



**ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2016**

The Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at City Hall in Austin, Texas.

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

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Aletta Banks, Nu Chanpheng, Vince Cobalis, Janki DePalma, Richard Jung, Sonia Kotecha, Ann Okamura, Patil Pramod, Shubhada Saxena, Kirk Yoshida, Richard Yuen

Staff in Attendance: Sarah Chen, Marion Sanchez, Betsy Woldman, Taja Beekley, Kimberly McNeeley, Angela Means

**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS**

There was no citizen communication at this meeting.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There was no change to the December 15, 2015 meeting draft minutes. Recommendation to approve the December 15, 2015 meeting minutes as presented in draft form was approved on Commissioner Vince Cobalis motion, Commissioner Shubhada Saxena second on a 10-0 vote. (Commissioner Sonia Kotecha arrived after minutes were approved.)

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Update on the AAQOL Initiative**

Marion Sanchez showed the mobile AAQOL display for Commissioners to review, and provided update on the community engagement piece (Community Conversation). Up to five events (both small groups and large events) have been scheduled, with the first small group meeting at the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce on 1/20/2016, followed by a public event at the AARC on 2/17/2016. Two project interns, Indira Nallapati and Jenny Shen, were introduced to the Commissioners. There is also plan to work with groups that serve the refugee population.

Marion further shared the steps to be taken in the Community Conversation meetings: whiteboard to list vision for the future, map showing population and services, 5 pillars (subject matters) for discussion groups, with all comments and notes placed into a portal. Participants will receive a keychain with logo and the AAQOL flyer. Betsy Woldman has put pictures of Austin Asian Americans in the Instagram account #austinlifeATX. Marion also shared a limited edition pin with Commissioners, the pin will be given to community leaders as a thank you for scheduling and hosting the meetings. Community meetings can be hosted with at least 15 members, and a van will be ready at City Hall to move the mobile display to the location within an hour of the meeting.

Commissioner Richard Yuen stated that the purpose of the guided conversations is for participants to write ideas on post-it notes and it's all inclusive, all ideas to be analyzed. For the

participants who prefer to be more private, a box of tools named “Conversations Over Tea” will be sent to social gatherings and private meetings, with the host sending all the ideas in an envelope back to the City. Commissioners asked about length of meeting and timeframe. Marion stated it’s a two-hour engagement and the project starts on 1/20/2016 through mid-April. To schedule a meeting at home, the host can contact the email on the back of the flyer.

Commissioners also suggested New Year Celebration events as possibility for Community Conversation. Marion also reported that meeting volunteers would have their names and language(s) they speak on the name tag. Commissioners also asked about a brief 5-minute presentation, media releases and whether they were translated to different Asian languages. Marion reported difficulties in reaching all the media on the list, since some of the numbers did not work any longer. Chair Richard Jung suggested sending the non-working media list to Commissioners for follow-up. Commissioners also suggested an online Chinese TV and Vietnamese radio for outreach, along with the City of Austin YouTube, website, TV and Twitter presence.

- b. Update on proposing names of Asian Americans for AISD school renaming  
Chair Jung stated that Houston ISD renaming 3-4 schools, and meeting has been scheduled with AISD Trustee Paul Saldana. AISD is finalizing process to allow school renaming. Chair Jung will send Houston ISD information to Sarah Chen for dissemination.

Commissioner Vince Cobalis moving item 5(b) for discussion and possible action. Chair Jung invited Parks and Recreation staff to make presentation.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

- b. Discussion and possible action on providing feedback to the City Auditor’s Office on Parks and Recreation Department Resource Allocation  
Kimberly McNeeley, PARD Assistant Director, and Angela Means, PARD Financial Services Division Manager, presented information related to the audit on PARD resource allocation. PARD is currently in the middle of the audit and the concentration is on how funds are made available for programming. The audit has been in progress for a month and scope has not been narrowed down yet. Chair Jung asked if there were policy directive to ensure allocation meets diversity needs, such as by location/ethnicities; and that if any Asian is at the executive level. Ms. McNeeley replied it’s geographic focused, Council resolution, nationwide standards and best practices were used as guiding principle, namely, for core area a facility is within 0.25 mile and outside core is within 0.5 mile. There is no Asian currently in the PARD executive level. Chair Jung expressed that having a person of specific ethnicity and age bracket (seniors) in the decision making group may facilitate directions in resource allocation. Commissioner Cobalis asked about resource allocation for different facilities for comparison. Ms. McNeeley can provide a list of facilities and budgets by location and district. As PARD staff explained this is an annual audit, Chair Jung wanted to ensure the Commission can provide meaningful feedback to the Office of the City Auditor. Ms. McNeeley reported that two quality of life reports were presented during the last budget session and resulted in discussions on the dais and funding/staff for African American Quality of Life and Hispanic Quality of Life (MAC).

Angela Means distributed PARD budget information, listing each recreation center and cultural centers and museums. Ms. McNeeley stated that the African American Cultural Heritage District budget is in the Economic Development Department, a partnership with the chamber and Neighborhood Housing. Commissioner Cobalis asked if there is a way to compare programmatically the MAC and AARC and how they differ. Ms. McNeeley replied a program planning worksheet by each center is produced each year and a report can be produced. Commissioners were concerned about timing and not being able to provide

meaningful feedback to the Auditor's Office. Ms. McNeeley said the information can be provided the next day to Sarah Chen for dissemination to the Commissioners. Chair Jung stated if the length of the audit was unknown, he would ask for an extension on the Commission's feedback. Ms. Means explained the budget cycle and timeline, and that PARD had not been able to enhance services in the past 8 years. Ms. McNeeley stated that if the audit finds deficiencies then PARD can get funding to fix the deficiencies. Commissioners discussed possibilities to add different languages to the signs in parks, Trail of Lights performance by Asian groups, and neighborhood association input to resource allocation. Ms. McNeeley acknowledged difficulties to reach people outside of the core group and would like to discuss with Marion and incorporate her methods. Commissioner Cobalis asked about budget for senior services, and Ms. McNeeley pointed out the budget under administration for meals on wheels. Commissioner Saxena commented the AARC needed funds for transportation, which grants do not allow. Information will be provided to Sarah Chen.

Commissioners discussed whether and how to respond to the auditor's request. Since PARD is traditionally underfunded, concrete data is needed for concrete funding proposals. Chair Jung asked Commissioners to send feedback to Sarah Chen after receipt of information from PARD, for Chair Jung to collate and formulate feedback.

#### **Returning to Item 3 Old Business:**

##### **c. Working Group Reports**

###### **1) AARC Working Group**

Commissioner Vince Cobalis stated that Sarah Chen will send out the minutes and attachments for the AARC Working Group. 1) Construction for the commercial kitchen will be mid to late summer, since no permits were issued and contractor was selected yet. There is a temporary holdover on the current contract to provide meals and an RFP is out for a permanent vendor contract. Taja Beekley reported the kitchen remains useful at present state. There was additional money from Council to expand the senior meal program, and Commissioners wanted to know if additional transportation would be covered. Some of the funds had been allocated for translations and equipment not included in the bond project (cups, plates, cooking utensils). Commissioner Saxena asked about partnering with a non-profit for transportation. Taja reported there were legal concerns about donation of vans to the City of Austin. As discussions went into details, Chair Jung suggested they be discussed in the Working Group. Commissioner Cobalis will schedule Commissioner Saxena to the next AARC Working Group meeting. 2) Working on population data collection and recommendations on changes to breakdown on population.

###### **2) HR Working Group**

Commissioner Nguyen reported that the working group did not meet in January. The next meeting is February 4, 2016, and still waiting for HRD to send representative. Sarah Chen reported that ACM Rey Arellano had sent the request to HRD and Rebecca Kennedy asked for clarification as to what particular personnel the Working Group wanted. Commissioner Yuen replied needing someone to explain the data and a consistent liaison to work with. Chair Jung suggested asking for a data person first, and if that person cannot answer the questions, ask for some other functions.

