



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

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ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) WORKGROUP
APPROVED MINUTES
Thursday, April 14, 2022

Meeting occurred via WebEx Teleconferencing

Meeting called to order at 6:07 p.m.

Work Group Members Present: Jodie Wang, Richard Li, Bob Zhang, Senator Clarence Lam, Pravin Ponnuri, Kim Eggborn, Cpl. Kyu Lee, Mabrooka Chaundhry, Michael Zhao, Samiyah Hira, Soo Park, Sue Song, Young Smith, and Devang Shah.

Staff Present: Angela Cabellon, Safa Hira, Yolanda Sonnier and Wanda Cao

Public Attendees Present: County Executive Calvin Ball, Michelee Bailey-Hedgepeth, Vikki Garcia, and Tomoko Hoogenboom

I. Welcome by Co-Chair: Jodie Wang

- Jodie welcomed everyone.

II. Approval of the January 13, 2022 Minutes

- The January 13, 2022 minutes were approved.

III. Remarks: County Executive Calvin Ball

- Dr. Ball thanked everyone for their service and dedication.
- Dr. Ball gave a shout out to Senator Lam, who is also Dr. Lam, for his leadership and also for saving lives during the pandemic. Senator Lam has done a fantastic job advocating for issues and bringing home money to Howard County.
- Dr. Ball acknowledged Vikki Garcia from Congressman's Sarbanes office and stated the office has done a great job working on issues in Washington D.C. and bringing funding for Howard County in our region.
- He states that Howard County is giving voice and empowering everyone in our community. Dr. Ball believes the combination of the workgroup's hard work and the festival will show the rest of the county, the state, the region, the nation, what Howard County is all about. That we are a welcoming place and we do embrace opportunity for all.

IV. Remarks: Honorary Chair, Senator Clarence Lam

- Senator Lam congratulated Jodie for being the new co-chair and thanked her for her service.
- Senator Lam also thanked and acknowledged County Executive Dr. Ball for his great leadership. He added that Dr. Ball does visit Annapolis on multiple occasions to testify on bills that are incredibly important to the state and to the county.
- He stated that Howard County probably has some of the highest vaccination rates in the country and that is through tremendous efforts from our county and from community leaders like yourself and so he wanted to thank everyone all for their hard work.
- He stated that the legislative session just ended in Annapolis and wanted to share a quick update on what took place:
 - Brought back additional funding for the Cultural Center in Howard County. Last year was \$500,000. This year there's an additional \$250,000 and that brings in a total of \$750,000 for the AAPI Cultural Center.
 - There were some folks in this workgroup that were involved in a curriculum bill to increase the amount of Asian American history, culture and heritage to be taught in public schools. Unfortunately, those bills were not able to advance this legislative session, however, we will continue to work on it in the upcoming legislative sessions and continue to bring it forward. Not only in Howard County, but for the state.
 - There is a bill for Civil Reparations for Hate Crimes that passed the Senate and half of the House, but in the end did not pass.
 - There is a 1 billion dollars in the state budget this year for education in our public schools.
 - There were 2 Briefings that were passed this year also
 - ❖ Gas Tax Extension
 - ❖ Tax Credit for seniors now for up to \$1000.00. This allows 65 and older to qualify: \$1000 tax credit, \$2750 tax credit filing jointly.

- Still working on Cultural Center and will continue to work with everyone on that.

V. **Executive Liaison Report**

- Angela welcomed Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom. Dr. Hoogenboom introduced herself and stated she is the Chair for the Maryland Kanagawa Sister State Committee. Her main job is teaching the Japanese language and the culture at UMBC.
- **AAPI Heritage Festival – May 1st**
 - Angela reiterated that make sure anyone that wants to attend the Festival, to please have them sign up on the Eventbrite register link that is on the website.
 - The event will be 11 to 4 on the Chrysalis Stage. We have about 20 food vendors and more than 30 community participants as well as retailers.
 - Angela thanked the whole group for everyone’s hard work for the festival.
- **AAPI Cultural Center**
 - Angela explains that the plans for the AAPI Cultural Center is first having a robust in-person community engagement starting this Spring, on May 19th, 2022, at 6:30 pm. Location is to be determined, however it is most likely to be at the Bain Center.
 - We would like to have the community involved and the engagements will solicit feedback of what the needs and the desires are of the community.
 - Once space is identified, there will be programming needs. Just know that that’s coming what that aggregate funding is. It is a great thing to know that we have a champion like Senator Lam.
 - Angela introduced Michelee Hedgepeth.
- **Expanding Outreach on LBI and EBO**
 - Michelee introduced herself and shared her screen. She stated that part of her goal is to help provide some information on our local business initiate and our programs.
 - Michelee explains that Howard County operates 3 different basic programs:
 - ❖ Equal Business Opportunity Program (EBO)

