

MEETING MINUTES



ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY-OF-LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JUNE 20th, 2023

The ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY-OF-LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION convened in a REGULAR meeting on **TUESDAY, JUNE 20th, 2023, at AUSTIN CITY HALL - BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM #1101, 301 W. 2ND STREET in AUSTIN, TEXAS.**

Chair HANNAH HUANG called the ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY-OF-LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING to order at 6:08pm CST.

Commissioners in Attendance:

Sarah Chen (Vice-Chair)

Nayer Sikder

Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:

Hanna Huang (Chair)

Kymberlie Quong-Charles

Kuo Yang

Lily Trieu

Fang Fang

Mohsin Lari

Sabrina Sha

Commissioners Absent:

Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan (ineligible to serve)

Pierre Nguyen (Excused Absence)

Anna Lan (Excused Absence)

Azra Siddiqi (Excused Absence)

Staff in Attendance:

Jeremy Garza – Business Process Consultant, Equity Office

Laura Esparza – Division Manager, Parks & Recreation Department

Tony Vo – Culture & Arts Education Manager, Asian American Resource Center

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PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

The first ten speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

Jelina Tunstill – Program Coordinator for the Community Advancement Network (CAN) Sharing tools and resources for language access and equity action. Can provide a more detailed community briefing at the request of the commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of the COMMISSION's REGULAR MEETING on May 16th, 2023.

The minutes from the meeting of May 16th, 2023 were approved on COMMISSIONER SARAH CHEN's motion, COMMISSIONER KYMBERLIE QUONG-CHARLES's second on a 9 – 0 vote. (Absent: Anna Lan, Azra Siddiqi, Pierre Nguyen, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan).

STAFF BRIEFING

2. Austin Transportation Partnership – Update on the final decision and the selected plans for Project Connection's first construction phase.

The presentation was made by: Yannis Banks – Public Involvement Manager, Light Rail, Austin Transit Partnership.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

3. Discussion and possible action on appointing a new primary and alternate representative for the Commission on the Joint Inclusion Committee (JIC).

The motion to approve *Commissioner Hanna Huang as the primary representative Committee and Nayer Sikder as alternate representative to the Joint Inclusion Committee* was approved on COMMISSIONER SARAH CHEN's motion, COMMISSIONER FANG FANG's second on a 9 – 0 vote. (Absent: Anna Lan, Azra Siddiqi, Pierre Nguyen, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan).

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4. Discussion on how the Interim City Manager Jesus Garza's recommendation to hold off bonds until 2026 will affect the cultural centers master plans (including MACC, AARC, & Dougherty Arts) with possible action to recommend City Council take action on this issue.

This recommendation to delay the bond election comes from the Finance Department and City Manager's Office. Assistant City Manager, Rodney Gonzales, says capital funds need to be spent down from bonds passed in previous elections. The City Manager created the Capital Delivery Services office to ensure that previous bond money gets spent since delays in spending those funds as become a chronic issue city-wide. The high amount of bond funds that have yet to be spent affects the city's credit rating. Delaying the 2024 Bond Election to 2026 affects the Asian American community and the Commission's work regarding the Asian American Resource Center (AARC)'s Phase 2 planning, including architecture design and build-out of the performing arts center. Laura Esparza, Division Manager at PARD, reports that City Council has just approved the continuation of the architect's planning process for the AARC. The upcoming timeline includes six months of design development followed by another six months of developing construction documents. In one year, after both phases are complete, pricing will be determined to make it in time for the 2024 bond election.

The recommendation from Jesus Garza, Interim City Manager, to delay the bond election until 2026, which will significantly push back the timeline for the AARC. It takes two years for funds from a bond election to be allocated, so a funds from a bond election in 2024 would get allocated in 2026, but if that election gets delayed till 2026, then funds will not be available until near the end of the decade, in 2028 at the earliest. The delay in a bond election will also affect the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) and the Dougherty Arts Center (DAC) which is in a critical state of decline that is unsustainable without bond funding for a new building.

How do things get on a bond election? In two ways, says Laura Esparza, the department nominates certain items they have already studied and determined can move forward. Or, the will of the public can push an item to a bond election. In 2018, community organizing and the will of the people successfully advocated for the Bond Committee and City Council members to add cultural centers to the bond election. Unfortunately, the construction cost in 2018 is not what it is today, it has doubled! Therefore, the 2018 bonds provide insufficient funding for cultural centers due to exploding construction costs.

Paths of action for the Commission: It is ultimately up to City Council to decide whether to delay or hold a 2024 Bond Election. Commissioners Hanna Huang and Lily Trieu will work on drafting a resolution/recommendation to City Council that seeks support for a Bond Election in 2024 for cultural centers, which have historically been underprioritized in bond elections.

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5. Discussion on workgroups, commission priorities and re-establishing commissioner commitments to workgroups, with possible action on dissolving any existing workgroups or establishing new workgroups, as needed by the Commission.

Possible workgroups the commission is interested in forming: Public Health & Safety; Community & Youth Engagement; Cultural Arts; Economic Development.

