



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | January 7, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Cecilia Nguyen, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Anna Thao, Tina Tran

- I. Call to Order and Introductions**
 - a. Meeting called to order at 12:01 pm by Chairwoman Gilpin.
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin motioned to approve October and November meeting minutes, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 - b. Meeting minutes approved.
- III. Commissioner Oath**
 - a. Lexi passed around a document for commissioners to sign the oath of office. All commissioners present signed.
- IV. Chair / Vice Chair Report**
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin recapped what she submitted to MORE for AAC's 2024 End of Year Report. That report will go to Mayor Nichols to be briefed on AAC's accomplishments in its first year.
 - b. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that the Lunar New Year Festival has a lot of planning in a short amount of time. Commissioner Lau has been instrumental in securing sponsors. Circle Cinema, and Magic City Books are partnering to highlight AAPI filmmakers and authors leading up to the event. APIDA and Williams are other sponsors/partners.
 - i. Showing of Parasite on 1/26 at Circle Cinema will promote Lunar New Year Festival.
 - c. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared a story of a friend who grew up in Tulsa and visited over the holidays, exciting for him to see the progress of representation and celebration of the AAPI community in Tulsa.
- V. Committee Reports**
 - a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau reflected on 2024, which had lots of engagement, volunteering, and tabling. Hope to continue in 2025 in a more organized and focused way.
 - ii. Lunar New Year Festival: February 1 at 101 Archer
 1. Williams sponsoring with a \$2,500 grant.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

2. Secured performers, pianists and dance group, lanterns, and Kremee Taiyaki & Ice Cream gift cards.
 3. Would like to invite special guests such as other AAPI community groups and elected officials.
 4. If you are interested in supporting with planning, reach out to Commissioner Lau.
- b. Workforce and Education Committee
- i. Paused on the committee work after the awards event. Commissioner Zhang stepped down as the committee chair and has nominated Commissioner Kasim as chair.
 - ii. Chairwoman Gilpin called for a vote to conform Commissioner Kasim as the chair of the Workforce and Education Committee.
 1. Aye: 11
 - iii. Commissioner Kasim stated the committee will support the Lunar New Year Festival.
- c. Data and Research Committee
- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar recapped where the committee left off at the end of 2024. Grappling with representing a multitude of stories and identities.
 - ii. The committee is working to identify gaps in existing data to know what more is needed.
 1. What organizations might have the data already?
 - iii. Moving in a direction to strategically integrate with other committees to gather information from within commission's networks.
 - iv. Committee meetings for next four months are set for the week after commission meetings.

VI. Discuss 2025 Goals

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin directed committee chairs and members to lead the conversation to form goals.
- i. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy:
 1. Commissioner Lau would like to actively involve community members in the commission by making connections, serving on committees.
 2. Commissioner Lau also shared an idea about supporting emerging leaders in the AAPI community through Asian leadership development programming.
 - a. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted that Leadership Tulsa could be a partner to organize a workshop. It takes a lot of resources to develop a program like Hispanic Leadership Institute. Reflected on how powerful it is for someone to be told they are a leader.
 - b. Commissioner Nguyen shared that LT has discussed what programming for Native and AAPI communities could look like. Potential opportunity to develop a workshop focused



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

on developing AAPI leaders. Will take time to develop an HLI-like program.

- i. Commissioner Chang: What format might the workshop take? Commissioner Nguyen: This is still in development.
3. Commissioner Kasim: Commission is still in the early stages of finding data and gathering resources, will need to organize resources to engage and connect.
4. Commissioner Zhang: Career development fits into Workforce Committee. Helps AAPI students and emerging leaders as well as AAPI led businesses.
- ii. Data and Research:
 1. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Build awareness of communities in Tulsa, awareness of the Commission, and awareness of resources and institutions. Fill in gaps of data and integrate into other commission work.
- iii. Commissioner Paredes: Fill two vacant positions on Commission.
- iv. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that fostering future AAPI leaders in Tulsa is a great overarching goal. Data fits in. Can address chronic absenteeism, mental health within this larger goal.
 1. Previously met with Dr. Hubbard to discuss developing materials that resonate with AAPI community.
 - a. Commissioner Chang: Stigma prohibits people from getting help until it is at crisis. Can reframe mental health as mental wellness or resilience to reach folks before the crisis point.
 - b. Generational trauma plays a role in immigrant communities. Breaking the cycle is a long process but have to start somewhere. Finding key leaders in different communities and disseminating materials to support.
 2. Down the road, could have mentorship program within schools.
- v. Commissioner Wang: What impact do we want to make for the community? How does the commission best advise the Mayor?
- vi. Commissioner Huynh: Streamline communication/advertisement/media presence.
- vii. Chairwoman Gilpin stated the commission will vote on goals at the next meeting.

VII. Old Business – no old business

VIII. New Business

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin announced AAC now has an account with Tulsa Community Foundation for donations.
- b. Commissioner Lau: TU Lunar New Year event is inviting AAC to table.

IX. Announcements / Public Comments



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- a. Monday, March 17 from 9am to 2pm at Martin Regional Library: Leadership Tulsa Intergenerational Summit focused on AAPI community
- b. Lexi shared two programs MORE is coordinating for National Day of Racial Healing.
 - i. Equity Dialogue: Title V Commissioners are invited to participate in equity dialogues. Look for the January Title V Blast for more information and a registration link.
 - ii. Art Contest: TPS High School students are eligible to submit a piece of art showcasing their thoughts and feelings on racial healing and social justice. The winner will have Mayor Nichols visit them at their school.
- c. Global Gatherings at Gathering Place: showcasing culture opportunity
- d. Chairwoman Gilpin received a Pinnacle Award.

X. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Lau seconded
 - i. Aye: 10
 - 1. Commissioner Huynh left the meeting prior to the motion.
 - ii. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 1:03pm.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | February 4, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Cecilia Nguyen, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Anna Thao, Tina Tran

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Meeting called to order at 12:03 pm by Vice Chair Pilehvar.

