



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander
Affairs

“Advocating Equality and Diversity”
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519
Email: oaco.mail@state.or.us

MINUTES

Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
Wednesday, March 20, 2013
10am – 1 pm
800 NE Oregon St., Room 1D

ATTENDEES:

Chair: Stephen Ying
Vice Chair: Mari Watanabe
Commissioners: Ping Khaw-Sutherland, Jennifer Kleskie, Joseph Santos-Lyons (phone), Mahendra Shah
Guests: Frank Garcia (phone), OAC Senior Policy Advisor/Governor’s Office; Jenny Lee Berry, Governor’s Office; Andee Short /Sen. Dingfelder’s Office; Nancy Haque, Western States Center
Staff: Lucy Baker, Nancy Kramer

I. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am.

II. Review and Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and a report from the Governor’s Office was added as the first report on the agenda. The agenda was agreed by common consent.

III. Approval of Past Minutes

Quorum was not met at the outset of the meeting and the Commission planned to adopt the minutes at the next regular meeting. Commissioner Shah arrived and the meeting achieved quorum.

MOTION (Watanabe/Shah): To accept the minutes as written. CARRIED.

IV. Governor’s Office Report

The Commission welcomed Frank Garcia, Sr. Policy Advisor, and Jenny Lee Berry, Deputy of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Mr. Garcia thanked the OCAPIA for its commitment to representing the voice of the API community in Oregon. He is pleased with progress being made by the Advocacy Commissions in rebranding themselves and aligning with the Governor’s Office and agenda. He appreciates their work becoming more effective advocates improving day-to-day life of APIs/underrepresented classes, leverage momentum and limited resources. He encourages OCAPIA and its Commissioners to get involved in the legislative session and speak to legislators on the needs of the API community.

In the coming weeks, the Governor is looking to see positive movement by the legislature around Tuition equity and restoring driving privileges for Oregon's undocumented workers. Healthcare and education reform are also high on the Governor's agenda.

Overall, the Governor's focus is largely a populist agenda, to get Oregon back to full strength. Diversity & Inclusion plays a large role in this work. The Oregon Affirmative Action Report will be released soon and multiple stakeholders are involved in all aspects of the Governor's agenda, creating larger bandwidth, more people, more perspectives, and framing a policy discussion.

Jenny Lee Berry discussed the Governor's Diversity Kitchen Cabinet which is composed of the Directors of all the State agencies and also, more recently, the Chairs of the Advocacy Commissions and its Administrator. Having the OAC's involved in the work of the Cabinet is growing their understanding of the Commissions as a resource. People being more thoughtful and intentional and recognizing the changing demographics of Oregon – people recognizing we are overrepresented by a dominant culture.

The Commissioners thanked Frank and Jenny for their report. They noted that the OCAPIA would like to hear more about the vision of the Governor's Office on a regular basis in order to be in alignment with the work going forward. OCAPIA has prioritized education as its strategic goal and wish to be kept up to date on that process including the ESL funding formula for Oregon, data collection and other supports for improved outcomes for API communities still struggling around that subject.

Mr. Garcia thanked the Commission for that overview and looks forward to supporting the OCAPIA in its education interests. He views the Advocacy Commissions as an important conduit and path for information and supportive action on policy for improving success for communities of color and women. Frank and Jenny wanted the Commission to know that they are both always available to Commissioners by phone.

V. Leadership Report

Chair Ying participated in many events since the January 2013 OCAPIA meeting: He attended the We Can Do Better conference on February 7, 2013. This organization was founded by Governor Kitzhaber and the theme of the conference was transforming healthcare and putting health first. He spoke at Meals on Wheels, at the Asian Health Center, explaining OCAPIA to the API community members who attended. At a recent Colored Pencils event he introduced himself as OCAPIA Chair and read OCAPIA's mission statement to the audience. He will also attend CACA's (Chinese American Citizen Alliance) scholarship/civil rights fundraising dinner in June 2013.

Chair Ying volunteered to serve on Central City 2035, for a term of three and a half years. He also participated as a translator at an immigration office petition for citizenship.

Oregon's Secretary of State won the National Association of Secretaries of State award for its innovation in registering those eligible to vote. One of the methods used by the New American Voter Project was going to elders' homes to register them using tablet technology.

The Chair noted that House Bill 2134 (Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services to adopt...uniform standards for collection of data on race...) passed, with testimony submitted by OCAPIA in favor of this bill and by great effort from APANO and other organizations.

VI. Administrator's Report

A. Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee Hearing Debrief:

Administrator Lucy Baker said that overall the OACO budget hearing on March 11, 2013 went well. Chairs from three of the Advocacy Commissions were able to attend and to give testimony on the work of the Commissions.

B. Budget Update:

Lucy presented on the overall status of the OCAPIA General Fund (GF) and the OCAPIA Other Funds (OF). She invited any Commissioners with questions to contact her directly for a more detailed financial briefing and to answer specific questions. The current GF and OF report were distributed to all present.

Executive Assistant Nancy Kramer will send a request to all Commissioners to submit any travel reimbursement they have withheld for this biennium. Nancy clarified that stipends/per diems are for attending OCAPIA meetings, not for travel reimbursements.

Commissioner Khaw-Sutherland requested a full accounting of OCAPIA's expenditures for the current biennium. The Office will send this to all OCAPIA Commissioners.

Lucy noted that the four Chairs of the Advocacy Commissions signed an exemption request to the Joint Ways and means General Government Subcommittee to hold the OACO harmless from further cuts and reductions to its budget in the 2013-2015 biennium.. The Legislative Fiscal Office requested three more 5% reductions for all agency budgets; for OACO this would involve closing the office, and reduce staffing by 14%.

VII. Old Business

E. May 2013 Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in Salem

The Frank Garcia, the Advocacy Commissions Senior Policy Advisor, will work on the Governor's participation for this event in the first half of May.

G. Focus on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs for APIs:

It was noted that a new Immigrant & Refugee Council for the City of Portland will include people from around the world who now live in Portland. The Mayor's Office supports the idea and is soliciting a revised proposal for this program.

All other Old Business was postponed to the next meeting.

VIII. New Business

A. Western States Center, Nancy Haque – Civic engagement presentation

Nancy Haque narrated a PowerPoint presentation for the OCAPIA about voter registration. She said there are many APIs who are not registered to vote. She clarified that nonprofits can register voters with no threat to their 501 (c)(3) status but they must remain nonpartisan.

She noted that APANO translated the most recent Voter Guide and their phone bank offered volunteers who spoke a total of 13 languages.

She stressed the importance for voters to understand the ballot and the crux of the issues. Often ballot titles and concepts are confusing and translation to other languages is crucial to voters understanding the issues.

The Commissioners discussed the issue, noting that API leaders need to offer an explanation of the voting process and why it is important to vote; Oregon allows students to register to vote at age 17 and that they are unaware of public school curriculum including voter registration.

The OCAPIA thanked her for her presentation.

B. The Commission welcomed Simon Tam, Manager and Band Member of The Slants, to discuss his work on establishing a trademark for the band's name. The OCAPIA has written to the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) on behalf of Mr. Tam in the past. The Slants are an Asian American band based in Oregon and Washington. In 2010 when they filed a trademark application, that name was considered racist term and they were denied a trademark by the USPTO. He wanted to let the OCAPIA know that he has been working steadily to reverse that decision including submitting surveys, testimony, and a new trademark application, but was denied again. He believes that API's and the API community must be in control of the language used to describe or identify their community and experience. It is important to re-take control of the language.

He and The Slants are now considering appealing the denial to a higher court. The ACLU has indicated an interest in supporting The Slants' claim when the case moves beyond the USPTO. Simon is asking OCAPIA to consider supporting that next step as appropriate. He suggested an amicus brief to the

court when the time is right. The Commission noted it will discuss this issue further before making a decision on the form their support will take. Jenny Lee Barry with the Governor's office also indicated an interest in talking with Mr. Tam regarding terminology. The Commission thanked Mr. Tam for his presentation.

- C. The Commission welcomed the Chair and Staff of the White House Initiative on AAPI (WHIAAPI) for an update on their work nationally.

WHIAAPI Chair, Daphne Kwok, thanked the Commission for the invitation to report and introduced the staff of the WHIAAPI:

- Tuyet Duong, Senior Advisor
- Juliet Bui, Advisor on Health Policy
- Julie DeFrain, Immigration Issues
- Jason Tengco, Advisor on Public Engagement

Ms. Kwok is also the Executive Director of Asians and Pacific Islanders with Disabilities of California

Daphne discussed the work of the White House Initiative on AAPI. They cover many of the same issues as OCAPIA at federal level. The WHAAPI Advisory Commission is 20 members from leading API Commissions and groups nationally. They serve as ears & eyes of the needs of the API community at the federal level. They report to the White House and over 23 federal agencies.

Julie DeFrain provided an Immigration reform update: The Obama administration is pushing for immigration reform since he came to office. This includes 1) securing the borders 2) streamlining the immigration system to reduce backlogs, 3) providing a path to citizenship, and 4) holding employers accountable – worksite enforcement and e-verify mandate and non-discrimination protections for workers. The bipartisan group drafting an immigration bill which will release their proposal this Spring. It will represent the first real opportunity in 6 or 7 years to enact immigration reform in both sides of the Congress. Julie noted that there is a large national campaign headed by a non-profit called the Alliance for Citizenship (<http://allianceforcitizenship.org/>). She encouraged all state Commissioners interested in immigration issues to visit their website for information and updates.

Juliet Bui discussed the national Affordable Care Act which is celebrating its 3rd anniversary in March. Several of its main benefits will become active in 2013. This includes increased access to free preventive services (enrollment is October 1st), free annual wellness visits, and allowing more young adults able to remain on parents' insurance until age 26. She noted that the API community has a higher rate than national average of being uninsured. Part of the Act will help address this situation by establishing 2 types of Insurance Exchanges to assist individuals and small business access better health

benefits. She encouraged interested Commissioners to participate in webinars that the WHIAAPI will be hosting on this and other subjects regularly. The material on the Affordable Care Act is available in many Asian languages.

Jason Tengco reported on the work of the WHIAAPI around public engagement. He noted the importance of hearing at the national level from the API community and coalitions. Commissioner Santos Lyons commented on the issue of family reunification as part of immigration reform and Jason said they are well aware of this key issue. He encouraged all Commissioners to work with their Commissions to take positions, write op-ed pieces, join informational listservs and leverage their community connections to work on key issues. Jason noted that his office is finalizing talking points they have heard from the API community on a number of issues and will forward them to OCAPIA.

The OCAPIA thanked the WHIAAPI for their discussion.

VI. Adjourn

The Commission adjourned by common consent at 12:18pm.