



Minutes

Council Board of Directors Meeting
September 17, 2015
5:00 – 7:00 P.M.
Lady Slipper Room, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Nhon called the meeting to order at 5:01 P.M.

I. COMMUNITY PRESENTATION

Mr. Saw Morrison, Program Manager of the Karen Organization of MN (KOM) presented on the Karen Minnesotan community and the role KOM is playing in helping this community to integrate. The Karen is an ethnic community from Burma; the first Karen families arrived in Minnesota more than a decade ago. Minnesota is home to an estimated 9,600 Karen, the largest concentration outside of Burma. Many chose to resettle in Minnesota due to the following reasons:

- Our nonprofit programs are responsive to refugee families.
- Our public school system here is known for its English as a Second Language programs.
- SE Asian language interpreter/translator services available.

In recent years, employment opportunities in greater Minnesota have compelled many Karen families to move to cities such as Marshall, Austin, and Worthington. In response to the growing call for assistance from greater Minnesota, KOM recently opened an office in Austin. On a different note, while our Karen families are certainly facing many and great challenges all Americans before them have, they have also responded to opportunities available to all Americans including joining law enforcement, the armed forces, and higher education.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

David Maeda
Hoeun Hach
Melissa Kwon
Tsewang Ngodup
Tran Nhon
George Thawmoo
Grace Lee
Faamati Winey
Mukhtar Thakur



State Senator Roger Chamberlain
State Representative Carolyn Laine

Staff: Sia Her, Karina Vang, and Tenzin Dolkar

Absent: Danny Lee, Ananda Liyanapathirana, State Senator Fong Hawj, and State Representative Rod Hamilton

With 9 out of 11 voting members present, there was a quorum.

III. NEWLY APPOINTED MEMBERS

- a. Governor Appointees
 - i. Faamati Winey, representing the Samoans/Polynesian community.
 - ii. Grace Lee, representing the Korean community.
- b. Legislative Appointees
 - i. State Senator Roger Chamberlain

IV. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2015 AGENDA

Chair Nhon asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

MOTION: To approve September 17, 2015 meeting agenda.

BY: Ms. Lee and seconded by Mr. Hach. *Motion was unanimously passed.*

V. APPROVAL OF JULY 2015 MINUTES

Chair Nhon presented to the Board the meeting minutes of July 16, 2015.

MOTION: To approve meeting minutes of July 16, 2015.

BY: Mr. Maeda and seconded by Dr. Ngodup. *Motion was unanimously passed.*

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRING PROCESS

Greg Hubinger, Executive Director of the LCC provided a brief update on the hiring process of the executive directors of the ethnic councils. The new statute specifies that these executive directors must be appointed by November 15, 2015. Mr. Hubinger asked board members to provide input as they relate to what the board is looking for in the next executive director of this Council; these recommendations can be collated or sent individually to him via email.

At this time, a search committee of six participants will be formed; Mr. Hubinger asked that three members of the board volunteer to serve in this capacity. The search committee will review all resumes; conduct the first round of interviews; and forward names to the committee in charge of the next step in the hiring process. This whole process may take up to eight to ten hours and will take place the last two weeks of October.



Ms. Her asked if Greg Hubinger could email us what he just proposed so all board members understand exactly the request before them. Mr. Hubinger agreed. Ms. Lee shared that she is interested in serving as one of the three board members.

VII. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS UPDATES

Senator Chamberlain, this being his first meeting as a Council board member, said he has no news to share at this time.

Representative Carolyn Laine asked, now that the legislative board members are voting members, can they also volunteer to serve on the search committee or do they take part in the second step, which is the bipartisan legislative committee. Mr. Hubinger answered that there is nothing that prevents this Council or the Chair from appointing a legislative board member to be on this search committee; the legislative perspective is going to come to play when the LCC subgroup does the second round of interview and when the LCC makes the final appointment decision.

Rep. Laine also spoke briefly about the Columbia Heights School Board Member who made a negative comment on social media about how Muslims use the bathroom. Questions for all of us included: how might we move on to handle this in a different way instead of just reacting out of anger at him and is there a way to have a conversation around this that will turn into something positive? Ms. Lee offered to help Rep. Laine connect with some Muslim community organizations.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Her summarized the E.D. report, which included updates on administrative practices, staff, projects, community partnerships, and outreach. Ms. Her shared that MN.IT just informed us they will start work on our website; a meeting has been scheduled for October 6th to discuss the project. Ms. Her also shared that the annual report is now due on January 15 and that staff will provide board members with a semi-final draft of the report in November, so that members have the opportunity to provide input. Ms. Her also shared that the Research Analyst/Capacity Director in that this position will not be fill until January. Another project Ms. Her and Ms. Dolkar are working on is the Violence Against Asian Women and Children study. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is leading this project, but our council is actively advising as we said we would when we asked legislators to approve of this legislative request on behalf of the Asian Pacific community.

Dr. Kwon asked how much influence the Council has on the Violence Against Asian Women project. Ms. Her answered that we cannot provide a number or percentage on how much we have a say in this project; however, our council has a very good working relationship with MDH.

Lastly, Ms. Her touched on old business: At our July 16th Board meeting, Senator Johnson asked what would happen in the case that there are not enough female applicants/board members on



the board. The staff communicated this question to the Attorney General’s office and they responded that we should do our best to be in compliance with our enabling statute; however, should there be a time when we have not yet achieved this provision, nothing will happen

IX. FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Her presented the financial report to the Board. On Attachment A, Account 41000, the amount of \$280,000 is the budget for four FTEs (salary and benefit). This budget includes the 2.5% increase effective on 7/1/15 and then again on 7/1/16, plus a 6.93% increase in insurance benefit that will be effective 1/1/16.

Ms. Lee asked what percentage of our overall budget is salary and what percentage is benefit? The staff will report back to the board with the following numbers:

Annual Projected FICA Amt	Annual Projected Insurance Amt	Annual Projected Retirement Amt	Annual Projected Salary Amt
6%	15%	4%	75%

Chair Nhon asked for clarity on Account 41196 – Centralized IT Services of the budget. Ms. Her answered that “IT Services” include computer, internet, and phone services. The budget of \$10,000 does not include the website cost as this expense is taken from our FY 2015 budget and set aside in the Odyssey contract we have with MN.IT.

MOTION: To approve the financial report.

BY: Rep. Carolyn Laine seconded by Mr. Maeda. *Motion was unanimously passed.*

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Chair Nhon shared that the Executive Committee currently has only had two members, excluding the executive director. Per the current enabling stature, the Chair recommends that we add to this committee a Treasurer and a legislative board member.

The Chair reminded the board that the Executive Committee is responsible for developing the agenda for the full board meetings, reviewing internal processes, providing directions for the executive director on behalf of the board, and addressing time-sensitive issues. At the Executive Committee’s last meeting on September 8th the Committee reviewed the financial report and discussed where we are in the process of inviting to Minnesota His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Finally, Chair Nhon shared that the Council has yet to begin work on its strategic plan.

Government Relations Committee:

Mr. Maeda thanked the legislative board members who were present at our Metro Legislative Recap Session held on July 18th. The Committee has not met since the Recap Session. Mr.



Maeda announced that the Government Relations Committee will have a meeting in October and that staff will send out the meeting details.

Events Committee: No report to share at this time

XI. ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MOTION: To elect a board member to serve as Treasurer on the Executive Committee. Dr. Ngodup nominated Dr. Kwon to be Treasurer; seconded by Mr. Thakur. Motion was passed.

MOTION: To elect a legislative board member to serve on the Executive Committee per the new statute.

Representative Carolyn Laine volunteered to be on the Committee. *Motion was unanimously passed.*

MOTION: To authorize use of the Council funds to pay for staff and board members, including legislative board members, to attend Asian-Pacific related community events, with the amendment that the board comes up with a process for determining the kind of organizations the Council should prioritize.

BY: Dr. Kwon and seconded by Senator Chamberlain. *Motion was unanimously passed.*

XII. OTHER BUSINESSES

Dr. Kwon shared that the NAPAW has an event on September 18th at 5:00 P.M.

Chair Nhon commented that in the future if any board members have events that they would like to share, they should email this information to the staff so the staff can distribute these events to everyone prior to the board meeting.

Mr. Hach shared that the Cambodian community has an event on October 10, at the IKA Khmer Center. Those present at this meeting each received an invitation.

Mr. Thakur announced that this will be his last meeting with the Council as a board member. Mr. Thakur shared that he has served on the board for over ten years and has appreciated everyone's commitment to the Council.

Mr. Thawmoo reminded everyone of the Karen Organization of Minnesota's (KOM) annual gala on October 7th. Mr. Thawmoo also mentioned that KOM is still looking for an executive director and that the Karen community is concerned about the changes taking place at Ucare. He expressed that he is still not clear on what the Council can or cannot do about these issues of this community; so, are board members allowed to bring these issues to the attention of the Council board? Ms. Her responded that these should be brought to the staff's attention so staff can determine how to appropriately assist.



As it relates to UCare: UCare lost the contract with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide health plans to low-income Minnesotans enrolled in MinnesotaCare and Medical Assistance. We, at the Council, have heard from various communities, especially from the Karen community, that UCare is their preferred choice of health insurance due to the transportation and translation services. At this time, DHS is working on transitioning UCare enrollees to a different health plan, and community members should expect to hear directly from DHS and UCare by December, 2015. Community members will receive notification to choose a new health insurance. Our office is planning to meet with Blue Cross and Blue Shield. We have reached out to Health Partners to see if we can assist in them in connecting with Asian Pacific communities. Additionally, we have reached out to UCare to see if the Council can be of assistance to the organization, and it is up to UCare to get back to us with a response.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M.