II. Guest Speaker: Jesse Guardiola, Tulsa Area United Way

- a. Jesse introduced himself and shared about his role at Tulsa Area United Way. Prior to TAUW, he was the Hispanic Outreach Director for Tulsa Police Department and served on the Greater Tulsa Area Hispanic/Latinx Affairs Commission. Passed out a TAUW brochure.
- b. Jesse offered attend community events to share information and resources available through TAUW.
- c. There is currently a lot of fear in Oklahoma in the immigrant community. Tulsa Public Schools and Union Public Schools are seeing students not attending out of fear. There is misinformation in the community, and leaders are trying to spread accurate information.
- d. Jesse posed the question: How do we build coalition across communities, including the Asian community, and align Asian and Hispanic communities on common issues?
 - i. Commissioner Paredes: What have you experienced works with the Hispanic community?
 1. Jesse: Building trust. Need to go beyond showing up at festivals.
 - ii. Commissioner Kasim: The Hispanic community often reaches out asking about their rights. How do we give them quality information?
 1. Jesse: YWCA Tulsa, Mexican Consulate, Tulsa Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Catholic Charities are good resources.
 2. Commissioner Kasim: Do these organizations have information on power of attorney?
 3. Jesse: The Consulate is working on this. Important for immigrant families to have in place.
 - iii. Vice Chair Pilehvar: The Asian community doesn't have shared language or identity. The Human Rights Commission's 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee hosted a Know Your Rights forum, and doing something like that for Asian



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

community requires language access (City has experience with this). Many in the Asian community have different paths of arriving to the US, Afghan refugee status has an uncertain future. Important to recognize this impacts more than Asian community.

1. Jesse will forward a know your rights resource to Lexi for translation.

iv. Jesse reiterated his offer to be a resource, can reach out through Lexi.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Vice Chair Pilehvar entertained a motion to approve January meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Paredes: Last name is spelled wrong on page three.
 - ii. Commissioner Kasim made a motion, Commissioner Paredes seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 8
- b. Motion carried, January meeting minutes approved with one edit.

IV. Guest Speaker: Maricarmen Mitchell, Tulsa Public Schools

- a. Maricarmen passed out a packet with information about AAPI students in Tulsa Public Schools.
- b. About 3% of TPS students are AAPI. Most students were born in the US, Micronesia, or Afghanistan. Many different languages spoken: Chuukese, Hmong, Marshallese, Pashto, and Dari are largest.
- c. Working to ensure current 8th graders have access to information about enrolling in high school.
- d. Family engagement initiatives from TPS:
 - i. Welcoming sessions for recently arrived families: Offered twice monthly to all families new to the district, accessible in top six languages (5 Asian plus Spanish). Mostly Spanish-speaking families attending, would love to see more turnout from AAPI families. Provide important information about the education system and how to advocate for their student. Opportunity to double check language access information and contact information.
 - ii. New family orientation
 - iii. Community connections: Invite organizations to present information on services available to immigrant communities.
 - iv. FAFSA nights
 - v. Multilingual parent advisory committee: Provides information about district services available to families, opportunity to provide feedback to help improve services.
 - vi. Language assistance: Document translation, live and phone interpretation. "I speak" cards help families request assistance in their language.
- e. Provide refugee-focused supports to all schools with Afghan students. Have hired five refugee liaisons and are assigned to schools with highest Afghan enrollment.
 - i. Commissioner Kasim: How are these services funded?
 - 1. Maricarmen: Grants through DHS, have not been interrupted or suspended. In fact, have recently welcomed two new Afghan families.
- f. Maricarmen expressed desire to collaborate to support AAPI students.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: The commission has an education committee with ideas about school-facing supports, will be in touch. Would like to attend family engagement events. Many challenges ahead and lots of hope in our community.

V. Vice Chair Report

- a. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared an update from last Human Rights Commission meeting, during which she presented on literacy rates. The average reading proficiency for third graders in TPS is 26%, the Asian community is 30%, and Pacific Islanders is 4%. Opportunity to meet range of needs AAPI students have.
- b. Building coalition with other communities – bring know your rights information to our community. What raises up one community, raises up all of us.
- c. It's been one year of the AAC.
 - i. Mailing list now has 170 people on it.

VI. Lunar New Year Debrief

- a. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared a message of gratitude from Chairwoman Gilpin, submitted via email prior to the meeting.
- b. Commissioner Lau said thank you to commissioners who helped at the event.
 - i. Almost 2,000 attended, with a few hundred more in line who had to be turned away. Looking forward to next year's event.
 - ii. Sign thank you cards for sponsors.

VII. Discuss 2025 Goals

- a. Chairs met last week to discuss 2025 focus: leadership development, mentorship, and community empowerment
- b. Lunar New Year Festival was a top-notch production. Vice Chair Pilehvar received questions about other cultural events celebrated in the Asian community, such as Diwali. The commission's role to advocate and represent the community, paired with this year's focus on leadership development, can lead to standing up capacity and access to resources for Asian community leaders. Then, the Commission doesn't have to plan events, but other community organizations can plan events reflecting their communities.
- c. Bee will share additional thoughts with Lexi and Chairs via email.

VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau shared the committee meets on 4th Mondays of each month from 5 – 6 pm virtually.
 - ii. Oklahoma Hmong Association invited the commission to Superbowl Sunday event at Hannah Hall.
 - iii. Leadership Tulsa Intergenerational Summit focused on AAPI community: March 17 from 9 – 2 at Hannah Hall. Opportunity to orient us in future leadership development
 - iv. Discussed supporting the Tulsa City County Library to establish an Asian Resource Center.
 - v. Goal of doing one or two community events per month.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- vi. Will schedule a Lunar New Year debrief meeting.
- vii. Received an invite to the University of Tulsa's Lunar New Year event on February 21. Requested sponsorship. Commissioners Lau, Paredes, and Nguyen volunteered to attend.
- viii. TU's South Asian Student Association inviting commission to Mock Desi wedding, opportunity to talk about the commission. More information to come.
- ix. Commission Kasim: Lunar New Year was an amazing event, proud to be part of it.
- b. Workforce and Education Committee
 - i. Commissioner Kasim: Committee held first meeting for this year, will be 3rd Wednesday every month at 5:30 moving forward. Will have new committee members joining.
 - ii. Focus for 2025: youth accomplishment, mental health, empowering Asian women
 - iii. Working to make next Luminary Awards event very impactful with clearer criteria for the awards
 - iv. Discussing a back to school initiative.
- c. Data and Research Committee
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Launching research project to inventory resources in the community. Want to strategically meet with partners. Don't want to reinvent the wheel, opportunity to partner with other commissions rather than only make available to Asian community.
 - 1. 211 currently has most comprehensive list, translation is available.
 - ii. Don't have many umbrella groups in the community, need to determine how to get on the ground to reach people.

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Commissioner Kasim thanked Krystal for her work.
- b. Leadership Tulsa Connect (Feb. 25 at Hannah Hall): Cecilia is leading this event, six organizations with immigrant services will be present, including Hmong Association of Oklahoma.
- c. Asian Americans Advancing Justice Coalition, based in DC, is looking for Oklahoma partnership to plug in and provide resources. Will have another meeting regarding education advocacy (ie Asian American history in schools), any commissioners who are interested reach out to Cecilia.

