



**ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2016**

The Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 20, 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 (arrived at 6:19PM), Vince Cobalis, Janki DePalma, Richard Jung, Charles Lu,, Thuy Nguyen, Ann Okamura, Pramod Patil, Sonemaly Phrasavath (arrived at 6:10PM), Shubhada Saxena, Kara Takasaki, Kirk Yoshida

Staff in Attendance: Rey Arellano, Sarah Chen, Taja Beekley, Jorge Morales, David Taylor, Marion Sanchez

**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Two citizens signed up under this item.

Dr. Richard Yuen of the Central Health Board of Managers spoke about the recently passed tax rate by the Travis County Healthcare District d/b/a Central Health, which is higher than last year's rate and will raise taxes for maintenance and operations. He clarified that Cerebral Health is not a direct care service, but has oversight of other organizations providing care.

Chair Richard Jung introduced the newest AAQOL Commissioner Sonemaly Phrasavath as she arrived and she introduced herself.

Mr. Jack Chen discussed the quality of life survey results, referenced the petition the Taiwanese community submitted 3 months ago and discussions on linguistics change and contract limitations, and asserted entitlement to self-identification by the Taiwanese community. He exceeded the 3-minute limit, so Chair Jung asked him to summarize and to address to the Commission instead of Dr. Jang.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There was no change to the August 16, 2016 meeting draft minutes. Recommendation to approve the August 16, 2016 meeting minutes as presented in draft form was approved on Commissioner Vince Cobalis motion, Commissioner Ann Okamura second on a 12-1-0 vote (Commissioner Charles Lu abstained).

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

Chair Jung moved item 3(b) to allow staff to present and leave the meeting early.

**b. Status report on the AARC Kitchen Renovation by the Public Works Department**

David Taylor, PWD project manager, and Jorge Morales, Assistant Director, reported on progress of the AARC Kitchen project. The Job Contractor submitted proposal on 9/11/2016, was over budget

but within the range or PARD budget. PARD performed option to stay with the Job Contractor, An RCA was launched to authorize the over \$500,000 limit and hope to be cleared 10/6 or by 10/20/2016. Commissioner Cobalis asked about the original budget and how much has been spent, and amount to ask for Council authorization. David Taylor reported \$500,000 budget with \$140,000 spent on architect, project management by PARD and PWD and QC review, and construction contract for \$550,000.

There were questions and discussions about delays, contingency plan if Council did not approve, and estimated completion date. Jorge Morales responded that Council gives authorization to spend the amount beyond budget which PARD is comfortable with funding availability, and that the team can remove items or cut internal cost to stay within budget. David Taylor stated early March is a more realistic completion date.

**a. Update on the AAQOL Initiative**

Marion Sanchez provided update on the community outreach report being drafted, which will address two areas, methodology and findings/lessons learned. Raw data will be released for community to review, and report will be released to the City of Austin portal. It will take 4 weeks to complete. Commissioner Takasaki commented that working group membership change and traveling schedules delayed in responding to the Taiwanese community concerns. She addressed the community's desire to see Dr. Jang's report, asked for understanding the effects on City department services, and that there are four parts of this project, thus consideration needed for release of both quantitative and qualitative reports. Marion listed the four parts: Dr. Jang's report, Ryan Robinson's demographics data, Asian American Health Assessment, and the Qualitative report conducted by CPIO. Commissioners Cobalis and Jung stated Dr. Jang's report was commissioned by the City and needs to be presented to the City which will decide when to release it.

Executive Liaison Arellano recognized the Taiwanese community for their input and participation. The City is ready to receive and review Dr. Jang's report, and it will be released to the City Council first, then to the public. Chair Jung would like to review the report before sending up to City Council, Executive Liaison Arellano deferred the details to the working group. Commissioner Takasaki stated Dr. Jang added a chapter to address the identity concerns, and Chair Jung asked Dr. Jang to talk about conversations with the Taiwanese community.

Dr. Jang provided perspectives on the Ordinance which identified the 5 major groups for study, and the survey followed the census groups. The Chinese group has diversity within the group and for the study, is defined in a broader group. The new chapter discusses the sub groups and the report has moved beyond what the census did, by paying attention to the sensitivity of the Taiwanese group. Chair Jung stated the report made adjustments and at the same time maintained the integrity of the study. He then invited community speakers.

Four speakers signed up for this agenda item: Francis Pan, Jong-Song Lee, Schiller Liao, and Michael Chen.

