Office of Ombudsperson for Families (OBFF)

Ombudsperson Board for Asian Pacific Families

Tuesday, February 18, 2025, 6:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Minutes prepared by KH

# Present:

Ombudsperson for Asian Pacific Families Manuel B. Zuniga, Jr. (MBZ), Deputy Ombudsperson Beth Chaplin (BC), Derek Kuhns (DK), Board Chair Brook Mallak (BM), Julie Le (JL), Thanh Glasco (TG), Katie Heilman (KH) taking minutes.

# Absent:

Yi Li You (YLY)

# Minutes

1. BM brought the meeting to order at 6:00 pm once there was a quorum. Introductions of Beth Chaplin and board. BM began introductions. BM asked for a motion to accept the agenda and previous meeting’s minutes. JL moved to approve, TG seconded. KH will resend the CECLC slide deck from the December board meeting. The agenda was approved unanimously.
2. MBZ caught up the board on BC’s onboarding process. BC is working to investigate continuing with CaseIQ, or if the agency will move in a different direction using Odyssey Funds. BC is also working on developing investigator positions for the agency. BM gave a summary of the approval process for CaseIQ a few years ago. BM offered to assist with her background of expertise in the investigative process.
3. MBZ reminded the board of the CECLC outreach projects in the Liberian/Greater African immigrant communities with DHS. MBZ will make sure the API communities are prioritized with the next rollout. MBZ is involved with a media engagement project collaboration with Joanna Woolman – MBZ will send the handout to KH to disseminate to the board after the meeting to discuss at the next meeting. OBFF is in the process of updating trifold display for community engagement events – KH updated the info sheets and is updating the banner with the new state seal. MBZ will send OBFF brochures to board members who want them. MBZ and TG gave a summary on tabling at the Tết Festival. The table placement made engagement tricky – TG suggested having a table activity to increase engagement. The OBFF is hoping to get “swag” for future tabling events. BM mentioned that as the agency becomes a more consistent presence at events, people will be more open to stop by the table. BM gave suggestions on how to better organize outreach activities, such as sorting out material handoffs. Tết is good event because it’s well-attended, and there are other gov’t agencies who are there. MBZ expressed thanks to board members who were able to help at Tết.
4. There are no new updates on the implementation of the Minnesotan African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act at this point. The board discussed the Federal recission of executive order 14031 of May 28, 2021. MBZ wants to see if there is a round table discussion that could happen with Former Commissioner KaYing Yang on what the implications are for the API community in Minnesota, as well as how to move forward without federal support. BM expressed concern with how it could affect CHIPS proceedings. MBZ recommended the AAPI Rising Summit as another option for discussion – the board members have already signed up to attend. The OBFF hopes to get an update at Joint Board Meeting next week on legislation requiring ongoing trauma informed training for Minnesota Law Enforcement Officers. The OBFF wants this to be a priority because many LEOs are the first contact in child removal situations. The board discussed possible implementations based on current POST board continuing education requirements.
5. MBZ is still working on the ERG leadership certificate coursework, which ends in May.
6. MEAD’s co-chair is stepping down because her workload has gotten too high. MEAD is working on a succession plan to grow the ERG within state service.
7. The OBFF reached out to MMB regarding current federal actions, and their inclusion officer sent out language to show the state’s commitment to diversity and One Minnesota Plan. Other agencies are sending out similar statements. Some agencies are having trouble applying for federal grants without tweaking their language. KH will send the board a letter from the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights.
8. BM asked for a motion to adjourn. JL moved with DK second to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm.