



Mayor's Asian American Advisory Board

Behavioral and Human Services Division
1809 Art Museum Drive, Suite 100, Large Conference Room
Monday, September 9, 2013 at 6:00 PM

Minutes

Board Members Present: Sophal Archard, Ed Callao, Radwan Chowdhury, Jay Gogaliya, Bala Govi, Mai Dinh Keisling, Do In Kim, Johnnetta Moore, and Rajat Sharma

Board Members Excused: Lorelie Papel and Dr. Jasper Xu

Board Members Unexcused: Sunyoung Providakes

Prospective Members/Guests/Volunteers Present: Palash Chowdhury, Gerron James, Michelle Karolak, Ellen Kiser, Frances Luna, Eric Nguyen, Sang Phouansouvanh, and David Tran

Ed Callao called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions made around the room.

II. Christine Dahnke, Chief ESOL Department, Duval County Public Schools

The Duval County School Board received the Immigrant Grant, which allows them to offer classes to immigrants who have been here three years or less in the country. GED, English and driver's education classes are a few classes that are being offered. Every Thursday there is Hot Topic class in which different topics are discussed. This Thursday, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office is coming to speak. On October 24, 2014, a carnival fundraiser is being held at Kings Trail Elementary at 5:00 p.m. Ms. Dahnke is asking organizations to have a booth discussing their culture with some type of fun game. Mai Keisling commented that several communities within MAAAB are participating. University of North Florida is partnering and will be giving free blood pressure checks.

III. Dr. Mary Rose, Center of Urban Education and Policy (CUEP)

The College of Education Center of Urban Education and Policy was given an endowment left by Ed Schultz, who passed away in 2009. Ms. Schultz was an education leader and wanted to bring people together around education. The two main goals of the Center is to find a way for the College of Education to be more engaged in the larger educational conversations and secondly, help enhance the level of collaborations around education, so that services are not duplicated. Currently, the Center is in the middle of completing a strategic planning process. The Center is in

need of persons who have experience in urban education for contributions to the strategic process.

Please see attached for more information on the Center for Urban Education and Policy (Attachment A)

Mai Keisling asked Board members to try to get their communities involved because there are pockets of the Asian community that need assistance. We have to speak for the kids who cannot speak for themselves.

IV. Michelle Karolak, Director of Refugees and Resettlement Department, Catholic Charities

Ms. Michelle Karolak stated that there is a misinformation on what Catholic Charities does and wanted to focus on adult education, adult job obtainment, and culturization to Jacksonville. Ms. Karolak asked everyone to take posters and post them where they could. Posters in different languages are available; please contact Ms. Karolak.

Ellen Kiser introduced the Refugee Resettlement program. The program not only handles new arrivals but also persons who have been here up to five years. There are eligibility requirements with this program, such as immigration status. The program offers English classes for service levels one to four and five to eight are offered at the Community College. All students must be enrolled in a work program or working. Three class times are available at several locations. There are no fees if eligible and a bus pass is given with enrollment.

Ms. Frances Luna introduced the Adult Employment Program. The program works with new arrivals with gainful employment so they do not become a burden to the community. Financial assistance is available but participants must attend English and computer classes, attend orientation and employment workshops. Assistance is available for six months in which participants must find gainful employment.

Gervon James stated that Catholic Charities would like to partner with businesses and individuals with job placement for their clients. The program tries to match clients with jobs they previously had in their country.

Catholic Charities receives a match grant from the government and must match with either dollars or volunteer time to comply with the grant.

Catholic Charities asked everyone to forward the information on their programs. In addition, Catholic Charities will accept high end used business attire and shoes. This will help with clients preparing for job interviews and attire for the work place.

Persons do not have to be Catholic to receive services. Jay Gogaliya asked about misconceptions. Ms. Karolak stated the misconceptions are that the clients come with a lot of money. The clients normally take a loan to come the United States. New arrivals are given a one-time gift of \$1,125 and with this money, the clients have to find an apartment, get utilities and food. This is why it is important for the clients to find a job as soon as possible.

A brochure is attached (Attachment B)

Ed Callao thanked all presenters and stated that these topics would be of interest for the Leadership Forum.

V. Membership Committee

Jay Gogaliya presented two applicants for membership (a third is eligible next meeting). Board discussed both applicants. Applicants were asked to leave the room. Radwan Chowdhury made a motion for the Board to recommend Sang Phouansouvanh for membership, Sophal Archard seconded, and the motion passed. Rajat Sharma made a motion for the Board to recommend David Tran for membership, Radwan Chowdhury seconded, and the motion did not pass with a vote of five no and two yes. Sang Phouansouvanh application will be forwarded to the Mayor's office for final approval.

VI. Leadership Forum

The Leadership Forum will be held in January or February. Mr. Callao will contact committee members to set a meeting.

VII. Night of Asia

Radwan Chowdhury suggested that we try to apply for money from the Night of Asia. The Board discussed and decided that it might be considered a conflict of interest.

VIII. Better Business Bureau's Letter

Please turn in notarized affidavits by Monday, September 16, 2013 to Lorelie Papel.

IX. 2014 May Event

Sophal Archard stated the banner was left TRIO and she will email Jennifer to see if the banner is still available. Ms. Archard also stated that she is in the process of looking for hotel to have the event. Jay Gogaliya has the logo; will forward Ms. Archard. Radwan Chowdhury suggested reducing the ticket price and trying to get Vistakon to be the gold sponsor.

Jay said that he is already receiving inquiries for scholarships and is the getting ready for the process to start.

X. Other News, Announcements, Comments

Johnnetta Moore discussed the new budget for MAAAB. It would consist of \$120 for copying only; all other expenses will need to be taken from trust fund. Money to be deposited in the trust fund must include a letter stating where the money is to be spent. If no letter is presented, then the Board will vote on how the money will be spent. A

trainer from the City of Jacksonville will be speaking at the next meeting in regards to professionalism. The presentation will take about 30 – 40 minutes.

XI. Meeting Adjourned

Radwan Chowdhury made a motion to adjourn, Jay Gogaliya seconded, and motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. Next meeting will held on October 14, 2013.