X. Adjournment

- a. Vice Chair Pilehvar entertained a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Commissioner Nguyen seconded.
 - ii. Aye: 8
- b. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 1:03pm.

Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | March 4, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Cecilia Nguyen, Parisa Pilehvar, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Bee Paredes, Anna Thao, Tina Tran, Vivian Wang

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Meeting called to order at 12:01 pm by Chairwoman Gilpin.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve February meeting minutes.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Nguyen seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 7
 - a. Commissioner Huynh was not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, February meeting minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin recognized Cecilia for her work connection with outside resources.
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen has connected with national organizations that want to learn more about the Asian community in Oklahoma and is serving as the main point of contact to connect to Tulsa resources.
 - ii. Upcoming meetings:
 - 1. National AAPI Mental Health Association: Tomorrow, March 5. Opportunity to receive mental health first aid training, if at least ten individuals are interested they can offer a session virtually.
 - 2. Asian Americans Advancing Justice Education Advocacy Team: Met with litigation team last week. If interested in attending the next meeting, contact Commissioner Nguyen.
- b. Vice Chair Pilehvar's report is covered in the Data and Research Committee report.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau noted two community events the committee attended in February: TU's Lunar New Year and the Oklahoma Chinese Language Speech Contest at Holland Hall
 - ii. Inquired with Tulsa City-County Library about steps to establish an Asian Resource Center, learned this is already something they have discussed internally. Commissioner Nguyen will serve as the primary point of contact between AAC and the Library.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- iii. Discussed AAC's purpose related to event planning. Main purpose is to advise the City and Mayor, not to plan events. Can build capacity with other community organizations and play an advisory role.
- iv. Lunar New Year debrief: If AAC would like to do another large event, could consider an Asian Festival instead of a Lunar New Year event to be more inclusive of the full Asian community.
- v. Upcoming events:
 - 1. City of Tulsa Naturalization Ceremony – contact Commissioner Lau to volunteer.
- b. Workforce and Education Committee
 - i. Commissioner Kasim shared that more community members have joined the committee. Committee members will select what programming they want to lean into throughout the year.
 - ii. Next meeting: March 17
 - iii. Established timeline for Luminary Awards, will open nominations soon. Will create a google form to receive nominations from the community.
 - iv. Considering supporting a back to school event.
 - v. Committee member Nancy is leading a women's empowerment initiative.
- c. Data and Research Committee
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Data & Research committee sought out resources translated into different languages.
 - ii. Last commission meeting, outlined a research process to gather data. Not only wanting to collect data but also build a relationship. May culminate in creating a resource guide, need to see what already exists in the community before creating something new. Each committee member will have one conversation
 - iii. Next meeting: March 11 on zoom.
 - iv. By learning from organizations, AAC can better understand what information is missing. Can lead to a recommendation to the City to leverage an existing study or conduct a survey.

V. Discussion and Vote: 2025 Goals

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin framed that she'd like to solidify and vote on AAC's 2025 goals so the commission can move forward with a focus.
- b. Vice Chair Pilehvar grounded the commission in why establishing goals are important. Reviewed discussions from January and February AAC meetings.
- c. Umbrella: leadership development, mentorship, community empowerment
 - i. Chairwoman Gilpin: having an overarching goal that is broad is ok, and good to focus in on one thing for the next year. The commission won't cease to exist after 2025, can do more things in the future. Drawn to the leadership development piece, could start a scholarship fund for Asian students and designate two or three high school students.
 - ii. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Who are the leaders in our community, and how do we build relationship with them? Establishing this now will help tackle other issues moving forward.
- d. Chairwoman Gilpin opened the floor for discussion.

- i. Commissioner Lê: Love the idea of a scholarship, need to strategically embed commissioners in the community to show who AAC is to the community. For example, tabling at the Night Market—great, but only one opportunity. Must show up in non-Asian focused spaces.
 - 1. Chairwoman Gilpin: Building awareness in the community will be an ongoing focus for the next five years, Lunar New Year helped with this, need to keep momentum. Get published in Tulsa People, Tulsa World, have a commissioner focus on marketing.
- ii. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Data committee's work ties into leadership development, how to build up leaders who can take into account such a broad and diverse community. Tulsa World did an op-ed series for Black History Month, could consider something similar for Asian Heritage Month in May. Spotting community members is a form of leadership development, could be through APIDA's Instagram. Not always clear for where current and future leaders can plug in.
 - 1. Commissioner Lê noted the commission should incorporate qualitative and quantitative data. How do we go deeper with connecting with the community members who don't have literacy or time to read Tulsa World articles?
- iii. Commissioner Lau: AAC has momentum, how do we continue integrating into the community sustainably? Could require outreach efforts from each commissioner, set a number of engagements per month/quarter. Develop talking points or introductory letter to equip commissioners with a way to approach people who are unfamiliar with AAC.
 - 1. Vice Chair Pilehvar reminded that the Data and Research Committee has developed an elevator pitch already, will share with Commissioner Lau.
- iv. Commissioner Kasim: The commission encompasses many different communities, need to get information out to all of them.
 - 1. Commissioner Zhang suggested using social media
 - 2. Commissioner Huynh asked what happens to resilient emails, Lexi shared that she monitors the inbox and forwards relevant messages to commission chairs.
- v. Commissioner Lê suggested connecting with an Asian-serving organization and equipping/training them to build up their leadership capabilities, will expand the reach of the commission.
 - 1. Commissioner Nguyen manages APIDA's social media. There are opportunities to connect commissioners to national organizations.
 - 2. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that providing training requires people power.
 - 3. Commissioner Lau: hesitant for AAC to preference collaboration to one organization (ie: APIDA) over another (ie: Hmong Association).
 - 4. Commissioner Huynh would like to see AAC take a more proactive role in establishing connections with organizations, rather than waiting for them to come to us. Leaders are already serving the community and commissioners can meet them where they're at.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- vi. Commissioner Kasim suggested that commissioners develop a list of current and future Asian leaders to connect with.
 - 1. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted this is her main goal when connecting with other two committees, need to know what relationships already exist.
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin: 2025 Goal is Leadership Development. Sub-goals are:
 - i. Connecting with community leaders (organizations and individual).
 - ii. Raising up future leaders (ie: scholarships, awards).
 - iii. Increasing awareness of commission as an advisory group in Tulsa's AAPI community.
- f. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve the 2025 Commission Goals.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Lau seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 7
 - a. Commissioner Huynh left the meeting prior to the motion.
 - ii. Motion carried, 2025 Commission Goals approved.

VI. Old Business – no old business

VII. New Business

VIII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Ramadan has started, ends March 28/29. Commissioner Kasim shared there is an event on Sunday, March 16. Eid Festival will take place again as well.
 - i. Chairwoman: Would like to see more commission presence at the Eid festival, Commissioner Kasim is working on sponsorship so commission can bring food and gifts.
- b. Leadership Tulsa Leading Generations Summit (March 17): Commissioner Nguyen has been planning this, focused on APIDA community. Commissioners Kasim and Lê and Chairwoman Gilpin are speakers.
- c. AAPI Night Market at Hannah Hall (May 16): Led by APIDA Tulsa and Tulsa Global District. Opportunity for AAC to table.
- d. Persian New Year (March 20): Also first day of spring, 13 days after is a nature holiday (April 2)
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin thanked community members for attending.
 - i. One public comment from president of the Philippian American Association. Several other community members were attending an AAC meeting for the first time.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Lau seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 7
 - a. Commissioner Huynh left the meeting prior to the motion.
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | April 1, 2025 | 12:00 – 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Cecilia Nguyen, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Bee Paredes, Vivian Wang

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin made a motion to approve March meeting minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 1. Aye: 10
 - ii. Motion carried, March meeting minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin reviewed the process to appoint new commissioners. Working to fill vacancies on AAC.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin has been in touch with Cynthia Jasso at Elevate East to discuss storing decorations that have been donated for future cultural events.
- c. Want to make an amendment to AAC's bylaws to establish a standing committee focused on the yearly cultural event. Instead of having an ad-hoc committee or working group—which would dissolve after the event—a standing committee will provide continuous support. Establishing a committee ensures event planning responsibility doesn't fall on one person. Chairwoman Gilpin will draft language for the bylaws amendment and the commission will vote in May. Will also vote on a chair for the committee.
 - i. Reach out to Chairwoman Gilpin if you are interested in chairing the committee.
- d. Committee chair terms end in June (one-year terms). Will vote in new chairs in June.
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin shared that the Executive Committee discussed the cultural event. Will keep cultural event in the winter to avoid competition with other holidays and big events. Want to broaden scope. In conversation with Arvest Convention Center to discuss availability and bringing outside food (City of Tulsa has a partnership with them). Event will be Saturday, January 31, 2026.
- f. Will have a commission retreat in July, think about locations and specifics of what to discuss. Could be off-site.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau shared commissioners attended Eid prayers on Sunday, looking forward to building more relationships with the Muslim community.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- ii. Working with Data Committee on an outreach project.
- iii. April events will see several south Asian holidays, if anyone knows of celebrations happening in Tulsa please share with Commissioner Lau.
- iv. Distributed flyers: Tulsa Global Alliance art exhibit and mental health study.
- b. Workforce and Education Committee
 - i. Commissioner Kasim shared the committee has almost finalized a timeline for the Luminary Awards. Will present in May meeting.
 - ii. Continuing work on the Asian women empowerment initiative. Committee members are meeting with community leaders to put together an event in May.
 - iii. Next meeting: April 16
- c. Data and Research Committee
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar reported the committee (along with the Culture Committee) rolled out the first round of partner conversations. Continuing to define questions and how to get needed information. Will continue conversations.
 - ii. Resource Guide: Vice Chair Pilehvar started her conversations with Wes Mitchell (Executive Director of 211 Eastern Oklahoma). 211 is a non-emergency help line. No other resource guide that is so up to date and accurate, have translation available for almost every Asian language (except Marshese & Chukese).
 - 1. Of the 250k calls 211 EOK took in 2024, less than 10 requested Asian language translation.
 - 2. Love putting power in community to determine what they need.
 - 3. Can market 211 to the community, opportunity to partner with other commissions to get the word out.
 - iii. Vice Chair Pilehvar has received questions about AAC providing translation services. While that's not possible, AAC can elevate that need to the city.
- d. Chairwoman Gilpin encourages those attending today's meeting as community members to get involved in a committee.

V. Old Business

- a. Commissioner Lau returned to the discussion of the 2026 cultural event. After Lunar New Year, Commissioner Lau spent a lot of time reflecting and debriefing. Received feedback about having a broader cultural celebration instead of focusing on an east Asian celebration. How can the commission create a platform to celebrate all Asian cultures in Tulsa? Broader cultural event can spark other celebrations focused on different communities within the Asian umbrella. Commissioner Lau opened the floor for discussion and questions.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: A Pan-Asian celebration is important to dispel myths/stereotypes of the Asian community. Also noted that Pan-Asia Supermarket could be a great sponsor. Commissioner Kasim has a connection.
 - ii. Commissioner Chang: This sounds wonderful, when would it happen?
 - 1. Commissioner Lau: Saturday, January 31, 2026
 - iii. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Thinking about what the City is uniquely positioned to do, appreciate the educational element, different cultural groups can contribute experiences. Gives AAC an opportunity to invite others in.
 - 1. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected that she is looking forward to growing the education component of the event.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- iv. Commissioner Nguyen raised the need to differentiate this event from the AAPI Night Market. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that whoever the chair person is will be tasked with this.
- v. Vice Chair Pilehvar proposes moving forward with Jan 31st as the event date, and commissioners should check their personal calendars to avoid conflicts.

VI. New Business – no new business

VII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Lexi introduced Dion'trae Hayes, City of Tulsa's new Chief Resilience Officer.
- b. Lexi reviewed TGOV mic protocols and City Hall parking procedures.
- c. Commissioner Kasim thanked Mayor Nichols and Deputy Mayor Reyes for attending the Eid festival. Over 5,000 people attended. Commissioners greeted people and Mayor Nichols recognized commissioners by name.
 - i. AAC has some work to do to engage leaders of the Muslim community—they were receptive to having Mayor Nichols there but were hesitant with some commissioners.
 - ii. Chairwoman Gilpin: Do you think it's a lack of awareness of the commission's role?
 - 1. Commissioner Kasim: Yes, need to do more work to engage. Recognized Saber (City of Tulsa staff) played a role in connecting community leaders to the commission.
 - iii. Chairwoman Gilpin also proposed inviting leaders from the Islamic Society of Tulsa to attend and speak at the June AAC meeting.
 - iv. Vice Chair Pilehvar added that something special was the cultural diversity of those attending—Muslims of all races and ethnicities. Will benefit everyone for them to collaborate with the City.
 - v. Commissioner Kasim thinks there's a misconception of who the commission represents—wider umbrella than most folks think when they hear "Asian."
 - vi. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected that it's more important than ever to support the Muslim community. Don't want any misconceptions that the commission focuses on one cultural group over another.
- d. Commissioner Lau noted that Culture Committee will not meet in April.
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin opened the floor to public comments:
 - i. One member of the public, Nic Annette Miller, shared about a community project, a pop up reading room. Grand opening is on April 19 at 1521 S Main St. In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Purpose is to increase exposure of Tulsans to Vietnamese culture. One way commission can support is through outreach and business connections.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 10
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 12:49 pm.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | May 6, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Cecilia Nguyen, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Ha Huynh, Hieu Lê

I. Call to Order and Introductions

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Commissioner Paredes noted a typo in the minutes.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin made a motion to approve April meeting minutes with one edit.
 - i. Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 1. Aye: 9, Nay: 0
 - a. Commissioner Chang was not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, April meeting minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin shared she would like to have a commission retreat in July with a social dinner after. Possible meeting location is the Williams tower.
 - i. Lexi will send a poll to determine the best time for everyone.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin thanked those who attended the proclamation for AAPI Heritage Month and thanked the Department of Resilience and Equity for their support. Deputy Mayor Reyes delivered the proclamation.
- c. Chairwoman Gilpin updated the commission on vacancies. There has been movement on the policy/immigration law and at large seats, both are currently with City Council. Still need to fill the Burmese seat, so Chairwoman Gilpin encouraged commissioners to reach out through their networks.
- d. Vice Chair Pilehvar Presents the Slate of 2025 – 2026 Committee Chairs
 - i. Proposed Slate:
 1. Cultural Event: Commissioner Lau
 2. Data and Research: Vice Chair Pilehvar
 3. Workforce and Education: Commissioner Kasim
 4. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy: Commissioner Nguyen
 - ii. Commission Discussion:
 1. Commissioner Nguyen noted she will meet with Commissioner Lau to transition the Culture Committee.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

2. Athan voiced support for the slate of chairs, looking forward to working with the team. Noted the importance of sustainability for the Cultural Event Committee.
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin agreed the chair will spearhead the vision and the continuation of that is important.
 - b. Commissioner Paredes noted the role of the community will evolve over time.
- iii. Voting on this proposed slate will happen in the June meeting. It will be important to have a quorum present.

IV. Review and Vote: Bylaws Amendment

- a. Voting to amend the bylaws to add a standing committee: Cultural Event Committee.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin read the description for the Cultural Event Committee.
- c. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve the bylaws amendment.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 1. Aye: 10, Nay: 0
 - ii. Motion carried, bylaws amendment approved.
- d. Commissioner Chang asked a clarifying question about the volume of cultural events AAC is planning. Chairwoman Gilpin shared that the Cultural Event Committee will plan one annual event that is hosted by the City of Tulsa, while the Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy Committee will coordinate ACC presence at other community events.
 - i. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that we need a clear strategy moving forward to determine community engagement capacity.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau wished everyone a Happy AAPI Heritage Month.
 - ii. Upcoming Events:
 1. Asian Woman Empowerment Event: Saturday, May 10 at Hannah Hall
 2. AAPI Night Market (APIDA Tulsa and Tulsa Global District): Friday, May 16 from 5 – 9 pm at Hannah Hall
 - a. AAC will have a table at this event
 - iii. Commissioner Kasim shared about a cultural celebration he attended at Booker T. Washington High School. Also reflected on the two City of Tulsa Community Conversations he has attended.
- b. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Kasim shouted out committee member Nancy who is planning the Asian Woman Empowerment Event.
 - ii. The committee is making progress with the AAC Awards, finalizing the nomination form and sending out this month. Nominations will be open May 15 – August 30. Will send the commission the event timeline and proposed award ceremony date to check the Mayor's schedule.
- c. Data and Research



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared that the committee has secured a meeting with 211 of Eastern Oklahoma and Tulsa Area United Way in June to discuss how to educate Asian community on resources available through 211.
 - 1. Need to operationalize census data to ensure representation and inclusion of Asian communities.
 - 2. Will work to tailor marketing to ensure it is culturally responsive.
 - 3. Will have a pre-meeting with the committee to discuss strategy and have streamlined messaging.
- ii. Continuing to pilot resource conversations, considering a model where a panel of committee members meet with individuals rather than one on ones.
 - 1. Commissioner Chang reflected on how much she has learned by serving on the committee.

VI. Old Business – no old business

VII. New Business

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin shared that there is an opportunity to submit the 2025 Lunar New Year Festival for a Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Tulsa award.
- b. Williams has approved sponsorship for 2026 Asian Cultural Event. If you have connections with businesses that may be interested in sponsoring, please reach out.
- c. Vice Chair Pilehvar raised a question about scheduling speakers in advance in alignment with AAC goals.
 - i. Chairwoman Gilpin noted she'd like to have Mayor Nichols speak at a future meeting and Commissioner Kasim noted Chief Larsen would be a great speaker.
- d. Vice Chair Pilehvar reflected on the Chair and Vice Chair meeting with new City Counselors that took place a few weeks prior. There is a need for two-way communication. Will keep a closer eye on agendas and meeting minutes and will report in future AAC meetings.
- e. Commissioner Nguyen: Organization of Chinese Associates provides scholarships. Opportunity to learn from them as AAC looks to develop their own scholarship.

VIII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Free youth mental health first aid training on May 28 and 29, 12 – 4 pm virtually. Reach out to Commissioner Nguyen if you are interested.
- b. Lexi shared an opportunity for commissioners to visit Dove Science Academy and talk to students about AAPI Heritage Month. Commissioners Kasim and Zhang volunteered, Lexi will follow up with them.
- c. Public Comments
 - i. Kyra shared Tulsa Changemakers Pitch Nights are this week.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin adjourned the meeting at 12:51 pm.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | June 3, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Cecilia Nguyen, Vivian Wang

