

**Montgomery County – DHHS
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting
July 11, 2017**

<u>Steering Committee</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>AAHI Staff</u>	<u>Present</u>
<i>Organizational Members</i>			
Ji-Young Cho		Sobia Ahmad	
Wilbur Friedman	X	Huyen Bui	
Michael Lin	X	Perry Chan	X
Mayur Mody	X	Tanya Dang	X
Sam Mukherjee	X	Betty Lam	
Nguyen Nguyen (Vice Chair)	X	Hyewon Lee	
Thomas Tran		Karlie Leung	X
Sovan Tun		Sanjana Quasem	X
Edward Wan	X	Alice Zic	
<i>Individual Members</i>			
	<u>Present</u>	<u>Guests</u>	<u>Present</u>
Nerita Estampador	X	Pazit Aviv	X
Meng K. Lee (Chair)	X		
Sunmin Lee			
Cynthia Marci			
Tho Tran	X		
Judy Wang	X		
<i>Affiliate Members</i>			
	<u>Present</u>		
Anis Ahmed			

Welcome (Meng K. Lee, Chair)

- Meng K. Lee called the meeting to order at 6:18 PM.

Approval of Agenda (Meng K. Lee)

- A motion to approve the agenda was presented. Wilbur Friedman moved to approve the agenda. Sam Mukherjee and Nguyen Nguyen seconded the motion.
- Meng called for a voice vote to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved by voice vote.

ACTION: Meeting agenda approved with no objections.

Approval of Minutes (Meng K. Lee)

- Meeting minutes of the May 9, 2017 Steering Committee (SC) meeting were shared with SC members prior to the meeting.
- Wilbur moved to approve minutes. Nguyen seconded the motion.
- Nguyen mentioned that several comments were raised during Dourakine Rosarion's presentation at the May 9, 2017 SC meeting and would like to know if

any follow-up was done around these comments. Specifically, he brought up the SC's concerns on whether representation of minority groups or Asian Americans is reflected in the data presented. He suggested AAHI to follow up with presenters in the future to ensure that the comments were addressed.

- Meng asked the AAHI staff to listen to the last SC meeting's recording and note any questions and suggestions for follow up.

ACTION ITEM: Staff will follow up with the comments made during Dourakine's presentation at the May SC meeting.

- Meng called for a voice vote to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

ACTION: Meeting minutes approved with no objections or further changes.

Villages in Montgomery County (Pazit Aviv, Village Coordinator, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS))

- Pazit Aviv, who works as the Village Coordinator with the Aging and Disability Services of the MCDHHS, presented on the villages movement within Montgomery County. She focused specifically on how villages affect seniors and their mental and physical health.
- Captured below are some discussion points from Pazit's presentation:
 - Villages are nonprofits started and maintained by groups of seniors that wish to age in place. Villages provide the social and logistical infrastructure for these seniors to live comfortably in their homes as they age.
 - Villages rely on a "neighbors helping neighbors" philosophy, in which seniors help each other to the best of their abilities by offering their skills or assistance.
 - Primarily, villages serve to break seniors' social isolation through social activities and facilitate their transportation by creating a platform for volunteers to drive these seniors to their desired destinations.
 - The senior population in Montgomery County has steadily grown since 2000 and is expected to continue to increase. The non-white senior population is growing, even compared to the non-Hispanic white cohort, making this discussion of senior health directly applicable to AAHI.
 - Nguyen asked how these villages differ from existing senior groups. Pazit replied that villages intentionally provide logistical help and assistance in addition to facilitating social connections.
 - Edward Wan raised concerns that Asian seniors might not be receptive to the idea of a village because they do not want to rely on or ask for help from others. Pazit acknowledged that she has heard these concerns from

seniors of all races and stressed that village participation is voluntary based.

