

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

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING  
September 10, 2013

MINUTES

**Present:** Adam Tavakoly, (Chair); Melissa Braynon; Reza D’Jehanshahi; Dr. Nasser Eftekhari; Tohfa Eminova; Nazy Given; Nidal Hozein; Barnaby Min Esq.; Shabbir Motorwala; Adrienne Thompson; Mehmet Ulutas; Nick Vicera; Dr. Jim Yu; and Mohammad Shakir, Director.

**Excused:** Sadrul H. Fasihi; Josephine Gordy; Joseph Johnson; Meital Stavinsky; Victor Swaroop; Ali Taqi; Manny Wong.

**Guests:** Reinaldo Valdes; Sharda Singh, Mohammed Islam, Paul Yarvis, FBI Agents Steven Weir; Kathleen Cymbaluk; Theresa Griffiths; and Sonia Miranda; Rene Diaz; Vanessa Ortega.

Chair welcomed the guests and asked them to introduce themselves, Mr. Islam spoke that he is a candidate for Miami Beach Commissioner and has come to the Board to share that he is from Bangladesh and an Asian American—Board clarified that it cannot endorse a candidate however it allows them to share their position. Agent Theresa Griffiths informed the Board about the upcoming Infragard Seminar, and Sonia Miranda Manager Foreign Language Program spoke about the FBI’s linguistic needs and opportunities for the Asian Americans especially, Arabic, Pashtu, and Turkish.

**Director’s Report:**

The Chair asked Director’s report while waiting for the quorum. Director said Mr. Diaz, the executive Director, Office of Community Advocacy will be sharing his recommendations about the Boards’ Operational Procedures. The Director said he shares some of those concerns that triggered Mr. Diaz’s recommendations i.e., that the Asian Board is slowly losing focus and it is adrift, it is also slipping into arbitrary decision making practice by officers individually rather than collectively as a Board. He said the board’s initiatives should reflect a team spirit, sustainability and long term community interest. The Board should not be a forum for personal achievement and showcasing.

Mr. Diaz shared his “Proposed Revisions and Amendments to Ordinances” (attached herewith). The Board members vigorously questioned his recommendations about the residency qualifications, absenteeism and Board elections. Mr. Min suggested some amendments namely to extend the current term to November, 2014 to bring the elections in line with other boards—this process will continue till the Board of County Commissioners finalize the recommendation. **Board unanimously approved to extend 2013-14 term of the officers till November, 2014 when elections will be held for 2015 term. (the new officers will be installed in January, 2015).**

**Committees:** **APA Committee** informed that it met September 5, but did not choose the Committee Chair. After some discussion, Professor Thompson and Dr. Yu were chosen as the Co-chairs. The **Scholarship Committee:** Ms. Given informed the Board her inability to continue due to professional pressures and asked to reassign the task to a new Chair. Melissa Braynon was assigned to carry on Ms. Given's task. Mr. Tavakoly took charge of all documents given by Nazy Given. Mr. Khosravi spoke his experience as the past chair and assured his support and cooperation in the future to make the scholarship a viable initiative. **Membership Committee:** Mr. Vicera said he is encouraging potential candidates to submit their names and attend the meeting. He also questioned if changing the meeting time and day may improve the attendance.

**New Business:** Mr. Vicera asked the FAAAB to support the Asian American Sports League by co-sponsoring organization. Mr. Min argued that the Board does not speak for FAAAB, but if Mr. Vicera wants assistance from the Board to rephrase his motion, which he did. After some discussion the Board asked him to write a proposal for Board's to consider. Mr. Vicera also asked board's support for a Filipino family who lost a loved one in a police chase. Board asked Mr. Vicera to secure the investigation status from the city of Opa Locka before the Board could take any position. Lastly, Mr. Vicera introduced Master Chufei Tsai, of Zen Buddhist Temple in Coconut Grove who shared that the temple property is in foreclosure and could use assistance. The Board asked how it can help when the temple does not own the property. She was advised to contact her Commissioners in the City and County to find out if there are any funding sources available for such projects.

**Announcements:**

**Next Meeting: October 8, 2013**  
**SAHARA FUNDRAISING performance, October 26, 2013 at Hollywood Center for Performing Arts.**

**Adjournment:** 8:15 p.m. meeting adjourned