- I. **Call to Order and Introductions**
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.
- II. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve May meeting minutes.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Huynh seconded.
 1. Aye: 7, Nay: 0
 - a. Commissioners Chang, Thao, and Paredes were not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, May meeting minutes approved.
- III. **Vote on Slate of 2025 – 2026 Committee Chairs**
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin amended the order of agenda to have enough time for the Islamic Society of Tulsa's presentation.
 - b. Reminder of slate of 2025 – 2026 Committee Chairs:
 - i. Cultural Event: Commissioner Lau
 - ii. Data and Research: Vice Chair Pilehvar
 - iii. Workforce and Education: Commissioner Kasim
 - iv. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy: Commissioner Nguyen
 - c. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to vote on the chairs as a bloc.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 1. Aye: 8
 - a. Commissioners Chang and Paredes were not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, commission will vote on chairs as a bloc.
 - d. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve the full slate of 2025 – 2026 Committee Chairs.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 1. Aye: 8
 - a. Commissioners Chang and Paredes were not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, slate of 2025 – 2026 Committee Chairs approved.
- IV. **Guest Speaker: Br. Shihab from Islamic Society of Tulsa**
 - a. Commissioner Kasim introduced Brother Shihab from the Islamic Society of Tulsa (IST) as today's guest speaker. Br. Shihab is the Youth Director at IST.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- b. IST is the only mosque in Tulsa, very diverse and welcoming. Tulsa's Muslim community is comprised of people from many different backgrounds. There are at least 10,000 Muslims in Tulsa. There are many families and children from several different countries that come to the mosque.
- c. Addressing challenges that youth face as immigrants and children of immigrants.
- d. As a religious community, IST doesn't seek to be involved in politics. Recognize that AAC is not a political body, but being connected to the City of Tulsa there is a perception that it is connected to politics.
- e. Commission Discussion:
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Religious institutions are a third place for many people (outside of their home, school). What can we learn from you of how to support the range of needs in the Asian community?
 - 1. Br. Shihab: Much of the Muslim community keeps to themselves. Families who are struggling often don't tell people outside their close circle. More comfortable accessing support/services through the mosque or from a trusted person than from a government entity.
 - 2. Commissioner Kasim: Agrees with Br. Shihab. Many community members are uncertain about interfacing with government. Br. Shihab will be a great resource to take information about AAC back to IST. Can help be a bridge with the youth.
 - ii. Chairwoman Gilpin: AAC can bring education to the community and help dispel misinformation about the Muslim religion. Would love for IST to be part of the 2026 cultural event to highlight how the Muslim community celebrates each other and their families.
 - 1. Br. Shihab will bring the opportunity to participate in the 2026 Cultural Event back to IST's board.
 - 2. Commissioner Lau: One of the best ways to educate and introduce culture to people is through food, decoration, clothing. IST can contribute to that immersive experience.
 - 3. Vice Chair Pilehvar stressed the importance of trust and relationships. You are on the ground every day, look to you to elevate needs that are not being met. IST represents many Asians and Tulsans. Would like to help get the word out about 211 Eastern Oklahoma, a private, confidential help line.
 - iii. Chairwoman Gilpin: Want IST to know they will always have a seat at the table regardless of what level of partnership they are able to commit to at any given point.
 - iv. Br. Shihab: Older generations have deep seated fear in trusting government. Will take time to build trust. Long term goal is to be involved as much as possible. Having education programs in the mosque (such as 211) is likely feasible if someone is available to come to IST.
 - v. Commissioner Chang: How much do you interface with school counselors? There are likely services that are available, and those individuals know which students need help.
 - 1. Br. Shihab was not aware of any partnerships with school counselors.
 - 2. Commissioner Chang: Counseling encompasses things like getting into college as well as mental health.
 - 3. Br. Shihab highlighted the cultural stigma against therapy.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

4. Vice Chair Pilehvar: There is a cultural element to therapy, working with City's mental health leadership to see how culturally responsive practices can be integrated. Would like to be in communication about this in the future.
 5. Br. Shihab agreed that the community needs someone who understands cultural and religious context.
 6. Commissioner Chang mentioned the mental health first aid training for Asian Americans she attended. Something anyone can benefit from.
 7. Br. Shihab: Sometimes terminology alone can steer people away. Could develop programming that doesn't use some of the buzzwords. People in the community struggle with these issues (depression, suicide), but there is so much stigma. Don't want outside people coming in and changing their culture.
 8. Chairwoman Gilpin: The way that we talk about mental health within Asian community is different, though many folks experience trauma. Can't approach it the same as western culture.
 9. Commissioner Chang noted the 988 free mental health hotline, Chairwoman Gilpin added that finding someone who understands culture is important.
 10. Br. Shihab: Very diverse cultural context is layered on top of religious context.
- vi. Commission thanked Brother Shihab for speaking in today's meeting.

V. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin shared good news about the Asian Cultural Event, will take place in the Arvest Convention Center. The venue has a very large capacity, about 50,000 square feet. Will still be a free event to the public with a small fee for food vendors.
- b. Will send out a poll to find a time for a July commission retreat, then have social time at a restaurant.
- c. Vice Chair Pilehvar has started reading City Council agendas and minutes to look for items relevant to the Asian community. Nothing to highlight this month.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Data and Research
 - i. On June 11, Vice Chair Pilehvar, Chairwoman Gilpin, and Commissioner Paredes will meet with Tulsa Area United Way (TAUW) to discuss 211 Eastern Oklahoma's marketing to the Asian Community.
 - ii. June 18 at 5:15 on Zoom is next committee meeting, will recap TAUW meeting and determine next steps. Will also try out group intake process.
 1. Asks out to Healthy Minds Policy Initiative and Family & Children's Services.
 2. Tell Vice Chair Pilehvar if you want to attend the meeting.
- b. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Lau reported on behalf of Commissioner Nguyen. Read a note from Commissioner Nguyen that expresses gratitude for being voted in as chair of this committee.
 - ii. Attended Asian Night Market in May.
 1. Resulted in 25 new people signing up for newsletter.
 2. Community appreciates commission attending public events.
 3. There is a desire for more social events.
 - iii. Working to identify a potential commissioner for the Burmese seat.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- iv. Friday, August 29 participating in Tulsa Drillers Game Night will highlight Asian Affairs Commission.
- v. Monday, June 23 at 6 pm is next committee meeting, no meeting in July but will have a committee social for members to get to know each other.
- c. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Kasim shared the award nomination form has been drafted, will open on June 15. Final edits are in progress. Identified stakeholders to help get the word out thanks to Vice Chair Pilehvar's help.
 - ii. Next working to determining event date, sponsors and donations, and other logistics such as scheduling the Mayor. Need to determine how to draw people into the event.
 - iii. Next meeting on June 18 at 5:30 pm in-person or virtual.
 - 1. Chairwoman Gilpin asked to discuss student awards during this event.
 - iv. Last year gave three awards, planning to add awards to be more inclusive and highlight more community leaders.
 - v. Called the event Asian Affairs Luminary Awards last year, want to finalize for this year. This name encompasses the full scope of the event.
 - 1. There was no dissent regarding this name from commissioners, so the event will keep this name moving forward.
 - vi. Commissioner Lê asked for more information about the scholarships. Chairwoman Gilpin said there are still details to be worked out—many possibilities. She encouraged Commissioner Lê to join the committee to help determine these logistics. Commissioner Lê offered to share resources from Empower-Ed.
- d. Cultural Event
 - i. Commissioner Lau thanked the City for facilitating the donation of the space at Arvest Convention Center.
 - ii. Each commissioner will contribute to the event, invite to be part of committee, provide connections, or secure sponsorships. Will work to determine a meeting time that works for everyone.
 - iii. Working to finalize the event name. This past year, focused on Lunar New Year. Can be a good anchor to encourage people to attend but could also seem exclusionary to other cultures. Open to commissioners' input on the event name. Want the event to be celebratory of all Asian cultures. Reach out to Commissioner Lau with your ideas.