- Meng suggested that AAHI might facilitate villages grouping Asian nationalities (e.g. a Chinese American village). Pazit agreed that communities should create their own villages based on their interests and needs. While villages are usually based on geographical areas, some Asian American communities create their own cultural or language-based village. Villages can also be established with a religion as a unifier.
- Wilbur inquired about the Medicaid waiver program for long-term care, which exists for extremely poor seniors. Pazit responded that villages are more for seniors who are generally independent but want a community for support. Villages cater to middle class seniors who do not qualify for health care benefits designed for low-income residents.
- Pazit asked SC members to be liaisons and help her reach out to the Asian American community. In particular, they can:
 - Provide feedback on how Pazit can best promote and advertise these villages.
 - Form relationships with villages that serve Asian American seniors.
 - Inform Asian Americans if they live in areas with existing villages and help connect them with the villages.
- Nerita Estampador raised the concern that first generation Asian Americans would not participate in villages because they have too much pride to ask their neighbors for help. Second generation immigrants, however, might be more receptive. Pazit responded that, for these prideful seniors, villages can serve to create social atmosphere, even if they do not take advantage of the assistance offered in the villages. Nguyen agreed with Nerita, and he encouraged Pazit to present the idea of a village as a social network, rather than a help network, when talking to Asian Americans.

AAHI Program Updates (Perry Chan, Program Manager)

- Perry Chan shared the following handouts with the SC:
 - AAHI Upcoming Events
 - July 2017 Local Events
- Perry shared AAHI's outreach progress:
 - Since AAHI is now at the start of Fiscal Year (FY) 18, AAHI is currently focusing on administrative work, including budgeting, planning, and performance appraisal. AAHI is working on the FY17 Annual Report, which should be finished before the fall retreat.
 - Friends' Corner continued to be a success. Since the SC meeting in May, four more sessions were held at a faith-based community center and the White Oak Senior Center. AAHI assisted close to 400 community members.
 - In May, AAHI held its second Empowering Community Health Organizations (ECHO) Workshop in the three-part senior health series. This workshop focused on senior safety. A panel of representatives from

the county were invited to discuss senior safety. Over 100 participants representing 47 organizations attended the workshop. The last workshop in the senior health series will be held in October and AAHI will continue to work with Aging and Disability Services to recruit a speaker.

- The third mental health photonovel “More Than Just Stress” is about to be completed. AAHI consulted a group of youth, called Mental Health Youth Ambassadors, throughout the creation of the photonovel to ensure the appearance and messages are relatable for teens. The photonovel will be presented at health fairs and youth outreach events, in addition to being accessible on the AAHI website.
 - The English version is finalized. AAHI is now working on the Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Hindi versions.
 - AAHI will plan a launch event to promote the photonovel. Perry is accepting suggestions for the launch.
 - Sanjana Quasem, AAHI Senior Program Coordinator, stated that the next photonovel will focus on navigating multiple cultural identities. Sam suggested that the photonovel might consider focusing on the cultural divide between Asian Americans’ homes and the American society and address the rising suicide rates of youths from Asian immigrant families. He stated that these children face extreme pressure from their families. Sanjana responded that after consulting with the Mental Health Youth Ambassadors, they did not want the photonovel to explicitly address suicide. Rather the current photonovel addresses suicidal ideation more subtly for a more realistic portrayal of a teen’s experience. AAHI will look into more explicitly confront suicidal ideation in the future.
 - When Nerita asked about the demographics of the teen group consulted, Sanjana and Perry responded that both genders, many different nationalities, and ages 13 through 18 were represented.
 - Edward raised his concerns that the photonovel does not address any topics specific to Asian Americans, and even the illustrations do not depict visibly Asian characters. Nguyen agreed and suggested to add more details, such as color of the hair and skin, to make the photonovel more culturally relatable to Asian Americans. Nguyen also suggested to shorten the speech bubbles’ content. Perry responded that, while this photonovel is finished, he will work with the Youth Ambassadors in the future to address these concerns. AAHI tried to make the photonovel relevant to all Asian Americans, despite the variety among Asian nationalities.
 - Sam suggested AAHI involve SC members and gather their input for the next photonovel. Tho Tran suggested AAHI address intergenerational communication problems in an Asian American family. Nerita agreed and suggested that parents can be the target audience for future photonovels.
- There are two vacant positions at AAHI: Outreach Coordinator and Resource Coordinator. Perry aims to hire new employees by October of this year. Perry

