



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ADVOCACY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ASIAN AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD



MINUTES, Monthly Board Meeting

6:00 P.M., Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Stephen P. Clark Center, 18-4 Conference Room, Miami, FL 33128

Ref: 04-09-2024

Present: Luna Adachi; Sadrul Fasihi; Sharon Fine; Eugene Fu; Josephine Gordy; Li Gurau; Smita Kulkarni; Stephen Matsumoto; Anjana Mishra; Subbarayan Pochi; Stephen Lian Thang; Adrienne Aiko Thompson; Mehmet Ulutas; Tai Vaz; Jim Yu

Excused: Aileen Alon; Hoda Askari; Vinita Chakravarty; Christina Fuentes; Jose Keichi Fuentes; Nick Vicera

Absent:

Staff: Joshua Ho; Cedric Brazle; Vanessa Azzam; Griselle Marino; Amanda Gonzalez

Guest: Major Patky Changkachith; Aparna Matange; Dilip Matange; Santosh Kulkarni; Sergeant Zubair Khan; Officer John Leon; George Yap; Amanda Yap; Jeannie Wong; Tania Andre; Winnie Tang

At 6:15 PM., Ms. Tai Vaz, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order; she welcomed the members and guests. Ms. Vaz asked the Program Director to verify the quorum. Quorum was established.

MINUTES: Ms. Vaz, Chairwoman, asked the members to review the Minutes for March 2024 and requested a motion to approve the Minutes. Mr. Stephen Matsumoto moved to approve the March Minutes, Dr. Adrienne Aiko Thompson seconded, Board unanimously approved the March Minutes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mr. Ho welcomed the Board and the guests and thanked all for attending AAAB April General Board meeting. He informed the Board to mark their 2024 calendar for 2024 AAAB General Board Meetings and stressed having a quorum as it is very important for our communities. He extended his gratitude to Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs for hosting the cultural grants workshop and to the Miami-Dade County's Strategic Procurement Department for hosting the Contracting Opportunities on Food, Beverage, and Related Services. He stressed the importance of providing information to our communities to assist and support cultural and economic opportunities. And to follow up with our communities afterwards. Mr. Ho congratulated the board for successfully cohosting the inaugural Asian-American Community Tour of Miami with Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau's Multicultural Tourism & Development. Stops included Wat Buddha Metta, Cambodian Buddhist Temple; Wat Buddharamsi, Thai Buddhist Temple; Ikebana International Miami at Pinecrest Gardens; and Tropical Chinese Restaurant, one of the oldest and successful Chinese restaurants in Miami. He proceeded to inform that he is working on reappointments and appointments to AAAB and the board members' patience are very welcomed and appreciated. Mr. Ho reminded to those board members

who have not fulfilled the requirement to complete the County's mandatory Sexual Harassment Prevention training course to do so online as the reports for non-compliant board members will be reported to the Board of County Commissioners. Board Members can now take the course at their leisure with our web-based video and complete the acknowledgment form and submit to our office at Woody.Remy@miamidade.gov.

PSH Video: http://miamidade.granicus.com/player/clip/6171?publish_id=b96c9797-b24e-11ea-888f-0050569183fa&redirect=true&h=fd3e7c3b157b789011de620d1cd37cab

Acknowledgment Form: <https://www.miamidade.gov/humanresources/library/sexual-harassment-prevention-training-acknowledgment-form.pdf>

Mr. Ho reminded the board to complete the County Board Members' Financial Disclosure Requirement for 2023 and the deadline is July 1st: to email the completed form directly to the Elections Department at financial.disclosures@miamidade.gov and Copy hjoshua@miamidadade.gov and Nilda Olmo at the Ethics Commission at Nilda.Olmo@miamidade.gov.

He once again asked the Board members to sign up for any of the three Board committees, after careful consideration of time and dedication, to actively engage our communities: Cultural Advancement Committee, Education/Civic Engagement Committee, and Economic Development Committee. Additionally, to inform any events and activities that we may as a board member can support and promote Asian American communities.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

National Human Trafficking Prevention Month - "The Right to Know" – Tania Andre Montanez, Executive Director, The Mavuno Project

The Mavuno Project aims to raise awareness & prevention on Human Trafficking and Sexual Abuse via Mission Trips to dis-enfranchised communities internationally and locally. We also share a message of Hope that will set the captive free. The vision is to eradicate Human Trafficking & Sexual Abuse through the power of education and a message of hope all over the world.