VII. Old Business

- a. Lexi gave an update on vacant commission seats. Two seats (at large and Immigration Policy/Law) will be filled soon, still do not have a lead for the Burmese seat.

VIII. New Business

- a. Commissioner Lau read an email from APIDA on behalf of Commissioner Nguyen about a community engagement event.
 - i. Posed the questions: What could the AAC's role be? Would AAC like to formally collaborate or be present?
 - ii. Chairwoman Gilpin encouraged chairs for each committee to be present and talk about their purpose. Also share about overarching goal for AAC. Be there to listen to community.
 - iii. Commissioner Chang: What would happen to turn the planning over to the community?
Commissioner Lau: APIDA would like to focus more on the Asian community.



CITY EXPERIENCE
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity

- iv. Commissioner Paredes: Would be good for the Data and Research Committee to develop a questionnaire to administer at the event to gather information on the community (basic demographics, anonymous) and ask what resources they need to be more successful.
- v. Lexi offered to connect with the City's trained Equity Dialogue facilitators to help at the event.
- vi. Commissioner Paredes: Important to emphasize that this event will be safe and inclusive.

IX. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Public Comments:
 - i. A TYPROS Lead Forward Program participant shared about cohort.
- b. Commissioner Kasim extended an invite to the June MPACC meeting.
- c. Commissioner Le shared that Empower-Ed is hosting first Step Into Your Future Festival celebrating graduating seniors, passed around a flyer.

X. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Commissioner Paredes seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 8
 - a. Commissioner Huynh and Vice Chair Pilehvar left the meeting prior to the motion.
- b. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 1:03 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Special Meeting | July 25, 2025, 2025 | 3:00 - 4:00 pm
BOK Tower at One Williams Center | Lobby Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Sofia Noshay, Yasamin Nawabi, Cecilia Nguyen, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Ha Huynh, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

II. Refocus on 2025 Goal: Leadership Development

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin noted that it's ok to say no if an opportunity if it doesn't align with AAC's 2025 goal of leadership development. Can't be involved in everything, don't want to stretch too thin.
 - i. In that vein, Commissioner Nguyen shared she is considering moving from monthly to quarterly newsletter. There is still a need for a monthly communication, so need to determine how to navigate.
 1. Commissioner Noshay: Conversation from Title V Commission Retreat about partnerships and not duplicating work. There are other weekly or monthly newsletters that we can leverage.
- b. Vice Chair Pilehvar offered some guiding questions for the discussion:
 - i. How will this event/project recruit new leaders or develop current leaders with new skills/connections?
 - ii. How do we produce insight, learning, or resources that will benefit our community?
 - iii. How is the work I'm doing benefitting segments of our community who need it most?
- c. Chairwoman Gilpin: AAC has made so much progress in less than two years because of every commissioner, extremely resourceful.
- d. Chairwoman Gilpin welcomed two new commissioners, Sofia Noshay and Yasamin Nawabi. Commissioners each introduced themselves and shared their reason for serving on the commission.

III. Committee Calls for Action

- a. Workforce and Education: Luminary Awards Nominations Open



- i. Commissioner Kasim shared that the Asian Affairs Luminary Awards nominations are open.
 - 1. Have a great flyer to help promote. It was posted on Resilient Tulsa Facebook Page.
 - 2. Need to rework community letter to clarify that tickets for luncheon is \$50.
 - 3. At \$2,500 for sponsorships. Goal is \$10k to cover event costs and also raise money for scholarships which will be awarded in spring 2026.
 - a. Discussion ensued of what sponsorship and ticket sales are going to.
 - b. Each honoree will be given three free tickets: one for themselves and two for guests.
- ii. Commissioner Noshay: Do we have mentorship opportunities to pair with the scholarship?

IV. Breakout Sessions for Committees: Discuss Current Initiatives and Align with 2025 AAC Goal

- a. Committee conversations took place after the meeting adjourned, as the meeting's end time was approaching and commissioners were not meeting in a quorum.

V. Announcements / Public Comments – none

VI. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 10
- b. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | August 5, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Yasamin Nawabi, Cecilia Nguyen, Sofia Noshay, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Masood Kasim, Anna Thao

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve June meeting and July retreat minutes.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Lau seconded.
 1. Aye: 10
 - a. Commissioner Wang was not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, June meeting and July retreat minutes approved.

III. Guest Speaker: Wes Mitchell, Executive Director of 211 Eastern Oklahoma

- a. Wes Mitchell explained the difference between calling 911 (emergencies), 988 (mental health emergencies), and 211.
- b. Vision: To provide accessible, comprehensive, and empathetic information and referral services that link Eastern Oklahomans to essential resources, fostering a stronger, more resilient community.
- c. 2024: Took 240k+ requests. 37 counties across Eastern OK. Only database with 9k resources that are curated and validated at least once annually.
 - i. Requests come in online, calls, and text.
 - ii. Goal is user ease—it shouldn't be difficult to ask for help.
 - iii. 68% of callers are calling for the first time, most are working and only one incident away from needing help.
 - iv. Sometimes people need to talk to someone just as much as they need resources.
- d. Wes showed a pie chart of demographics of help seekers, which mirrors state demographics.
- e. 211 offers three-way translation calls. If someone calls who speaks a language other than English, 211 will have an interpreter added to the call with the help seeker and the 211 staff. Don't want language to be a barrier in receiving help.