- Minority Business Enterprises (MBE)
- Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE)
- Disabled Business Enterprises (DBE)
- ❖ Local Business Initiative (LBI)
- ❖ Veteran-owned Business Enterprise Program (VOBE)
- Michelee explains that Howard County Howard County ensures and encourages EBO participation through race and gender-neutral measure such as outreach, advertising, technical assistance, and having a certification program. Not all surrounding jurisdictions have an MBE certification program in place.
- Over past 5 years, we have exceeded our goals with EBO participation.
- EBO Subcontracting Trades: construction, architectural, engineering, professional, information technology, consultants, and other types of services.
- Within the last 5 years, part of the goal is to increase the participation of minorities for the programs.
- Within the last 5 years, Asian American businesses have increased their participation in the programs.
- It also shows that the highest leading EBO Participation is among women-owned businesses, then African American, and then Hispanics on businesses.
- The work on the LBI has increased and we currently have 319 businesses enrolled in the program.
- Goals: Reviewing goals, working with partners, agencies, and internal departments on engaging with current EBO and LBI vendors, share more about local businesses, and having incentives in exploring enhancements to LBI Program.
- Michelee stated that they will be at the AAPI Festival as a vendor on May 1st.

VI. Japan Day

- Jodie returned the floor to Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom to share about Japan Day.
- Dr. Hoogenboom shared that the Maryland Kanagawa Sister State hosted Japan Day last year in Howard County.
- Initially the event had guests preregister and submit a release, but because the turnout was so vast, they had open up the event to everyone. The event had a lot of people come by that weren't familiar with the Japanese or Asian culture.
- It appears the Embassy of Japan wanted the Maryland Kanagawa Sister State to collaborate with businesses and local businesses relating to the Asian community.
- Dr. Hoogenboom reached out to Bob Zhang, who is a part of the AAPI Workgroup, and he connected her to this group.
- She wanted to know if the AAPI Workgroup would be interested in collaborating with them. Performances would be in 1 room, and there will 89 tables for the cultural events. She was thinking that the tables can introduce what type of businesses we have in Howard County so that the guests can learn the variety of businesses in the area.
- Right now, Japan Day is held on September 18th, 2022, at the same place as last year, at The Meeting House in Columbia, MD.
- Richard welcomed Dr. Hoogenboom to tonight's meeting. Dr. Hoogenboom stated that the tables are still open to suggestions.
- Richard brought up a concern regarding the date of Japan Day. Richard and Dr. Hoogenboom agreed to discuss the date more in depth after the meeting. The confirmed date of Japan Day is TBD, to be determined.

VII. Committees Discussion & Reports

• Business & Economic Development Committee

- Soo stated they had a meeting in February 24, 2022, Howard County Tourism, Restaurant Association of Maryland, and local restaurant operator, Sheila Bakery, on route 40. They discussed the challenges that restaurant

operators are going through because of the cost of supply increase, hiring issues, and minimum wage increase.

- Some issues were the prices of containers for carryout, and how the health departments are handling the kimchi to the Korean American restaurants.
- Soo stated in April 5, 2022, they hosted a tour on Asian American businesses in the Lotte plaza to Howard County Leadership. This helped them gather information about training, hiring and workforce development issues.
- Lastly, this committee is also planning to have an AAPI Resource Session.
- Bob stated that his company is a member of the Maryland Innovation Center, that they shared ideas with Soo, who is also the newest to the board as well. They were looking to have an APPI Resource Session on May 25, 2022, at 9am. The registration is almost done and should be finalized by next week. It will be shared with everyone once that is completed.

- **Government Access and Community Engagement**

- Young stated that there isn't much to report except for the AAPI Heritage Festival on May 1st. She stated how it is going to be an exciting day on May 1st and believes that next year will be even better.

- **Health, Wellness & Safety**

- Mabrooka summarized what this committee has done so far:
 - Started out with survey of community members.
 - The results show that there are a lot of resources for health, wellness and safety, but there's a disconnect between the resources, where our communities are unaware of these resources.
 - From the results, we met with Safa and Cpl Lee in December to start working on an opportunity for leaders of our communities to be trained on this information and where to access it.
 - We have a tentative date on Saturday, May 28, 2022, from 9 to 2 pm for those Train the Champion sessions.