###### **3) Business Plan Working Group**

Commissioners Yoshida reported the group met today with Taja who would submit her budget to PARD in March. The Working Group will be looking at putting forward a recommendation in the next meeting. Taja will provide a list of unmet needs through Sarah and Commissioner Yoshida asked Commissioners to send feedback to Sarah. Be realistic, as Taja said there are 18 divisions and only 10 items will get through. Suggestion is to focus on one or two things and hope to get one funded. Chair Jung suggested to do it in the context in how much can be done,

be patient and make sure something solid is put forward. Commissioner Yuen stated that by August or September we would have strong data to show gaps for requests. Commissioner Saxena suggested identifying three or four budget items besides AARC/PARD budget to make recommendations. Commissioner Yuen suggested looking at the 5 pillars identified last year and as ways to identify gaps. Chair Jung suggested emphasizing that the language minority Asian Communities are most likely to pay taxes and not get any services in return. Commissioner Yoshida also suggested tracking the next bond election in FY18, and needing to start planning in FY17 on capital improvement items. Chair Jung reported that Commissioner Richard Yuen will serve on the Central Health Board and direct service providers have not been providing translators, which might be prone to lawsuits.

**4) Community Outreach Working Group**

Chair Jung reported this working group is still waiting for new Commissioners to come on board before commencing meetings.

**5) Education Working Group**

No report.

**d. Discussion and possible action on nomination of commissioners for joint committee assignments**

Chair Jung appointed Commissioner Pramod Patil on the Joint Cultural Committee.

Commissioner Cobalis suggested that an alternate be appointed to the joint committees to help make sure the Commission has a representative available at these meetings.

**4. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

There was no staff briefing.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Discussion and possible action on a resolution to support threatened immigrant communities**

Commissioners Kotecha reported that she reached out to the Human Rights Commission which passed a resolution to welcome Syrian refugees, and that Mayor Adler will be present on the 1/24/2016 Muslim townhall meeting. In light of the attack on a Pflugerville mosque, she suggested the Commission make a recommendation. Chair Jung asked Commissioner Kotecha to reformulate the resolution she drafted and circulate through Sarah Chen for vote in next month's meeting. The item will be put on the February agenda.

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

Commissioner Thuy Nguyen shared the New Year Celebration at Summit Elementary on 2/11/2016 and invited Commissioners to join. Ticket is \$5/plate.

Commissioner Richard Yuen shared he will step down from this Commission to concentrate on Central Health commitment, but will still come as a private citizen on the AAQOL Oversight Working Group and speak as a citizen. He recommends seeking someone with strong data and analytical skills, in the behavioral or health profession to serve in his vacated seat. He promised to serve as long as necessary.

Commissioner Sonia Kotecha shared the Indian American Coalition event on Saturday.

Commissioner Shubhada Saxena shared a leadership institute training in early March by the New Leaders Council, and sought suggestions on diversity training.

Commissioner Shubhada Saxena shared an AREAA event.

Commissioner Vince Cobalis shared that Capital Metro seeks input on services next month and asked Commissioners to email him suggestions.

There is a presentation to Central Health Strategic Planning on Friday.

#### **6.FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Commissioners discussed agenda items for the February 16, 2016 meeting. One item has been moved to Old Business on the agenda:

1) Discussion and possible action on a resolution to support threatened immigrant communities

One new item will be placed on the agenda after the working group discussed and report to the Commission:

1) Discussion and possible action on a resolution in response to SMBR's MBE/WBE Disparity Study Report

#### **7. ADJOURN**

Recommendation adjourning the meeting was approved on Commissioner Patil Pramod motion, Commissioner Thuy Nguyen second on an 11-0 vote. Chair Richard Jung adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.