Mr. Francis Pan praised the Commission for the work and indicated the issue to him was identify. He does not want to be associated with communist China. Using the Chinese language is fine, but not when using identity. He urged that Taiwanese not be included in Chinese. Chair Jung expressed that Dr. Jang wrote a chapter clearly breaking out Taiwanese, retroactively making a correction to make sure we differentiate Taiwanese and Chinese, and asked if that satisfied what he wanted? Mr. Pan stated he would like to meet with Dr. Jang to discuss in detail. Chair Jung asked that the Taiwanese community wait till the actual report is released than send a representative to talk with Dr. Jang.

Mr. Song-Jong Lee passed out a handout and discussed his personal experience. Chair Jung asked him to address the Commission instead of Dr. Jang.

Mr. Schiller Liao stated he did not represent the Taiwanese community tonight and expressed it has been an emotional three months for him. He stressed that people who speak the language do not necessarily identify themselves with the language, and asked the Commission to understand why they identify themselves as Taiwanese. He could accept Chinese speaking countries but hope future surveys will identify Taiwan as a separate group. Chair Jung reiterated the survey cannot be done retroactively and that chapter 4 of the report clearly identified Taiwan as a separate group. He welcomes the community to return after the report is released.

Mr. Michael Chen expressed his unhappiness with using language as a tool to identify people. He asserted culture should be used, and that language categorization was not acceptable.

Chair Jung thanked the Taiwanese community and Dr. Jang. He stressed that Dr. Jang is a paid consultant of the City and what she did on chapter 4 was on her own time. He asked the Taiwanese community to appreciate Dr. Jang's efforts.

**c. Nomination and vote on a Community Stakeholder Commissioner vacancy**

Chair Jung announced that as of today, we will not take any more applications and that the selection process will be handled by the existing working group chaired by Commissioner Banks. There will be no action on this item today. Recommendation to table item 3c until next month was approved on Commissioner Janki DePalma motion, Commissioner Ann Okamura second on a 13-0 vote.

Chair Jung moved to item 5(a) for discussions due to the high number of speakers signed up for this item.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Discussion and possible action on allocation of FY17 Asian American Quality of Life budget funding**

Executive Liaison Arellano reported that Council approved FY17 budget last week and we are now waiting for the Budget Office document clearly identifying what was approved. AAQOL funding included \$250,000 translation block grant. The three Executive Sponsors for the QOL will meet tomorrow to come up with recommendations to the Commissions on how to use the funding. Chair Jung expressed that it helped to have clarification. He talked to Council Members and was advised that we will make recommendations based on our decisions here, and asked the Chair of the Business Plan Working Group to report on the working group's efforts. Commissioner Yoshida reported the constraints of the approved QOL budget: one-time funding, Council wants services vs. staff. He distributed a new list as a result from the working group's discussion of the original list and other considerations.

Chair Jung invited citizens who signed up for this agenda item to speak first. Three groups represented by ten speakers signed up to present and request funding. Chair Jung asked that a primary speaker for each group speak, to be followed by supporting speakers if time allows.

Ms. Marina Bhargava spoke on behalf of the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (GAACC), a community organization which supports other organizations. She argued that GAACC has not been funded equally by the Economic Development Department, citing the following funds awarded to minority chambers: GAACC \$142,500, Hispanic Chamber \$202,000, Black Chamber \$172,000, Gay/Lesbian \$153,000, and that funding was not based on community size or performance. Chair Jung would like to ask Economic Development Department for transparency. Commissioner

Saxena asked how funds would be used, Ms. Bhargava responded for outreach and service delivery. Commissioner Saxena invited her to meet with the Community Outreach Working Group. Ms. Esther Martin spoke on behalf of the Asian American Resource Center Non-Profit (AARC-NP) for additional funding to continue the Community Health Navigator Pilot launched in July 2016 and experienced success. Initial funding was one-time funds from HHSD.

Since Ms. Linda Phan was the sole representative speaking on behalf of the Asian Family Support Services of Austin (AFSSA), formerly SAHELI, Chair Jung allowed her more time to present. AFSSA is a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to Asian and other immigrant families dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking, as well as Civil Rights issues. She requested funding for the Economic Empowerment Program which addresses long term needs of survivors. Staffing already exists for the program, but increased request for services, including those via the 24/7 hotline and healthcare services, required funding for indirect cost and personnel cost for a one year term. Chair Jung asked how many years had AFSSA applied for grants from HHSD. Ms. Phan replied two to three, but never got grants. Chair Jung asked if any Asian services received HHSD funding. Ms. Phan was not aware of it. Commissioner Saxena asked about the possibility of putting funds together and creating a pipeline for social services to serve the under-represented. Chair Jung commented that even an established non-profit (such as AFSSA) is not getting funding from the City of Austin now. The AAQOL has to be the City connection for the community to get funding because the City is not meeting the needs. Organizations have come to speak to the Commission, stating they still did not have access to funding, but they are ready and can provide services if funded. Commissioner Chanpheng asked who has been using AFSSA services. Ms. Phan replied new refugees and a wide spectrum of established community. When asked about current funding source, Ms. Phan indicated 3 federal grants and several (Texas) state agencies. Commissioner Banks was interested if AFSSA had any working relationship with the Community Navigator Pilot. Ms. Phan replied it was very new and no active partnership has been established. However, the 24/7 hotline did receive request to connect to healthcare services.