Human trafficking is a global problem, and Florida, with its diverse population and significant international presence, is unfortunately not immune to this crime. Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by improper means (such as force, abduction, fraud, or coercion) for an improper purpose including forced labor or sexual exploitation. It's a multi-billion dollar criminal industry affecting millions of people worldwide, exploiting vulnerabilities and leaving devastating impacts on victims. Florida ranks third in the nation for reported cases of human trafficking.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Florida had 896 reported cases of human trafficking in 2020 alone. The state's diverse population, including a significant Asian community, makes it a prime target for traffickers. Asian communities in Florida, like other minority groups, face unique vulnerabilities that traffickers exploit. Language barriers, immigration status, lack of awareness about human trafficking, and cultural stigmas around seeking help are among the factors that make Asians susceptible to exploitation.

Introduction to Maharashtra Mandal of South Florida – Aparna Matange, President and Founding Member

Maharashtra Mandal of South Florida is a nonprofit organization established in 2007 to promote the culture of Maharashtra to the community of southern Florida. Maharashtra Mandal of South Florida was formed to connect folks from the Western State of Maharashtra who live here in South Florida. The mission of Maharashtra Mandal of South Florida, also known as MMOSF is to provide a forum to promote cultural ties among people who are interested in the Maharashtrian culture and to inform and educate the younger generations about the rich cultural values with an intent to preserve and pass on the heritage to future generations. The organization promotes various Maharashtrian cultural activities such as music, drama, dance, literature, language, and social traditions. The organization also aims to coordinate and encourage its members to participate in charitable efforts locally, nationally, and internationally. Ms. Aparna Matange has been a resident of South Florida since 1995 and has been

one of the founding members of MMOSF and has been a past president of MMOSF for the term of 2015-16. It was her along with 50 other individual families who decided to start this organization, which at one point barely had 30 family memberships. Besides showcasing local talent in the community, Aparna and her team are dedicated to bringing artists of different arts and genre from hometown Maharashtra, to display their talent. All the team members are working professionals in different job sectors, who come together for a noble cause of helping and serving the community in such a way that the community member takes a pride in joining and carrying with them a piece of memory that will last a lifetime. MMOSF aspires to continue to exchange ideas, share experiences and build relationships with the community in South Florida.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AAAB Executive Committee – Tai Vaz, Chairwoman

➤ Report: Meeting on April 5th

- Get Out the Vote / Voters Decide: Asian American Vote 2024
 - APIAVote, Asian American Federation of Florida, & Asian American Advancing Justice
 - Listening Forum
 - Citizenship Drive
 - Voter Registration Drive
 - Get Out the Vote Drive
 - Asian American Vote Day
- Asian Heritage Community Tour with Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau
- FIU First Generation Scholarship
 - After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Stephen Matsumoto, AAAB 1st Vice-Chairman to set the amount of donation to the scholarship to \$5,000.00. Dr. Li Gurau, AAAB Immediate Past Chairwoman, seconded. And the amount of \$5,000.00 for FIU First Generation Scholarship donation was approved unanimously.
- Doing Business with Miami-Dade County & Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- AANHPI Heritage Month
 - AANHPI Heritage Month marquee signage at Miami International Airport
 - Opening Kickoff Ceremony at Stephen P. Clark Center on Thursday, May 2nd
 - Family Fun Day Event at History Miami Museum and Miami-Dade Public Library System
 - Calendar of Events
- Mr. Ho will announce the Executive Board Meetings to the board members and the public more than the required 48 hours prior to hosting the meeting.

