



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



MINUTES, Monthly Board Meeting

6:00 P.M., Tuesday, January 14, 2025

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

Ref: 01-14-2025

Present: Luna Adachi; Hoda Askari; Christina Fuentes; Li Gurau; Stephen Lian Thang; Adrienne Aiko Thompson; Smita Kulkarni; Anjana Mishra; Tai Vaz; Nick Vicera; Jim Yu; Preeya Disyanan (ITC)

Excused: Vinita Chakravarty; Sadrul Fasihi; Sharon Fine; Eugene Fu; Jose Keichi Fuentes; Josephine Gordy; Stephen Matsumoto; Subbarayan Pochi; Mehmet Ulutas

Absent:

Staff: Joshua Ho; Griselle Marino; Vanessa Azzam

Guest: Deputy Sheriff John Leon; Taylor Haas; Naoko Komura; Matt Marr; Athanasia Fitos; Koranis Buomadez; Jenni Person

At 6:32 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 September 2024 and requested a motion to approve the Minutes. Dr. Hoda Askari moved to approve the September Minutes, Dr. Smita Kulkarni seconded, the Board unanimously approved the September Minutes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mr. Ho welcomed the Board and the guests and thanked all for attending AAAB January General Board meeting after a break in the month of December. He reminded the Board to update their calendar for 2025 AAAB General Board Meetings and stressed having a quorum as it is very important for our communities. He proceeded to inform the Board that he is working on reappointments and appointments to AAAB and the board members' patience are very welcomed and appreciated.

Mr. Ho introduced the Miami-Dade County elected officials including the newly elected Constitutional Officers.

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>

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:

*Jenni Person, Community Relations Manager, Greater Miami Jewish Federation

*Naoko Komura, Teaching Professor of Japanese, Department of Modern Languages, Florida International University

*Athanasia Fitos, Library Operations Manager, Community Engagement, Miami-Dade Public Library System

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- **Jenni Person, Community Relations Manager, Greater Miami Jewish Federation – Invitation to attend the Nova Music Festival Exhibition “We Will Dance Again”:** Opened on December 18th at Greenwich Studios in North Miami, the Nova Exhibition Miami invites visitors to reflect on the tragic events of October 7, 2023, when the Nova Music Festival in Re'im, Israel, was violently disrupted by an unprecedented terrorist attack. This in-depth installation, created and directed by Reut Feingold, serves as both a remembrance of the 370 festival attendees who lost their lives and a platform for survivors to share their powerful testimonies. The exhibit recreates the atmosphere of the Nova Music Festival, incorporating salvaged remnants from the festival grounds, including scorched cars, bullet-riddled bathroom stalls and personal belongings. Visitors will encounter a sensory and emotional journey, enhanced by survivors' firsthand accounts and immersive installations designed to bear witness to the largest massacre in music history.
- **Naoko Komura, Teaching Professor of Japanese, Department of Modern Languages, Florida International University: Invitation for Japan Immersion Day at FIU:** On Wednesday, February 24, 2025, FIU will host Japan Immersion Day to celebrate and enjoy Japanese culture, learn about Japan, and more. The event will be held in FIU's Green Library (GL) Room 100 and the classrooms located on the second floor of GC. It will feature various cultural activities and fun games to encourage students to learn more about Japan. A non-refundable fee of \$15 includes a Japanese lunch, supplies, and handouts. For additional information, contact Professor Naoko Komura at komuran@fiu.edu.
- **Athanasia Fitos, Library Operations Manager, Community Engagement, Miami-Dade Public Library System: 2025 Local Author Book Fair & Asian Culture Series:** The Miami-Dade Public Library System is excited to present the 2025 Local Author Book Fair on Saturday, Jan. 25. This vibrant, free annual event, celebrating Miami-Dade County's rich literary talent, will take place from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Main Library in downtown Miami. The event promises a day filled with engaging activities, including storytimes and book readings from award-winning and bestselling authors, book signings, interactive illustration workshops by a Marvel and DC Comic artist and much more. Families and children can meet and take photos with beloved storybook characters such as Cookie Mouse, Rainbow Fish and Pete the Cat. The fun continues with live music, crafts and a special performance of "Pete the Cat" by Miami Children's Museum Theatre Troupe. Author Sita Singh will be featured.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

AAAB Executive Committee – Tai Vaz, Chairwoman

AAAB Cultural Advancement Committee – Li Gurau, Chairwoman

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

Update: Athanasia Fitos, Library Operations Manager, Community Engagement, Miami-Dade Public Library System: Excited to partner with AAAB for the Asian Culture Series at the Miami-Dade Public Library System. There is a small budget dedicated to the series from the Miami Dade County Library System in addition to our annual events during Lunar New Year and the AANHPI Heritage Month celebration with History Miami Museum. Please forward month and choice of libraries to be considered to Mr. Ho to be shared with the Miami-Dade Public Library System and Asian Culture Series Sub-committee chairwoman.

- Possible Dates and Countries:
 - India
 - January 2025 China
 - February 2025 Japan
 - April 2025 Pakistan
 - September 2025 China
 - October 2025 Korea

AAAB Economic Development Committee – Sharon Fine, Chairwoman

- Report: MDC International Trade Consortium – Preeya Disyanan, ITC Board Member
 - Currently working with Director Chavanol Phivnil at Thai Trade Center Miami, to prepare a trip to Thailand for THAIFEX, Asia’s most influential F&B arena, where visionaries, disruptors, and market leaders converge to redefine the industry; and business partnership opportunities for South Florida business organizations and entrepreneurs in May of 2025. Few members of ITC are very interested in participating in the trip.

AAAB Education/Civic Engagement Committee - Tai Vaz, Chairwoman

- Health/Wellness Sub-committee: Chair: Sadrul Fasihi

Update: Presented to the Office of the Mayor for the possibility of UMC Free Clinic in serving the residence in district 8 and district 9. Will invite Vice-Chairman McGhee (District 9) and Commissioner Cohen Higgins (District 8) to UMC Free Clinic for introduction and familiarity of UMC Free Clinic.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

- **Introducing 2025 AAAB Executive Board:**
 - Ms. Phonethip “Tai” Vaz - Chairwoman
 - Mr. Stephen Matsumoto - 1st Vice Chairman
 - Ms. Luna Adachi - 2nd Vice Chairwoman
 - Ms. Josephine Gordy - 3rd Vice Chairwoman
 - Dr. Li Gurau – Immediate Past Chairwoman
- **Updates from Miami-Dade Sheriff’s Office –Detective Brandy Conway**
 - This weekend due to the MLK events, there will be an increase of motorcycles, dirt bikes, ATV’s, etc on the roadways. Please remain cautious when driving throughout Miami Dade County. There will be increased patrol for intelligence gathering, visibility and enforcement
 - There are some local events planned for Inauguration Day, but do not foresee any mass gatherings or concerns to our county.
- **34th Annual Asian Culture Festival**
 - Saturday, March 1st & Sunday, March 2nd
 - Tropical Park, 7900 SW 40th St, Miami, FL 33155
 - Video Introduction: <https://youtu.be/T8DKhUDfhvI?si=KHTmL5tEDZGFrbcw>
 - Website: <https://asianculturefestival.net/>

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

➤ **Sponsorship Request: Japan Immersion Day at Florida International University with Japan Language Program: \$300**

- February 24, 2024, 9:30am – 1pm
- Modesto Maidique Campus (11200 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, Florida 33199) – Green Library 100
- Contact: Professor Naoko Komura, Teaching Professor of Japanese, Japanese Program Coordinator, Department of Modern Languages

Dr. Adrienne Thompson moved to approve \$300 to sponsor Japan Immersion Day at Florida International University; Dr. Jim Yu seconded; the Board unanimously approved the \$300 Sponsorship Request to support Japan Immersion Day at Florida International University with Japan Language Program.

➤ **Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust (CITT) Request for provide a brief presentation on the Status of People's Transportation Plan (PTP) and SMART Plan 2025.**

- The Board decided to invite CITT to provide a presentation, no longer than 20 minutes, during March 2025 General Meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Calendar of Events:

- December 18 - February 16: The Nova Music Festival Exhibition; Greenwich Studios in North Miami, 12100 NE 16th Ave, North Miami; \$20; Tickets [NovaFestivalExhibition](#)
- January 17, Friday: Webinar - Procurement Advocacy Communication Forum presented by Miami-Dade County Strategic Procurement Department; https://miamidade.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-WiTe1tERMq5KbuKUK4yuw
- January 23, Thursday: Miami-Dade County Public School Local Business Fair; Miami Norland Senior High School, 1193 NW 193rd Street; 6PM-8PM; Information: 305-995-1307 / oeecertification@dadeschools.net
- January 25, Sunday: Anand Bazaar 2025 hosted by IRCC Florida; Corporate Shelter, Miramar Regional Park, 16801 Miramar Pkwy, Miramar; 11AM -4PM; <https://irccflorida.org/event/anand-bazaar/>
- January 30, Thursday: State of the County Address presented by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava; Miami Senior High, 2450 SW 1st Street; 6PM; [Mayor Cava's State of the County Address](#)
- February 1, Saturday: Chinese Language Teachers Association of Florida's Chinese Culture Festival; Ransom Everglades Middle School, 2045 South Bayshore Drive, Coconut Grove; 10AM; <https://www.ransomeverglades.org/#/>
- February 1, Saturday: 2025 Overseas Chinese Spring Festival Gala, hosted by South Florida Chinese Business Association; Julius Littman Performing Arts Theater, 17011 NE 19th Ave.; 6PM; \$30-\$60; [Chinese Spring Festival](#)
- February 2, Sunday: FREE Japanese Festival; Ichimura Miami-Japan Garden, 1101 MacArthur Causeway, Watson Island, Miami; 10:30AM-4PM; Free Admission; Authentic Japanese Tea Ceremony \$10, Sushi Sample Plate \$10; <https://friendsofjapanesegarden.com/>
- February 8, Saturday: City of North Miami Beach Lunar New Year Festival with Florida Asian Services and ACETalk Radio Show; Senator Gwen Margolis Amphitheater, 165 NE 165th Street, NMB; 10AM-3PM
- February 12, Wednesday: Lunar New Year Celebration with Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce Miami; Tower Club, Ft. Lauderdale, 100 SE 3rd Ave, 28th Floor; 6PM; \$25; [Lunar Celebration TCCM](#)
- February 24, Monday: Japan Immersion Day at Florida International University; FIU Modesto Maidique Campus, 11200 S.W. 8th Street, Miami; 9AM -1PM; Info komuran@fiu.edu

- Sundays: **ACE Talk** Show with Winnie Tang, Josephine Gordy & Joshua Ho on WAVS 1170AM & 107.9 FM, Sunday evening from 9PM – 10PM www.ACE-Talk.com

Adjournment: At 7:26PM, Dr. Adrienne Thompson moved to adjourn; Dr. Li Gurau seconded; Board unanimously approved to adjourn.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 6PM – SPCC 18-4 Conference Room