

Montgomery County – Department of Health & Human Services (MCDHHS)
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 8, 2022

<u>Steering Committee</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>AAHI Staff</u>	<u>Present</u>
<i>Organizational Members</i>		Sanjana Quasem	X
Nguyen Nguyen (Chair)	X	Muhammad Hasan	X
Hina Mehta (Vice Chair)	X	Tammy Wan	X
Pallavi Gowda	X		
Michael Lin	X		
Ji-Young Cho	X		
Wilbur Friedman	X		
Tho Tran	X		
Thao Bui	X		
Yuchi Huang	X		
<i>Individual Members</i>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Guests</u>	<u>Present</u>
Shruti Bhatnagar			
Nerita Estampador	X		
Meng K. Lee	X		
Cynthia Macri	X		
Judy Wang	X		
<i>Affiliate Members</i>	<u>Present</u>		
Anis Ahmed			

Welcome (Nguyen Nguyen)

- Nguyen Nguyen called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
- Nguyen asked for permission to audio record the meeting. There were no objections.

ACTION: Audio recording of meeting was approved with no objections.

Approval of Agenda (Nguyen Nguyen)

- Today’s meeting agenda was shared with members prior to the meeting. Nguyen asked if there were any objections to the agenda.
- Yuchi Huang moved to approve it and Wilbur Friedman seconded it.

ACTION: Meeting agenda was approved with no objections.

Approval of Meeting Minutes (Nguyen Nguyen)

- The Steering Committee meeting minutes from Tuesday, January 11, 2022, were shared with members prior to today's meeting. A motion to approve the January meeting minutes was presented.
- Wilbur asked to have the Council Members names changed to be more formal and Michael Lin agreed with Wilbur.
- Wilbur Friedman moved to approve the meeting minutes. Yuchi Huang seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved.

ACTION: January's meeting minutes were approved with no objections. AAHI to make edits.

AAHI Program Updates (Sanjana Quasem)

- Sanjana Quasem shared AAHI program updates from January 2022 to March 2022. She highlighted activities AAHI has completed or is working on related to community engagement, community empowerment, capacity building, and change catalyst. She also provided information on upcoming COVID-19 vaccination and testing efforts, as well as hiring 4 part-time community health workers through Athena Consulting. See the attached presentation slides for her full update.
- Following Sanjana's presentation was a short Q&A session:
 - Ji-Young had a question regarding the bystander training by Hollaback on March 30th, and whether that event would provide multilingual interpretation services.
 - Muhammad Hasan responded that currently there will not be simultaneous interpretation. Muhammad stated that it was good feedback and that he will look into Vietnamese, Korean, Hindi, and Chinese interpretation, and if there are other languages needed, to let him know before the 30th.

ACTION ITEM: AAHI will research simultaneous language interpretation for the bystander training on March 30th.

Advocacy Subcommittee Update

- Nguyen gave a brief overview regarding the tremendous impact of the COVID-19 Relief grant and that many people have benefitted from the COVID Relief Grant.
- He stated that they want to continue to request funding for AAHI to continue providing funding support to the community organizations.
- A couple of months ago, the African American Health Program Executive Committee and the Latino Health Steering Committee reached out to discuss

requesting the County Executive to add funding to the base budget for the three initiative programs, which will help maintain the sustainability of programs over time. It is likely that there will be a significant increase in the next year and coming years.

