



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

MEETING MINUTES

COMMISSION OF ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AFFAIRS (CAPI)

Date: Thursday, February 28, 2019
Time: 10:00 – 11:30 AM
Location: Lucas State Office Building – Room 320
Conference Call – Public Access Provided

Commissioners Present:

Ben Jung, Chair – *West Des Moines*
James Suong – *Des Moines*
Karlai Thornburg – *Ames*
Michelle Yoshimura-Smith – *Des Moines*
Suresh Basnet – *Cedar Rapids*
Peggy La – *Sioux City (by phone)*
Ritu Gurung – *Davenport (by phone)*
San Wong – DHR Director (*Ex officio member*)

Absent: None

DHR/CAS/API Staff:

Tina Shaw, Executive Officer for Office of Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs/CAS

Public Attendance: Xiangheng Li, DHR Youth Program participant (Valley High School) attended as part of DHR Day on the Hill event.

Guests: Lisa Ung – World Financial Group

I. Call to Order

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM. All seven commissioners in attendance. Quorum present.

II. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Motion by La, seconded by Basnet to approve the minutes from the 1/14/19 meeting. Unanimous consent. Motion carried. Minutes will be posted to the DHR-CAPI website.

III. New Business

Shaw introduced Lisa Ung, Senior Marketing Director for WFG and owner of Ung Financial Services. She also serves as the company's compliance officer. In this capacity, Ung, who took over the family business after her father retired, noticed the lack of healthcare education and dearth of resources to make the API community aware of programs and benefits. Many elders do not understand the various federal and state systems, processes for accessing programs they have paid into. Ung noted that even her English-speaking clients are having trouble navigating processes.

In Ung's client base, 85 percent are Asian: Tai Dam, Laotian, and Vietnamese. A large part of her business growth comes from word-of-mouth referrals. She and her trained, licensed bi-lingual brokers do much "hand-holding" to get them applied, enrolled and better familiar with processes and paperwork. Often, she is clearing up miscommunication from advice given re: Medicare Part D on the SHIIP hotline - SHIIP falls under the auspices of the Iowa Insurance Division. Shaw provided CAPI with Lisa Ung's write-up outlining the challenges for API community members for Medicare Part D.

Suong: If an elder API leaves a company or place of employment, they have no health insurance. Where do I point them for help? Ung responded the Social Security Administration is the first, best place to start. However, all materials are provided in English; Vietnamese may be requested. But in Iowa, there is a large demand for Tai Dam and Lao, and they are not available. Ung provides quarterly CMS-approved (CMS is the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services) workshops and welcomed CAPI to attend. Ung educated the Commission on the four major parts of the federal Medicare Program.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the Medicare. Ung reiterated the point that Part D should not be characterized as an option - though many APIs are being counseled that it is - and this is the main source of confusion. If people do not sign up for Part D and continue to stay in the program, they may be penalized by way of a reduction in overall medication-benefit levels. Ung sees a role for CAPI by taking the lead in educating the leadership within core API groups of people in Iowa.

When asked about digital delivery methods, such as YouTube or other social media channels, Ung responded that CMS approval is required for videos.

La inquired on how to get Medicare education for Vietnamese elders in the Siouxland area. Ung and Shaw will speak with La offline and brainstorm on viability of hosting such an outreach event and timing and venue.

Wong: Community Action Agencies are a good source of information. Ung commented that it has been a difficult for her company to partner with state agencies, even if only to educate.

Shaw agreed with Ung on the low numbers of APIs choosing long-term care facilities, and the statistics show API elders are being cared for longer at home or by loved ones in their homes. Shaw described the rationale for CAPI's support for CARE Act which emphasizes home-based care and supports. Shaw and Ung agreed to meet further and discuss the formation of a workable outreach plan that goes beyond Des Moines. Ung agreed to add CAPI to the free, quarterly education outreach forums her business hosts.

IV. Old Business

Yoshimura-Smith led the discussion on the creation of a Friends of CAPI nonprofit to support the scholarship capacity of EducAsian, among other priorities. Using the bylaws documents provided by the Latino Affairs Commission and the Status of Women's Commission as base guidance documents, a rough draft was presented to the CAPI for review. Shaw explained the two differing approaches used by these entities that may or may not be taken by CAPI, and that bylaws are required in order to submit legal documents to both the Iowa Secretary of State and the Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt status. Discussion was tabled to a future meeting.

V. Announcements & Miscellaneous

- A. Commissioner Reports – Discussion about the legislative status and prospects for passage of the CARE Act. Both Jung and Yoshimura-Smith were able to publicly show support on behalf of CAPI and the community during an AARP press event at the Capitol.
- B. DHR and API Office Report – Shaw provided a detailed report of EducAsian programming and circulated the six-week matrix of speakers, workshops and campus tours.

VI. Next CAPI Meeting

General consent was expressed to meet sometime in early to mid-April. Shaw will circulate a poll for CAPI to find a date that works for the majority of commissioners.

VII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:58 AM by Basnet, seconded by Thornburg . Unanimous consent. Motion passes. Commissioners joined other DHR Commissions on the 6th floor of the Lucas Building for a luncheon hosted in conjunction with DHR Day on the Hill.