

**Montgomery County – DHHS**  
**Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting**  
**July 10, 2018**

<b>Steering Committee</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>AAHI Staff</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>Organizational Members</b>			
Jinhee Wang on behalf of Ji-Young Cho	X	Perry Chan	X
Wilbur Friedman	X	Betty Lam	
Yuchi Huang		Karlie Leung	X
Michael Lin	X	Maria Lejano	X
Mayur Mody	X	Sanjana Quasem	X
Sam Mukherjee	X	Samikshya Sapkota	X
Nguyen Nguyen (Chair)	X	Alice Zic	
Tho Tran	X		
Thomas Tran			
Sovan Tun			
<b>Individual Members</b>			
Nerita Estampador		<b>Guests</b>	<b>Present</b>
Meng K. Lee (Vice Chair)	X		
Sunmin Lee			
Cynthia Macri			
Judy Wang	X		
<b>Affiliate Members</b>			
Anis Ahmed			

**Welcome (Nguyen Nguyen, Chair)**

- Nguyen Nguyen called the meeting to order at 6:21 PM.
- Nguyen stated that the meeting will be recorded. There were no objections.

**Approval of Agenda (Nguyen Nguyen)**

- Steering Committee (SC) meeting minutes from May 08, 2018 were shared with members prior to the meeting.
- Handouts for the AAHI Mission Statement Survey, Maryland Department of Aging Call Check Pilot Program, and the Montgomery County Population Health Report were shared prior to the meeting.
- A motion to approve the agenda was presented. Meng K. Lee moved to approve the agenda and Michael Lin seconded the motion. Nguyen called for a voice vote to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved by voice vote.

ACTION: Meeting agenda approved with no objections.

## **Discussion of FY19 Advocacy Plan (Nguyen Nguyen and Sam Mukherjee)**

- Nguyen stated that since the local Maryland primary elections have been conducted, it is time to discuss the SC's upcoming advocacy plans and actions.
- Sam Mukherjee noted that three of the four potential council member candidates do not know of AAHI but are interested to learn.
- Nguyen asked if the advocacy committee should start setting up meetings with potential council members to discuss AAHI programs and activities.

ACTION ITEM: SC advocacy committee will set up meetings with council candidates to brief them on AAHI programs and activities once introductory materials are ready.

- Mayur Mody asked if it is possible to introduce AAHI to potential council members prior to them being elected as they might not have time to meet after they are elected.
- Nguyen agreed that having those early conversations between July and December is reasonable as long as they do not break protocol.
- Meng suggested the SC to develop one-page of talking points describing the mission, programs, and past accomplishments of AAHI. This will ensure SC members share the same information when talking to the candidates. Tho Tran seconded the need for clearly stated objectives and plan when meeting with council members. Sam noted that the talking point should include information on who AAHI serves, what it does, and how it affects the population.
- Perry noted that there is already a similar document in existence, however, it would need to be tailored to the audience. Nguyen hopes to meet with council candidates in September or October and Perry should have talking points ready by September. Council candidates' information is available on the webpage.

ACTION ITEM: Perry will prepare a one-page talking point package that includes accomplishments, outreach pictures, publications, and future plans of AAHI.

- Michael expressed concerns over whether these meetings are premature as the candidates may not fully understand how AAHI fits in with other programs in the county yet.
- Meng noted that AAHI should join the Latino Health Initiative (LHI) and the African American Health Program (AAHP) for a united minority effort. He believed that the joint effort will give the candidates a more significant reason to listen since it is about the overall minority community rather than just the Asian American community.
- Nguyen asked whether other minority health programs' steering committees will be interested in joining AAHI to meet with potential council members. Perry noted that they may be interested but is uncertain about the timing of the meetings.

ACTION ITEM: Nguyen will inquire if LHI and AAHP SC members are interested in joining AAHI to meet with potential council candidates.

- Perry stated that many units in the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) has started putting together a knowledge transfer document about the different programs in preparation for the transition of the administration.
- Tho noted that the Commission on Aging (COA) has already begun the preparation. COA has invited Charles Short, Special Assistant to the County Executive, to assist on the document as he has experience with many transitions. Tho suggested AAHI to invite an expert to help as well.
- Nguyen reminded the SC that the advocacy committee consists of Sam, Michael, Meng, and Nguyen but any member is welcome to join if interested.
- Perry suggested to increase AAHI's exposure in the community by members of the SC introducing themselves as part of AAHI steering committee whenever they attend other activities or meetings in the County.

#### **Approval of Minutes (Nguyen Nguyen)**

- SC meeting minutes from May 08, 2018 were shared with SC members prior to the meeting.
- A motion to approve the minutes from the May 08, 2018 meeting was presented. Mayur moved to approve the minutes and Wilbur Friedman seconded the motion.
- Nguyen called for a voice vote to approve the meeting minutes. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

ACTION: Meeting minutes approved with no objections.
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#### **AAHI Mission Statement Update Exercise (Perry Chan, Program Manager, and Nguyen Nguyen)**

- Nguyen recalled that during the May 08, 2018 SC meeting, Perry stated that AAHI is working on a blueprint which guides the strategic planning of the program. In order for AAHI to move forward with the blueprint, the program's mission statement needs to be reviewed and updated as well.
- Nguyen noted that though a mission statement survey was sent out to the SC, only three to four responses were received. Nguyen would like to use this opportunity for the SC to discuss the mission statement.
- Meng expressed that AAHI is not a stand-alone organization, but rather, part of the MCDHHS. The SC cannot tell AAHI what to do. Instead, the SC advises, assists, and advocates and thus, it may be inappropriate for the SC to determine the mission. AAHI should incorporate the vision of Uma Ahluwalia, Director of MCDHHS, and Betty Lam, Chief of Office of Community Affairs MCDHHS, into the mission. Meng also questioned whether it is the best time to change the mission statement now as there is impending personnel change in MCDHHS.
- Nguyen noted that there needs to be a two-way communication. He stated that the SC helps shape the direction of the program by providing feedback on the needs of the community. Nguyen stated that AAHI not only supports the leadership, but also gives them a new perspective on the needs of the community. AAHI needs a well-defined framework and direction to move forward and the SC can help identify it.

- Judy Wang and Tho raised the question of whether this mission statement exercise is the same as what they did during the SC Retreat.
- Nguyen agreed with Judy that part of the exercise may seem repetitive when compared to the retreat but the discussion is important for developing the blueprint.
- Sam expressed that the mission and goals are two different ideas. The mission should be a broader philosophical statement that encapsulates what the program envisions to do and the goals should state how the program will achieve the mission stated.
- Perry stated that though Betty and Uma are the final decision makers, they are open to hearing suggestions from the SC. He would like to hear three or four ideas on what the SC would like AAHI to do in the next five to ten years.
- Judy suggested reviewing the meeting notes from the past retreat for ideas on mission statement development.

**ACTION ITEM:** Perry to review past retreat meeting notes for ideas that can be incorporated into the mission statement.

- Nguyen posed the question of who does AAHI serve?
  - Wilbur asked who should be included as Asian Americans. Does this include people from the Middle East, those who have been in the country for many generations, and those who may be married to non-Asians?
  - Meng noted that different groups within the community have different needs and require various kinds of services and programs.
  - Nguyen stated that public health programs are obligated to serve everyone, but the SC can prioritize which group of people are more in need of assistance. Meng suggested low-income, uninsured, and underprivileged people.
  - Sam suggested to review the mission of the Leadership Institute for Equity and the Elimination of Disparities (LIEED) which states that they serve the “underserved, underprivileged, and most needy population.” This is similar to AAHI’s mission.

**ACTION ITEM:** Perry to review LIEED’s mission to support in the development of AAHI’s mission statement.

- Judy expressed that AAHI should serve all Asian Americans and should not narrow down the definition to serve a specific sub-group. Even if individuals are middle-class, they still have needs that require attention.
- Michael agreed that the definition of “underserved” should be adjusted depending on the community’s needs and AAHI’s mission should be inclusive.
- Perry noted that AAHI adjusts their outreach strategies based on the needs of the community accordingly. For example, if they are reaching the population with higher income, AAHI would not be promoting the county mammogram program as these people may not qualify. Instead, AAHI would educate them and increase their awareness on preventative care.

- Sam stated that there was a proposal several years ago to include Middle Easterners and the emerging population. However, there was no action taken by Middle Eastern communities after AAHI reached out to them.
- Perry stated that being Asian American is a self-identified term. People in the community will decide whether they think they belong to this group.
- Nguyen suggested AAHI to include some language in the mission or website to clarify whom they serve so that anyone who identify themselves as Asian Americans will seek help from AAHI.
- Nguyen expressed that besides being a service provider, AAHI can become the internal consultant for the county. The county has many resources but they do not have the expertise in serving the Asian American community and AAHI can assist in advising these programs.
- Michael agreed that AAHI can be the bridge between the community and county programs. Tho further suggested that AAHI may not serve the community directly, but can provide technical assistance and build capacity for community-based organizations.

**Program Updates (Perry Chan, Program Manager)**

- Perry reported on the success of the ECHO workshop on emergency preparedness with 59 attendees, representing 23 organizations. AAHI will plan the next ECHO workshop based on feedback from evaluations received.
- Perry noted that Photonovel 4, which will be available in five languages, is being reviewed for the last time before the publication is sent to the printer.
- Perry shared that there is a new initiative called Healthy Mind Initiative in which he is working with a group of public health officers from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) U.S. Public Health Service's (USPHS) that serves the Asian American community. Together with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), AAHI provided a train-the-trainer type of workshop that focuses on mental health and parenting in the Asian American community. These trained officers will eventually be conducting outreach in Montgomery County. Perry believes that this pilot project has great potential in reaching the community with minimal expenses from AAHI.
- Following the suggestion from Yuchi Huang at the SC meeting in May, Perry noted that AAHI Program Manger I and Program Assistant compiled a summary of data points related to Asian Americans obtained from the population health report of Montgomery County released by the Public Health Officer, Dr. Travis Gayles.
  - Tho requested the summary to be sent out electronically so that it can be translated for the community.