- On March 15th, the County Executive office will release the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which will confirm the budget request of \$1.2 million. Nguyen will keep the Steering Committee updated on the status.
- Following Nguyen's overview was a short Q&A session:
 - Tho Tran asked if the money is increased for AAHI, will money be cut out of the budget somewhere else? Will other Asian organizations get cut to put more money into the base budget?
 - Nguyen answered that there were excess funds from the County from the previous year and that those funds would go into the budget. Nguyen suggested to continue to reach out and advocate for your organization for funding.
 - Michael Lin asked whether the budget is on the County Executive's desk for review, and if it has been reviewed by OMB.
 - Sanjana doesn't know the status of the review, but OMB will play a role in advising the Council in the process.
 - MK Lee asked what the deadline was for the County Executive to submit the proposal to the County Council.
 - Nguyen responded that the deadline to submit the budget is March 15.
 - Tho asked regarding the success of getting the money, will AAHI continue giving out grants? Or will AAHI be using that money for operation costs and activities within AAHI?
 - Nguyen answered that the money proposed is intended for the NGOs to sustain organizational activities and will be issued in the form of a grant. It will follow the model of the COVID Relief Grant, but it will not be limited to COVID-related activities.
 - Yuchi Huang asked whether overhead can be reduced if funding is granted. Yuchi wanted to make sure that if overhead is reduced, then they can get more money to go towards organization activities.
 - Nguyen responded that it was a valid point and that he was discussing it with Sanjana and AAHI. They are trying to be as efficient as possible and trying to be good stewards. Sanjana agreed with the sentiment of giving organizations as much money as possible. The county has rules about how the money gets dispersed and that's why it's necessary to work with a fiscal agent, like PCC, becomes necessary. Once we can overcome the structural barriers, then we can work on reducing the overhead.

Membership Subcommittee Updates

- Hina Mehta talked about membership and engagement. She posed:
 - How do we engage everyone on their skills?
 - Who can give how much time?
- She noted that all the current members are actively engaged towards the Asian American health needs.
- In her presentation, she reviewed the current member structure and each of the categories.
- She proposed that the “affiliate member” be changed to “honorary member”, which would be members who are part of the County, the people we need help from but are people who can’t dedicate too much time.
- Steering Committee members, along with membership subcommittee are encouraged to self-evaluate for their availability and commitment to the committee and AAHI mission.
- See the attached presentation slides for her full update.
- Following Hina’s presentation was a short Q&A session:
 - Yuchi suggested a change in the name “honorary member” to “advisors” because they don’t have the voting rights like members do.
 - Hina responded that it was a great suggestion and encouraged others to share feedback with her.
 - Yuchi asked if a substitute has the full rights of a regular member.
 - Hina responded no and that the substitute sent to the meeting is more of a messenger and can take news back to the organization. Most of the voting is done via email anyway, so the member can still vote.
 - Yuchi noted that the substitute will not count as quorum.
 - Nguyen suggested that 1.) the group should clarify what a substitute is, 2.) organizational substitute should have the same stature of previous organizational member.
 - MK asked a question regarding the term limit and whether there will be a term limit moving forward.
 - Hina responded that she would like to propose to put a term limit, however the members should not be punished by a term limit. If you were not active during your term, the committee will be able to tell that member to send another representative from their organization.
 - Wilbur stated that historically, the committee has allowed organizations to send whoever they want as their representatives. He added that rather than adding membership rules in the bylaws, it would be easier to change to ad hoc.
 - Yuchi added that membership is important to AAHI as a whole. The committee should establish criteria for forming the organizational

membership. Hina added that the organization must serve the Asian American community and be related to health.

Upcoming Steering Committee Election

- Nguyen announced that his term is coming to an end on June 30th.
- Nguyen stated that there is a process to nominate and elect the next chair and vice-chair. You can nominate people to be the next chair and vice-chair and will continue to collect it until May.
- Nguyen asked if there were thoughts or questions.
 - Ji-Young asked if it was possible to nominate the current chair again.
 - Nguyen replied that it may not be written but traditionally it's a two-year term for each chair. According to the guidelines, the chair must be a person that has been on the committee at least two years and has participated in at least 50% of the Steering Committee meetings.
- If you have a nomination, email Wilbur and Sanjana.
 - Ji-Young asked if there were any official nomination forms.
 - Nguyen replied that it's just an email message to Wilbur and Sanjana.
 - Nerita Estampador asked whether the vice chair could be nominated at the same time.
 - Nguyen answered yes and that it's for two years.
 - Sanjana asked if there's a deadline for how long the nominations will be accepted.
 - Nguyen responded that typically the election would take place at the end of March but due to the current environment, there's no sense of urgency. The end of March will be the deadline to send in nominations.

