to Commissioners via Sarah Chen.
- Marion Sanchez shared that there will be a Public Input meeting on 1/22/2015 at City Hall and urged Commissioners to invite participants. Executive Liaison Arellano stated City Council wants feedback on committee structure and public input, with the interest in outreach to the Asian American community. Other topics Council would like to have deep dive discussions regarding matters such as housing, affordability, permitting, Imagine Austin, at the policy and strategic level before issues get to agenda items.
- Chair Richard Jung encouraged Commissioners to consider the push for a new Office for Immigrant Affairs or Language Minority Affairs, for the day to day push of issues important to the community. It's important to have an office from the inside to push for issues. With the Mayor trying to create a new way of looking at problems and issues, Commissioners are encouraged to bring up this idea at public meetings. Chair Jung added that the public cannot just call Commission Members or Executive Liaison Arellano for their problems. The DC Mayor's Office has an office where citizens can call and discuss problems in their own language. Immigrants and minority language speakers are the people who don't have access to the system now and if there is one number to call to address their problems it will be helpful.
- Commissioner Sonia Kotecha shared that Austin Welcoming City Summit will be held at the Palmer Events Center 2/23-24/2015, hosted by the Commission on Immigrant Affairs. She will forward information to Sarah Chen for dissemination to Commissioners.
- Executive Liaison Arellano wanted to ensure we are doing a complete and reasonable job of reaching to the Asian American community. General approach is to cast broadly for input. A study sponsored by the AARC Non-Profit made some recommendations about public outreach, with written translations into Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean as a minimum for the general public. Other categories included geographic/demographics and social safety net. In general, the City of Austin will take that language requirement approach, and if Commissioners have other different, helpful approaches to let him know. He will send the report as a reference and provide a summary. Chair Jung acknowledged the AARC-NP and

NAAO PAC for community engagement efforts.

- Executive Liaison Arellano announced that his assignment changed in December 2014, with the retirement of Deputy City Manager Mike McDonald. He now oversees the public safety departments and his previous departments have been reassigned to other ACMs. He introduced Roxanne Evans as his new Executive Assistant and acknowledged Robin Otto for her services and efforts.
- Chair Jung wanted to ask the Law Department if Commission Members were allowed social bonding such as dinner together outside of Commission meetings. Staff Liaison Sarah Chen stated a community announcement will have to be posted.
- Commissioner Shubhada Saxena wanted to know how the Commission can let the community know of its existence. Chair Jung suggested attending events and being acknowledged. Commissioner Yuen would like to have name badges with magnet made for Commission Members.

#### **5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commission members did not discuss items for the February 17, 2015 meeting. Three items have been placed on the agenda from prior meeting discussions:

- 1) Presentation and discussion of the impact of the NHCD 5-year housing plan on the Asian American community
- 2) Review and discuss City of Austin diversity report and possible recommendation
- 3) Information sharing (standing agenda item)

#### **6. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

There were no staff briefings at this meeting.

#### **7. ADJOURN**

Recommendation adjourning the meeting was approved on Commissioner Richard Yuen motion, Commissioner Miyong Kim second on a 6-0 vote (Commissioner Vince Cobalis left prior to adjournment). Chair Richard Jung adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m.