- The purpose is to provide direction for our community members in terms of accessing all of the resources that are available in reference to health, wellness and safety.

VIII. Final Report and Recommendations

- Angela stated that the final report would include strong policy recommendations, which it appears that AAPI have been already thinking about policies and initiatives.
- We've had themes about mental health, business, procurement engagement, safety, government access, etc.
- Wanda talked about the Final Report timeline due dates, which are:
 - **May 14th** – Report due to Co-Chairs from subcommittees
 - **June 14th** – Report due from Co-Chairs. They will send this to AAPI group for feedback.
 - **June 28th** – Feedback due from workgroup where report will be sent back to Co-Chairs.
 - **July 1st** – Co-Chairs final report DUE. Co-chairs will send to Angela, Yolanda, and Wanda.
 - **July 14th** – Last meeting. AAPI Workgroup will vote on Final Report.
- Wanda will send the workgroup the La Alianza Final Report so that we can see the template on how the final report is supposed to look.
- Yolanda shared her screen and went through the La Alianza report so that the AAPI workgroup can have an idea.
- Angela and Yolanda recommend that the workgroup give up to 10 recommendations for the County Executive.
- Yolanda stated that once Richard and Jodie receives all the recommendations, that they will review it and set it up as priority 1 to 10, or however many numbers there are.

IX. New Business

- No new business.

VI. Announcements

- Bob stated for May 18th, the Governance Committee plan on having a celebration. Once he has the link, he will share with everyone.
- Mabrooka wanted Kim to share the project that they are working on with the AAPI and the Asian American Educators of Howard County.
- Kim explains that rather than waiting for legislation to come through, they decided to have a group of teachers together, who are looking through all the Asian American literature, from fiction to non-fiction, and we are correlating it to the existing content and topics at our schools.
- Specifically starting with social studies – where we can talk about how to infuse Asian American perspectives when we teach about everything.
- Kim adds that they have partnered with the Maryland Counsel for Social Studies, and the Maryland Literacy Association and we are offering a professional development session. It'll be in Columbia, on May 14, 2022.
- Mabrooka also added that at the Central Branch, of the Howard County Public Library, they have a part of the library with resources books for kids.
- Sue added that anyone can contact Diane Li if anyone is interested in collecting free videos that are offered at the Library and she will be glad to deliver the videos to you. These videos include videos that help non-English speakers with learning English.
- Yolanda added information about the Reading Human Rights events that the Office of Human Rights and Equity and the Library are collaborating. Every month they get together to have a book discussion. The next events are:
 - April 26, 2022 - “Believing our 30 Year Journey to End Gender Violence,” by Anita Hill (co-sponsored by Library, HopeWorks and Howard County of Human Trafficking Prevention).
 - May 24, 2022 – “Minor Feelings – An Asian American Reckoning” will be facilitated by Wanda.

- Yolanda encouraged everyone to distribute the May 1st Festival information to their communities.
- Pravin stated that there is also a Holi Event on April 23, 2022 and invited everyone to join if they are able.
- Jodie added that they are also collaborating with the Museum of Howard County History. They are looking at artists/students, grade K to 12th grade, and have the chosen artwork displayed in the museum for the topic, “Renew and Rebuild Our Communities and Beyond.” The winner also will win up to \$100 prize. We will have a celebration on May 21, 2022, Saturday afternoon.
- Yolanda asked the workgroup if they would be willing to co-sponsor the May 24th Reading Human Rights event. AAPI members would give a few words for the event on behalf of the workgroup.
- Pravin motioned for AAPI Workgroup co-sponsor the May 24th Reading Human Rights event. Mabrooka 2nds the motion. Jodie asked for a vote. No one opposed. The motion passes.
- Yolanda stated she will let Outreach know to add the AAPI Workgroup Logo to the flyer.

VII. Closing Remarks

- Jodie thanked everyone for attending this meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7: 42 p.m.

WORKGROUP MEETINGS: (2nd Thursdays Quarterly):

All meetings will be virtual until further notice.

2022 Meeting Dates
Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 6 pm – Final workgroup meeting

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Business & Economic Development	Health, Wellness & Safety	Government Access & Community Engagement
Soo Park, Co-Chair	Mabrooka Chaudhry, Chair	Young Smith, Chair
Jodie Wang, Co-Chair	Pravin Ponnuri	Ashley Hou
Answer Hasan	Sue Song	Richard Li
Bob Zhang	Richard Li	Samiyah Hira
Devang Shah		Sanjay Srivastava
Matthew Lee		Marianne Brackney
Michael Zhao		Cpl. Kyu Lee
Charley Sung		