Data Subcommittee Update

- Nguyen recapped from the last meeting and talked about ramping up the efforts of data collection and analysis. They brainstormed to create a new subcommittee on data to research this topic. This subcommittee establishes two things:
 - Analysis: analyzes data on a county level from the different sources and defines the challenges.
 - Insight: based on the data, figure out the needs of the community, how to improve services, and how to deliver services.
- Cynthia Macri commented that grantees are asking for translation services for the many Asian languages. She asked if there was a way to add additional language capacity to the budget and pay translators.
 - Nguyen will discuss this matter outside of the meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Nguyen and Sanjana will have a meeting with Cynthia outside of the Steering Committee meeting regarding the addition of language capacity to the budget.

- Judy Wang is working with an academic organization on a project to collect the data in a more comprehensive way. She would like to collect everyone's input to figure out the best way to collect data.

AAPI Heritage Celebration Month Proposal

- Sanjana gave an overview on the Asian American Heritage Month Celebration proposal. She is collaborating with Yi Shen, the County Executive's Office of Community Partnership's Asian American Liaison to discuss the Asian American Heritage Month. This proposal will also be sent to the Asian Pacific American Advisory Group, of the County Executive Office of Community Partnership.
- Sanjana is looking for two Steering Committee members to volunteer to be on the planning committee.
- See the attached presentation slides for her full update.
- Following Sanjana's presentation was a short Q&A session:
 - Yuchi commented that the program looks great. He asked what kind of message will be delivered regarding the Model Minority Myth.
 - Sanjana replied that it's important for the community to understand what the Model Minority Myth is. She stated that giving the background helps to discuss the harmful implications of the Model Minority Myth and its impact on the Asian American community. This is both helpful for Montgomery County employees to have this in mind when creating services for the community and is helpful for the public to know so that they can understand the struggles of the Asian American community.
 - Yuchi commented that the explanation of the Model Minority Myth should be clearly explained to avoid any confusion.
 - Ji-Young had two questions about the ceremony:
 - Will there be food vendors?
 - Is there a budget for the celebration?Sanjana answered that regarding food vendors, they will have to talk with the Rockville Townsquare.

ACTION ITEM: Sanjana will investigate the allowance of food vendors at Rockville Townsquare.

- Sanjana replied that there is money in the budget this fiscal year. In continuation of the Model Minority Myth conversation, Ji-Young believed that funders and the County Office need to listen to this conversation about the Model Minority Myth as well.

- Cynthia commented that the difficulty with heritage month celebrations is that they are presented to the same group of people. The most important thing is to make it relevant.
- Sanjana agreed that it was a great point. She mentioned that in brainstorming this idea, the question was “how do we get people interested in talking about the Model Minority Myth?”
- Nguyen added that this is an important event to make our voices heard. He noted that if you have time to volunteer, to reach out to Sanjana.

Updates

- Nguyen asked the Steering Committee if they had any updates for the group.
- For Healthy Montgomery, Nguyen reported that there are no updates due to the fact there have not been any meetings. The Community Health Needs Assessment is going to be produced soon. They need feedback from the community for the assessment.
- County Executive Asian American Pacific Advisory Committee updates: Ji-Young gave updates regarding efforts to make Asian American holidays part of the Montgomery County Public School calendar. They voted to make Eid and Diwali as professional days for the next school year. They want to make it a permanent holiday, however, that is a decision for the state to change.
- Montgomery Cares Program update: the County has been involved in the process of eligibility and going through OESS to apply.
- Suicide Prevention Coalition and Veteran Commission: The discussion revolved around the 988 number for the Suicide Prevention Coalition. They are moving towards the shorter number for those in crisis. Another topic discussed was the lack of counselors on the school level. In the Veteran Commission: a law was signed that OPM to conduct a study to look at paid compensation for disability for racial and ethnic minorities but didn't mention women. Cynthia is working with a women's veteran group on getting paid compensation.
- Pallavi Gowda added Rotacare Maryland Clinic is having weekend clinics. She invited anyone on the committee to join on weekends.

Adjourn

- Nguyen adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.

ACTION: Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 10th, 2022.