

Minutes from AAQOL Dialogue Event

Event: AAQoL Community Engagement Listening Forum

Date: November 14, 2018, 6-8 pm

Location: Asian American Resource Center

People present: (see sign in list)

Introductions

Introductions (planned 15 mins, took 30 mins)

- Attendees represented various sectors and organizations including:
 - Real estate development
 - City Planning Commission
 - American Gateways
 - AACHI (formerly AARC non-profit)
 - AFSSA
 - Center for Asian American Studies (UT)
 - Seton
 - Northwest Austin health clinic
 - People's Community Clinic
 - Ministry
 - Technology/healthcare staffing
 - Asian Chamber of Commerce
 - Austin Chinese American Network
 - VACAT
 - Special needs kids
 - Interpretation service
 - NAAO
 - Asian American history center
 - Family violence

Feedback expressed during introductions include...

- Expanding social skills for special needs kids
- Several attendees expressed positive feelings about bonds that have passed (affordable housing and cultural centers/library funding)
- Several acknowledged the growing diversity of Asian community
- Asians working together rather than within their own communities

Marion thanked everyone for introducing themselves. Introductions took longer but the group decided that it is worth creating time to acknowledge and recognize the work each person is creating.

Presentation

Kirk went through slides:

- AAQoL mission
- Meeting schedule and scope of work of commission
- Accomplishments
- Community engagement – this is our first event.

Marion reviewed discussion agreements.

Discussion Questions

Question 1: *How can the AAQoL Advisory Commission better serve and connect with the AA community?*

- In order to reach all the Asian Communities we need a list of all the organizations → Marion said there is a database but it is incomplete – need help completing it. ****Follow up – email everyone and ask them to add their organization to list****
- AAQoL should identify a very clear goal (or 3 goals) every year, make it clear, so people can understand. Make it concise.
- Challenges - tough for commission to connect with everyone because API community is so diverse (i.e. even within one group there are multiple groups). Suggestion for solution – look at participation based on areas represented (i.e. health, education, social) and bring people to participate in those areas. Use organizations such as NAAO as a conduit.
- What is the structure for commission (roles and how do we get in touch with the right commissioner)? → Marion answered this question. ****Follow up – provide info on how to get in touch with commission****
- Have a geographic sense where the AA community is situated (Eric Tang's comment). Solution -> connect with city demographer Ryan Robinson to obtain distribution.
 - Response to above comment (Esther Diaz): American Community Survey does have data and language data is limited. Better source is school district.
- Communicate and articulate mission of commission. 80-90% of people don't know about the commission. Asian organizations are not aware. Important to educate on mission and help people understand "what's in it for me?"
- Define and develop a structure to help people better work together.

Question 2: *Conversely, how can you, as a community leader, better engage with the commission?*

- Why don't we engage the quality of life commission? One way is to use citizen communications. Commission can invite various groups here today for citizen's communications. ****Follow up - We should consider creating a citizen communication schedule and invite people here today/organizations represented throughout the year, once a month****
- AAQoL is a hub for Asian American community.

Question 3: *What challenge, need, or opportunity that impacts health have you or the community that you serve experienced? What idea do you have to address this challenge, need, or opportunity?*

- Opportunities
 - Utilize Asian community health fairs – people are more likely to go if it's designed for them
 - There are many needs so why don't we partner together and streamline? Use existing organizations to broadcast information. ****Follow up - email contact information so groups can connect****
 - Advocate for appropriate administration and grants to help underserved communities. There are already investments in disability and senior care being made in the community to organizations that are already established, it's just a matter of making it aware that there are disparities within the Asian communities. ****Follow up – APH****
 - Creating a "resource coordinator" position that serves as a connector among all organizations
- Challenges/barriers

- Demographics of staff at safety net clinic does not reflect the composition of the community (i.e. lack of Vietnamese speakers). Workforce development and challenging misconceptions of Asian success.
- Eliminating barriers to healthcare access by simplifying intake screening and ID requirements. Lack of administrative support and outreach by clinics.
- Insufficient information about nutrition and food – need to provide information on food consumption and exercise/healthy lifestyle.
- No inclusion criteria, other safety net Clinic's has many barriers, need support from AAQoL for additional admin support to get word out (outreach), more staffing
- Gaps in senior care system (Schiller)
- Outreach to inform people resources are available is difficult.
- Transportation to AARC – AARC is a hub but some people can't get here
- Racism – we need to teach cultural awareness from an early age (James Shieh)

Kirk mentioned micro grant program and provided a brief summary of commission achievements

One person asked if there are any other Asian special needs groups

Question 4: *What are other challenges impacting your community that you would like the commission to know?*

- Cultural stigma about sharing mental health and disability issues ***Follow up- Share info on Mental Health First Aid classes available through Integral Care for the community at no charge, can email to attendees link***
- Asians usually cluster in their own communities but the commission can connect people in leadership roles with each other to help them get involved in communities outside their own, the AAQoL can be a conduit for connection
 - Suggestion: hold a multicultural event to exchange resources, be united but not divided.
- Participants shared interest in inviting each other to their events, to create a bridge across API communities
- Utilize existing strategies (i.e. UT health fair and CelebrAsia) that are established and translate materials to Asian languages
- Show up on budget night!
- Blog/Facebook opportunities to connect
- Look at other organizations who are models at organizing (i.e. GAVA/GO Austin Vamos Austin/Carmen Llanes Pulido's Executive Director)
 - Suggestion: send out list of organizations and people and description of each person's role and organization's work.

Kirk thanked everyone for coming.

Follow up items

- See items above
- Send out synopsis of meeting
- Inquire if people are interested in holding a similar event in the future and suggestion for topics