

**Miami Dade County**  
**Asian American Advisory Board**  
111 NW. First Street, suite 1034  
Miami, FL 33128

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**  
**May 14, 2013**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Adam Tavakoly, (Chair); D’Jehanshahi, Reza; Nazy Given;; Barnaby Min; Victor Swaroop; Shabbir Motorwala; Ali Taqi; Mehmet Ulutas Nick Vicera; Manny Wong; and Mohammad Shakir, Director.

**Guests:** Tufa Eminova; Patty Pitayapisut; Subbarayan Pochi; Steven Weir; Kathleen Cymbaluk;

**Excused:** Melissa Braynon; Sadrul H. Fasihi; Nasser Eftekhari; Josephine Gordy; Joseph Johnson; Nidal Hozien; Meital Stavinsky

At 6:15 the Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed the guests, and asked Mr. Robert Thompson of the Commission on Ethics and Public Trust to introduce himself and make the presentation. Mr. Thompson gave an overview of his office and stressed that the ethical guidelines are not just good practices expected of the Board members but are legal rules ignoring or violating the rules is a crime punishable by fines and or prison. He stated that it is a good practice even to avoid any perception of violation of the Sunshine-Law. He informed the Board that all board proceedings, any communication, and any board related issues are all public record and cannot be concealed from public—in fact upon request, it must be produced in a timely fashion. In regard to the Board member nomination, he said it is unusual that Commissioners entertain recommendations from the Asian Board. He also clarified that “reply all” responses on Board related e-mails is a violation; all communications must be channeled through the staff.

**Minutes:** The Chair asked for a motion to approve the April minutes. Some members pointed out attendance correction. Ms. Given moved the motion to approve the amended April minutes, Mr. Min seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the April minutes.

**Director’s Report:**

The Director reported that the Recognition dinner was held successfully on April 26, 2013. He informed the Board that a package for each member is prepared with all information and guidelines to enable them to learn about the Board and its operating procedures. The Director also briefed the Board about the Board appointment procedure. He explained that the Asian Board began making recommendations to Commissioners because some districts did not have Asian population, but it is not a common practice for other boards. The rules suggest if a Commissioner does not make an appointment within 30 days, the Board of County Commissioners can appoint someone. In thirteen years, he has not seen the Board pursue this option except in one case when former Chair Martinez appointed Lisa Barquist for Commissioner Seijas who never appointed anyone to the Asian Board. Director also announced APA Heritage Month celebration at V.A. Medical Center, May 22, and MDC Inter-American campus on May 30, 2013.

**Old Business:** Chair congratulated Mr. Wong on organizing a successful Community Recognition Dinner. In reviewing Mr. Wong said that we did not fully utilize the potential, however, it was a profitable event and we connected with the community well. He said at least ten different organizations participated in the dinner and many community leaders were recognized. We can build on this concept and reach out to many in the

Asian community. Mr. Tavakoly offered to help organize the next dinner with an Iranian theme. The Board agreed to hold the dinner on April 18, 2014, venue to be selected in the near future.

**Scholarship:** Ms. Given pointed out that Scholarship was not given much exposure during the dinner and we lost a good opportunity to publicize the event. Board generally agreed that we could have made it part of the program but dropped the ball. She said that the scholarship application is finalized and put on the website. It is decided that the Scholarship award ceremony will be June 7, 2014.

**Membership:** Mr. Vicera pointed out that official public records of Miami-Dade County (MDC) would show that there are current members of the Board who do not meet the MDC residency requirement and MDC elector-status requirement to become members of the Board per Section 2 of MDC Ordinance # 97-128 that provided for the creation of the Board. It was decided that the Board Director will look into this issue.

#### **New Business:**

Mr. Tavakoly discussed the Business Forum, and said it is scheduled for May 29, 2013. He said it needs more publicity and if we can sell some booths in the lobby, we can raise funds for the scholarship. He also suggested a 'Taste of Asia' food tasting during the event. He asked if members can facilitate food from their respective cultures—finger food only.

#### **Announcements:**

- Asian Heritage month celebration at V.A. Medical Center 11:00 a.m., May 22, 2013
- Business Forum in the Government Center lobby, 10-12 p.m. May 29, 2013
- APAHM Asian Art Gallery at MD College Inter American Campus 6:00 p.m. May 30th

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.