**ACTION ITEM:** Perry will send out the public health report electronically.

- Perry noted the Maryland Department of Aging has started a Senior Call Check Pilot Program which seniors can sign up for to receive a phone call every day. The aim of the program is to check up on the participant's wellbeing on a daily basis. The program is currently only available in English and possibly in Spanish in the future.

- Sam stated the importance of a daily phone call can have on the mental health of seniors but expressed concern over the manpower needed with these types of programs, especially if multiple languages are available.
- Meng wondered how this program is different than other programs where an alert button is installed in a senior's home and the participant has to push the button if they encounter a medical emergency.
- Tho noted that this is a pilot program that is only available with 3,000 people who are English speaking. She is uncertain if the program will last and how will the Department of Aging will use the data they collected.
- Judy suggested AAHI to initiate a statement to the Department of Aging expressing concerns that if the Asian community is not included in the pilot program, Asians will also be excluded in the data they are collecting. This may indicate the program is not useful in the Asian community because there is not enough response from them, which may lead to less resources for the community in the future.
- The AAHI SC will send a letter to the Department of Aging stating AAHISC's appreciation of the pilot program but wishes the program can expand to the Asian community as well. The letter will also include a list of Asian organizations in Montgomery County that can assist with the expansion. Perry also suggested contacting Jay Kenney, Chief of Aging and Disability Services, to discuss the pilot program and to obtain contacts for AAHI SC to send the letter.

ACTION ITEM: Perry will draft a letter for the SC to send to the Maryland Department of Aging.

ACTION ITEM: Perry will contact Jay Kenney to discuss the pilot program and to obtain state department contacts.

- Perry shared copies of the certificate from the roundtable meeting with the Office of Minority Health, HHS held in May in commemoration of Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

### **Updates from Liaisons and Members**

- **Healthy Montgomery (Nguyen Nguyen)**
  - Nguyen reported that the last Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee (HMSC) meeting was the last meeting with George Leventhal as Co-Chair of the committee. At the next HMSC meeting, Dr. Travis Gayles will be the Co-Chair of the committee. The Health Officer will be a permanent co-chair and a representative from a human services organization will be the other Co-Chair, currently represented by Manna Food Center. This structure will continue moving forward.
  - HM will now conduct a needs assessment every five years. The next time an assessment will be conducted will be in 2021.

- Nguyen also noted that HM is in the process of creating new branding materials, including a new logo. However, he expressed concerns of this new branding as the HMSC was not notified of such changes prior to the logos being selected by vote. Without fully understanding the meaning behind the logo's design, Nguyen is uncertain if it can represent HM appropriately.
- **County Executive's Asian American Advisory Committee (Sam Mukherjee)**
  - Sam reported that the last two committee meetings happened in succession.
  - The transition team, which includes Bruce Adams and Diane Vu, has been working on the transition plan. They gathered input from the members of the Advisory Committee to complete the transition plan. The consensus, and the recommendation provided, is that the next County Executive's Office of Community Partnerships should retain the advisory group.
  - Additionally, many community groups plan to join hands and discuss their grievances with Carolyn Chang, who is responsible for the grants review process, with the new administration.
- **The Governor's Commission on Asian American Affairs (Sovan Tun)**
  - Sovan Tun was not present, therefore no update was available.
- **The Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs (Mayur Mody)**
  - Mayur did not have anything to report.
- **Leadership Institute for Equity and the Elimination of Disparities (Meng K. Lee)**
  - Meng did not have anything to report.

### **Other Business**

- Perry introduced AAHI's new Behavioral Health Program Coordinator, Sami Sapkota. Sami provided a quick introduction. Sami has a strong interest in community outreach and has her Master of Public Health.
- Nguyen inquired about AAHI's hiring process for other positions.
  - Perry reported that the Resources Coordinator may be filled soon; however it is still unconfirmed.
  - Perry stated that for the Health Promotion position, two rounds of hiring has been conducted but there was no suitable candidate. The position has been posted for the third time and the post was closed on July 3, 2018. Perry is waiting for a response from Human Resources.

- Sam asked that a list of positions to be filled be sent out to SC members. Perry has shared the positions with multiple groups, including this group, and has posted it online in several places.

ACTION ITEM: Perry will email SC a list of future openings at AAHI.

- Nguyen confirmed that there are four more positions that will be filled in Fiscal Year 2019.
- Nguyen stated that the SC Retreat will be upcoming in September or October. He asked the SC to let him know if any members are interested in joining the planning committee for the retreat.
- Mayur announced that he is opening a clinic in Howard County on August 1, 2018 and the ribbon cutting is at 1pm. Everyone is invited to join. It will be an urgent care and primary care clinic, and insurance is also accepted. The clinic will see patients from all over Maryland and is not restricted to certain county residents.

#### **Adjourn (Nguyen Nguyen)**

- Nguyen adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, September 11, 2018