Ms. Linh Tu, presented her personal experience as support to the GAACC funding request. She received assistance from GAACC and was connected with People Fund to open the first Asian Pediatric Nurse agency, providing 10 full-time jobs.

The following speakers spoke in support of the Health Navigator Pilot:

Ms. Rajani Ramachandra, Program Coordinator, reported statistics and presented program overview. Ms. Bobbi Kommineni discussed utilization of the initial one-time funding of \$50,000 from HHSD for July through end of the year, including the hiring of three part-time Health Navigators serving the Korean, Burmese and Vietnamese communities. Funding is needed to hire a fourth Health Navigator and for programming cost. Commissioners asked about the service model. Ms. Ramachandra replied the two-prong approach: initial intake to address the needs, then Navigator accompanies client to appointments and social service agencies to obtain services. Three remaining speakers, Ramey Ko, James Shieh, and Joy Arthur were each given a minute to present in support of the Health Navigator funding request.

Chair Jung asked about how PARD will address the Public Event FTE if funded. Commissioner Cobalis discussed with PARD Director Sara Hensley who would possibly establish a temporary FTE and prioritize it for next fiscal year, but no guarantees. There were discussions of possible duties of this position.

Chair Jung thanked all speakers and the Commissioners deliberated the funding list provided by the Business Plan Working Group. Commissioner Banks presented an alternative funding proposal for consideration. Commissioners discussed funding for Asian mental health services contract for HHSD in the amount of \$90,000. There were concerns about delivery mechanism and whether

HHSD could award the contract to established vendors capable of providing services to the Asian community.

Executive Liaison Rey Arellano stated that the three Quality of Life executive sponsors will meet per Council direction, and will return with specifics for measures and outcomes regarding the funding.

Upon consideration of pending recommendations from the AAQOL Initiative survey, Commissioners agreed to amend the proposal from the Business Plan Working Group. Recommendation to amend the Business Plan Working Group recommendation to reduce the funding for mental health services in the amount of \$90,000 and allocate \$82,558 to the AARC senior transportation, with the balance added to Health Navigator was approved on Commissioner Shubhada Saxena motion, Commissioner Ann Okamura second on an 11-2 vote, with Commissioners Aletta Banks and Kara Takasaki oppose.

Returned to item 3(d).

### **3. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **d. Working Group Reports**

##### **1) Human Resources Diversity Issues Working Group**

Commissioner DePalma reported that the HR working group met with HRD staff prior to the Commission meeting. HRD had some creative ideas at the AARC regarding privacy. There would also be career fair and bigger workshop. HRD would come up with proposal.

##### **2) Community Outreach Working Group**

Commissioner Yoshida reported that Commissioner Saxena would be chair.

##### **3) Education Working Group**

Commissioner Chanpheng provided follow-up on the International School and proposed a visit in the first week of October for two hours.

##### **4) Arts and Culture Working Group**

Commissioner Patil reported that the working group would like more participation from Commissioners and community members. Cultural Asset Mapping is ending this month. Commissioner Saxena will conduct a meeting at 1:30pm on 9/28/2016 at the AARC.

Commissioner Thuy Nguyen left at 9:48pm.

##### **5) Health Working Group**

Commissioner Cobalis reported the Health Working Group was established last month and wanted to put HHSD on the October agenda to address issues regarding mental health. He urged Commissioners to join.

##### **6) Community Assessment Working Group**

Commissioner Takasaki reported two meetings with Dr. Jang and Marion Sanchez. The group is looking for guidance from the City on timeline to release the report.

Commissioner Nu Chanpheng left at 9:53pm.

### **4. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

There was no staff briefing.

Moved to item 5(b)

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**b. Discussion and possible action on HHSD services.**

**Item tabled.**

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

**Chair Jung reminded Commissioners to read the resumes for the Stakeholder Commissioner.**

**6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**Commissioners did not discuss agenda items for the October 18, 2016 meeting. Items tabled will be on the agenda.**

**7. ADJOURN**

**Recommendation adjourning the meeting was approved on Commissioner Vince Cobalis motion, Commissioner Janki DePalma second on an 11-0 vote. Chair Richard Jung adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.**