added that the positions with Primary Care Coalition (PCC) will be ending as Montgomery County will be creating new positions. Four positions will be created by the County in FY18 and four more positions will be created in FY19.

ACTION ITEM: When the County job descriptions are public, Perry will send them to SC members to share with their networks.

- Meng provided an update on the Public Health Officer position hiring process. Three candidates are currently under consideration for the job, all of whom are experienced doctors. The final decision will be made in September.

Subcommittees (Meng K. Lee)

- **Retreat**

- This year's retreat will take place in September or October. The exact date will be chosen based on the availability of SC members.

ACTION ITEM: Perry will send a survey for the retreat date to SC members.

- The location will most likely be the North Potomac Community Center, and the retreat facilitator will be the same as last year.
- The retreat planning sub-committee will converse in the next few weeks and discuss topics for the retreat with the facilitator. Sam, Judy Wang, Meng, and Nguyen volunteered to be in the task group.

- **Guidelines**

- Meng asked the SC if they should operate under a set of rules instead.
- Sam suggested that the SC needs rules to maintain protocol and avoid conflicts.
- Wilbur said that the SC must declare all previous rules void when they adopt new guidelines. Last year, he composed a set of guidelines, which Meng supplemented, that could be adopted as the new rules.
- Perry stated that the Leadership Institute for Equity and the Elimination of Disparities (LIEED) has a set of guidelines that the SC might consider incorporating into their own guidelines.
- Meng brought up the possibility of having Montgomery County set the guidelines because the County created AAHI.
- In the past, the Nomination Committee members compiled sets of guidelines. Wilbur, Sam, Sovan Tun, Mayur Mody, and Meng were in this group. These five SC members will form a group again to work on creating a new set of guidelines which aims to be finished by the November SC meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Meng, Wilbur, Sam, Sovan, and Mayur will work on a new set of guidelines to be presented at the November SC meeting.

- Tho commented that the SC should have protocols to ensure member's participation and commitment in the group. The protocols should include evaluation indicators to track the member's performance. Nguyen and Meng, on the other hand, would like to avoid putting too much pressure on the members since this committee is volunteer-based.
- Edward questioned whether SC members will be dismissed in regard of their performance. Perry stated that SC members are unlikely to be dismissed because they are unpaid volunteers. Edward was also concerned if the guidelines will be followed properly and suggested to have a form of public recognition to acknowledge the SC's effort.
- **Nomination / Membership (Wilbur Friedman, Mayur Mody, Sam Mukherjee, Sovan Tun)**
 - Wilbur announced that an applicant would like to join the SC.

ACTION ITEM: Wilbur will send the application to the SC for review.

Updates from Boards, Committee, and Commission (BCC)

- Updates were not discussed at this meeting.
- Nguyen suggested to shorten the duration of presentation from guest speakers to allow more time for Boards, Committee, and Commission updates.
- **Healthy Montgomery (Nguyen Nguyen)**
- **County Executive's Asian American Advisory Committee (Sam Mukherjee, Sovan Tun)**
- **Governor's Commission on Asian American Affairs (Sovan Tun and Edward Wan)**
- **Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs (Mayur Mody)**
- **Leadership Institute for Equity and the Elimination of Disparities (Meng K. Lee)**

Other Business

- There was no other business to address in this meeting.

Adjourn (Meng K. Lee)

- Meng adjourned the meeting at 8:40PM.

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 8:40PM.

Next Meeting: TBD