AAAB Cultural Advancement Committee – Li Gurau, Chairwoman

➤ Asian Cultural Series Sub-committee: Chair, Tai Vaz

- Subcommittee will meet to finalize presentations at Miami-Dade County Library System
 - Contribution of Hinduism
- Report: Asian-American Community Tour with Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau – April 6th
- Grateful to the following:
 - Connie Kinnard, Senior Vice President, Multicultural Tourism & Development
 - Herlinda Lombardi, Program Manager, Multicultural Tourism & Development
 - Petra Brennan, Director, Tourism Business Enhancement, Multicultural Tourism & Development
 - Ella Pedre, Coordinator, Multicultural Tourism & Development
 - Tai Vaz, Chairwoman, Asian American Advisory Board

- Amanda Gonzalez, Intern, Asian American Advisory Board
- AAAB Members: Josephine Gordy, AAAB 3rd Vice-Chairwoman; Li Gurau, AAAB Immediate Chairwoman; Sharon Fine, AAAB Past Chairwoman; Smita Kulkarni; & Winnie Tang, AAAB founding board member.
- AAPI Leaders: Debbie Lowe, Chinese Cultural Association President; Hana Squires, History Miami Museum; & Jeannie Tim Wong, Miami Dade County Procurement.
- GMCVB Multicultural Tourism & Development Committee Members: Yvette Harris, Chairwoman; Connie Kinnard, Senior VP, Multicultural Tourism & Development; Marlon A. Hill, Esq.; and Joshua Ho.
- Stops included Wat Buddha Metta, Cambodian Buddhist Temple; Wat Buddhangersi, Thai Buddhist Temple; Ikebana International Miami at Pinecrest Gardens; and Tropical Chinese Restaurant, one of the oldest and successful Chinese restaurants in Miami.
- Work in Progress
 - AAPI Heritage Month Celebration with History Miami Museum and Miami-Dade Public Library System – May 11th
 - With the additional venue, will have additional cultural performances and demonstrations.
 - Six calligraphers
 - Additional activities
 - Asian American authors will have an opportunity to showcase their work: Meet the Author series with Sadrul Fasihi

AAAB Economic Development Committee – Sharon Fine, Chairwoman

- Cultural Grants Workshop - Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs – Thurs. March 21st, 2PM (Zoom)
 - Follow up with Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council
- Vendor Forum: Contracting Opportunities on Food, Beverage, and Related Services – Wed. March 27th, 11AM (South Dade Regional Library Auditorium, 10750 SW 211 St, Cutler Bay, FL 33189)
- Report: MDC International Trade Consortium – Preeya Disyanan, ITC Board Member
 - ITC Meetings are open to the public, so attend
 - Reports from Sister Cities Committee
 - Small missions to Asian countries with chamber of commerce
 - Mission Committees
 - Possible: India, Vietnam, Thailand
 - Seatrade

AAAB Education/Civic Engagement Committee - Tai Vaz, Chairwoman

- Health/Wellness Sub-committee: Chair: Sadrul Fasihi
 - UMC Free Clinic (Mobile Clinic) will purchase a smaller mobile clinic

CURRENT BUSINESS:

- **Updates from Miami-Dade Police – MDPD Major Patky Changkachith & Detective Brandy Conway**
 - Detective Brandy Conway – Preparing for major events throughout the county – F1, Fleet Week, Memorial Day Weekend.
- **Get Out the Vote Campaign (Location, Date, Time, Hosts)**
 - April 28th: Norman Y. Mineta Leadership Institute in Orlando (APIA Vote)
 - July 13th: Presidential Townhall Watch Party in Philadelphia (APIA Vote)
 - September 17th: National Voter Registration Day (APIA Vote)
 - Assist with Citizenship Drive

- Assist with Voter Registration Drive
- Promote Get Out the Vote Drive
- Establish Asian American Vote Day
- Organize Voters Decide: Asian American Vote 2024

➤ **Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (May)**

- **Marquee Signage at Miami International Airport**
- May 2, Thursday: Opening Kickoff Ceremony at Stephen P. Clark Center
 - Ms. Vaz, Chairwoman, requested a motion to approve the date for the Kickoff Event on May 2nd. Mr. Stephen Matsumoto moved to approve the date for the Kickoff Event on May 2nd, Dr. Adrienne Aiko Thompson seconded, Board unanimously approved date for the Kickoff Event on May 2nd.
- May 4, Saturday: Golshan Ensemble and Maliheh Moradi (Iranian Music Ensemble), FIU BBC Mary Ann Wolfe Theater
- May 11, Saturday: History Miami Museum & Miami-Dade Public Library
- May 15, Wednesday: Gummakonda Reddy Foundation Golf Tournament, Jacaranda Country Club
- May 18, Saturday: NAMI Walk 2024, Zoo Miami
 - **THE AAAB4 AWARENESS** - Team Captain: Dr. Eugene Fu
- May 18, Saturday: Museum of Discovery and Science
- May 19, Sunday: Ichimura Japan Garden
- June 1, Saturday: City of North Miami & North Dade Rotary Club
- Federal Detention Center Miami: TBD
- U.S. Southern Command: TBD
- Doing Business with Miami-Dade County and Miami-Dade County Public Schools: TBD