The motion to establish a Public Health & Safety Workgroup authorized to investigate public health and public safety challenges the Asian American community faces in Austin; the workgroup shall consist of no more than one less than quorum, including Commissioners Lily Trieu, Kuo Yang, Pierre Nguyen, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan; with members replaced as needed by the committee; the workgroup members are authorized to collaborate with other commissions and represent/speak on behalf the Hispanic/Latino Quality-of-Life Resource Advisory Commission on matters pertaining to their assignment; the workgroup will make periodic reports to the Commission as deemed appropriate, with a brief summary report with recommendations for the commission to take action, concluding their work no later than December 20th, 2023 was approved on COMMISSIONER HANNA HUANG's motion, COMMISSIONER LILY TRIEU's second on a 9 – 0 vote. (Absent: Anna Lan, Azra Siddiqi, Pierre Nguyen, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan).

WORKING GROUP UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

6. Budget Workgroup – Updates on the FY23-24 Budget Recommendation Process. JIC budget priorities include: Affordability, Public Safety, Health, & Transportation. Budget (*Hannah Huang, Sarah Chen, Kimberly Quong-Charles*)
7. Community Stakeholder Workgroup – Updates on commissioner vacancies and discussion on the marketing strategy to solicit applications to fill stakeholder vacancies (*Fang Fang, Kimberlie Quong-Charles, Sabrina Sha & Mohsin Lari*)
8. AARC Workgroup – Updates & discussion on Phase II, staffing & budget, friends of AARC group development (*Kuo Yang, Hanna Huang, Lily Trieu, Kirk Yoshida & Vincent Cobalis*)
9. Joint Inclusion Committee – General update and discussion on the coalition building work of the JIC (*Hanna Huang & Nayer Sikder*)

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FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

10. Call for items from Committee members:

Discussion and possible action on appointing an at-large commissioner to the open/vacant position.

Discussion and possible action on pasting a recommendation to City Council to move forward on a 2024 Bond Election for the City's Cultural Centers, despite Interim City Manager Jesus Garza's recommendation to hold off bonds until 2026.

Discussion and possible action on adding members to existing workgroups, or authorizing any new workgroups as needed by the Commission.

Vanorda Richardson, PARD Financial Manager III PARD's FY24 Financial Forecast/Proposed Budget. No staff briefing. Now seeking one-pager email update from Vanorda.

Staff Briefing from Austin Code Department (ACD), regarding their June 2023 Summer Ready campaign, a quarterly ACD outreach effort about safety in the summer (rest break ordinance, tall weeds/grass, illegal dumping, air conditioning rebates, etc.) – Tara Long (Scheduling TBD)

Staff Briefing from Nefertiti Jackmon, Community Displacement Prevention Officer in the Displacement Prevention Division of the Housing & Planning Department (Scheduled for July 2023)

Staff Briefing on the I-35 Cap & Stitch from Shannon Riley, Project Coordinator for "Our Future 34 – Austin Cap & Stitch Program) (Scheduled for July 2023)

Future meeting to be hosted at the AARC, originally planned for July, and pushed to August.

Laura Esparza – AARC Fundraising Training (Scheduling TBD) Pushing the discussion to the July agenda 2023? Fundraising training is about parameters of non-City groups fundraising for City CIP projects. (IN JULY or AUGUST)

Intergovernmental Relations – Brie Franco (Tentatively scheduled for after the legislative session (Tentatively schedule for August 2023) Inquiry from Commissioner Fang Fang about Senate Bill 147.

Human Resources Department Staff Report Update (Scheduling TBD) ask Interim Director, Rebecca Kennedy

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Activation of the Joint Cultural Committee (Scheduling TBD)

Cultural arts division about new cultural arts programs and the new second pilot they are rolling.

YWCA – Mental Health Contract with APH for Asian American Mental Health Services (Scheduling TBD); Follow-Up Summary of how it has gone. Update on the status of all the contracts, and any findings or reports that have gone out Mental Health Services Update on any and all Asian mental health contracts since 2020 (esp., after North Austin Universal Health).

ADJOURNMENT

11. The meeting is adjourned at: **7:46 pm**

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The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Meeting locations are planned with wheelchair access, and hybrid virtual meeting attendance is now available. If requiring Sign Language Interpreters or alternative formats, please give notice of at least two days (48 hours) before the meeting date. Please call the Equity Office Commission Liaison, Jeremy Garza, at (512) 978-1797, or email at jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov, for additional information; TTY users route through Relay Texas at 711.

For more information on the Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission, please contact the Equity Office's Community Services Program Coordinator, Jeremy Garza, by phone at (512) 978-1797, or (preferably) via email at jeremy.garza@austintexas.gov.

***The minutes were approved at the Commission's REGULAR MEETING on July 18th, 2023 on COMMISSIONER SARAH CHEN's motion, COMMISSIONER MOHSIN LARI's second on a 10 – 0 vote. (Off the Dais: Kuo Yang. Absent: Lily Trieu, and Zahra Shakur Jamal-Hassan).**