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

➤ **FIU First Generation Scholarship**

- From AAAB 25th Anniversary Gala
 - AAAB Executive Board approved on their Executive Meeting on April 5th for the amount of \$5000, matched by \$10000 from State of Florida for total of \$15000, and recommends this amount to the Board.
- Ms. Vaz, Chairwoman, requested a motion to approve the amount of \$5000 from the AAAB Trust Account to the FIU First Generation Scholarship. Mr. Mehmet Ulutas moved to approve the amount of \$5000 from the AAAB Trust Account for the FIU First Generation Scholarship, Dr. Adrienne Aiko Thompson seconded, Board unanimously approved the amount of \$5000 from the AAAB Trust Account for the FIU First Generation Scholarship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Calendar of Events:

- April 5 – April 14: Miami Film Festival; For Tickets www.miamifilmfestival.com
- April 10, Wednesday: Beyond Caste and Cow: Rediscovering the Soul of Hinduism with Dr. Chander Shaykher; Miami Dade College Padron Campus, 627 SW 27th Ave., Room 201; 6:30PM-7:30PM;
- April 10, Wednesday: Eid al-Fitr (Celebration of Breaking the Fast)
- April 12, Friday; Shabbat B'Yachad (from the frontlines of Israel-Hamas War) with Lt. Col. And Director of AJC Jerusalem; Beth Torah Benny Rok Campus, 20350 NE 26th Ave.; For information (786) 279-7802

- April 14, Sunday: Songkran Festival – Thai New Year Celebration; Wat Buddharangsi of Miami, 15200 SW 240th Street, Miami; 10AM-3PM; Free admission; Cash for purchases; www.thaitemplemiamifl.org
- April 16, Tuesday: AJC Miami and Broward Community Leadership Passover Seder; Temple Israel of Greater Miami, 137 NE 19th Street; 11:30AM-1:30PM; \$36 Per Person; To register AJC Community Leadership Passover Seder
- April 18, Thursday: Meet the Candidates & Judiciary Reception, hosted by APABASFLA; Southeast Financial Center, 2nd Floor Reception Space, 200 S. Biscayne Blvd.; To Register: www.apabasfla.org/events/
- April 18, Thursday: Department of Justice (Protecting Places of Worship (PPOW) Training Series: Active Shooter Safety Training; African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 Sistrunk Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale; 5:30PM-7:30PM
- April 19, Friday: Legal Essentials for Small Business Success: A Workshop Guide with Marlon Hill, Presented by GMCVB Tourism Business Enhancement; Overtown Performing Arts Center, 1074 NW 3rd Ave.; 9:30AM-12PM
- April 20, Saturday: NAMI Miami-Dade County presents the Second Honest Talk About Suicide and a Message of Hope; University of Miami Newman Alumni Center, 6200 San Amaro Drive, Coral Gables; 9:00AM-12PM
- April 22, Monday – April 30, Tuesday: Passover (Pesach)
- April 26, Friday: Refresh and Renew with Didi Krishna – A Meetup for Youth and Young Adults; Sadhu Vaswani Center of Miami, 2470 NW 102nd Place, #205, Miami
- May 2, Thursday; Department of Justice (Protecting Places of Worship (PPOW) Training Series: The Power of Hello; African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 Sistrunk Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale; 5:30PM-7:30PM
- May 7, Tuesday; Department of Justice (Protecting Places of Worship (PPOW) Training Series: Tools for De-Escalation; African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, 2650 Sistrunk Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale; 5:30PM-7:30PM
- Sundays: ACE Talk Show with Winnie Tang, Josephine Gordy & Joshua Ho on WAVS 1170AM & 107.9 FM, Sunday evening from 9PM – 10PM www.ACETalk.org

Adjournment: At 7:36 PM, Ms. Tai Vaz requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sharon Fine moved to adjourn, Ms. Luna Adachi seconded; Board unanimously approved to adjourn.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 6PM – SPCC 18-4 Conference Room