- f. Top five referral categories: utility assistance, food, housing, health care, legal, consumer, and public safety services
 - i. 211 is part of the ecosystem preventing homelessness.
 - ii. Top services provided: rent payment assistance, homeless motel vouchers, transportation cost assistance, rental deposit assistance, electric service payment assistance
 - iii. Also keep track of unmet needs, when someone calls and there is nowhere to refer them to. Top five unmet needs: housing, transportation, utility assistance, clothing/personal/household needs, individual/family/community support.
- g. In June 2023, a local nonprofit decided they could no longer support 211. Tulsa Area United Way took over operations.
- h. 211 is part of emergency management ecosystem (ie: warming or cooling stations, natural disaster response).
- i. 211 needs: Sustainable funding (solely funded by TAUW, no state or federal funding) and increased outreach and awareness.
- j. Commission Discussion
 - i. Wes: How can 211 work better with your communities?
 1. Commissioner Paredes: There are many different languages spoken within the Asian community. Start with top three to five and ensure resources are translated and interpreters are available. Wes reiterated that the interpreter services they use has all languages available.
 2. Commissioner Paredes: Be out in the community with us.
 3. Chairwoman Gilpin: Can't represent the City of Tulsa but can reach out to legislators as individual residents who support 211. Building awareness and attending community events is important. Invite Wes and 211 to table at Tulsa Asia Fest. There isn't a larger volume of Asian calls because the community isn't aware yet.
 4. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Data & Research Committee is making this a project for at least the next four months. Concerns from community, will immigration status be disclosed, will resources be in my language?
 - a. Wes assured that 211 is completely anonymous. Screening questions that include demographic info are solely to determine eligibility of the caller to access certain resources.
 - b. Vice Chair Pilehvar: Committee is setting a goal of increase in Asian-identifying callers.
 - c. Chairwoman Gilpin made recommendation to include "safe and confidential" on 211's collateral.
 - ii. Vice Chair Pilehvar: What happens to conclude an unmet need call?
 1. Wes: 211 staff record data of why the need was unmet. When meeting with legislators, they elevate that data.



2. Vice Chair Pilehvar wondered how often callers may encounter an unmet need when calling, Wes shared only 6 – 7% of calls result in an unmet need.
 3. Vice Chair Pilehvar suggested adding AAC info to the Asian community's marketing so AAC can help elevate unmet needs.
- iii. Commissioner Nguyen: Grateful to know this resource exists. Don't have to reinvent the wheel by creating other resource centers.

IV. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected on the constructive retreat in July realigning to AAC's 2025 goal of leadership development. Title V Commission retreat was the same day and was very insightful, the commissions are all doing very impactful things.
- b. Vice Chair Pilehvar welcomed Commissioners Noshay and Nawabi to their first official commission meeting.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen passed out a flyer with upcoming events (Appendix 1) and highlighted where AAC will be tabling.
 1. Tulsa India Fest (8/23): Great opportunity to connect with Tulsa's Indian and South Asian community. Need at least two commissioners to table.
 - a. Commissioner Lê volunteered.
 2. Welcoming Week Kickoff Event (9/12): City of Tulsa event.
 3. Tulsa Driller's Game (8/29 at 5:45pm): AAC will be a highlighted organization during the game. Need at least two commissioners to table.
 - ii. Commissioners attended the Han Korean BBQ opening, run by Commissioner Lau and his family.
 - iii. AAC Newsletters will be quarterly moving forward but can still highlight important events and opportunities when needed. Welcomed commissioners and public attendees to add themselves to the email list.
- b. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Zhang: Committee has cleared major hurdles thanks to the City and Chairwoman Gilpin's help.
 - ii. Opportunities for support:
 1. Parking for event – Chairwoman Gilpin will contact BOK
 2. Tracking ticket sales – determining where people will purchase tickets. Chairwoman Gilpin will reach out to Tulsa Community Foundation.
 3. Call for nominations and sponsorship.
 4. Commissioner Lau will help confirm performances for the ceremony.
 - iii. Chairwoman Gilpin urges all Commissioners to share link to nomination form and submit their own nominations before August 30.
- c. Data and Research



- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar provided a handout with the Data and Research Committee update (Appendix 2). Committee has reached many of the original objectives set out in April 2024, will be setting new goals.
 - ii. Next focus for remainder of 2025:
 - 1. Equip our leaders with access to resources
 - 2. Collect and curate community stories that raise awareness and nurture leadership
 - iii. Vice Chair Pilehvar invited commissioners who are interested in these two projects to join committee meetings.
- d. Cultural Event
- i. Commissioner Lau: Committee met in July and made progress on Tulsa Asia Fest.
 - ii. Proposed Tagline—Many Stories: One Tulsa
 - iii. Great marketing professionals on the committee working on branding, will work with Lexi to coordinate with City of Tulsa.
 - iv. Thinking about cultural booths, interactive elements.
 - v. Next Meeting: Aug 27 at 6pm
 - vi. Invite to commissioners to join committee. Currently, Commissioner Lau is the only commissioner on the committee.

VI. Old Business – no old business

VII. New Business – no new business

VIII. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Public Comments

- i. Nem Lun with City of Tulsa thanked Commissioner Nguyen for highlighting the Welcoming Week Event. Welcoming America chose Tulsa to be the host city for the kickoff event. Will have a Title V Commission table, opportunity for AAC to put out flyers.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Commissioner Pilehvar seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 11
- b. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | September 2, 2025 | 12:00 – 1:00 pm
City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Athan Lau, Hieu Lê, Yasamin Nawabi, Cecilia Nguyen, Sofia Noshay, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Vivian Wang, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Anna Thao

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve August minutes.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Nguyen seconded.
 1. Aye: 8
 - a. Commissioners Paredes and Nawabi were not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, August minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin noted there is a lot to discuss regarding Luminary Awards and Tulsa Asia Fest.
- b. Vice Chair Pilehvar reminded the commission that she represents AAC on the Human Rights Commission (HRC).
 - i. HRC is part of the human rights ordinance, which protects Tulsans against discrimination in City employment, contracts, housing, public accommodation, and ADA compliance. If someone were to feel discriminated against in these areas based on race, there is a process to bring that complaint forward. AAC represents communities that can and should utilize this process when needed. If you hear of anything, reach out to Vice Chair Pilehvar for information on how to file a complaint.
 - ii. HRC working to make the complaints filing process easier and more accessible. Overseen by City's Compliance Officer, who shares an update with HRC on a regular basis.
 - iii. HRC is primarily an advisory body to the Mayor. Currently focusing on two goals based on Equality Indicators #49 and #50.
 - iv. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted that there has recently been work done to update and unify protections across sections of the human rights ordinance. Lexi helped explain those proposed updates, which include



adding veteran status as a protected class in housing and public accommodations and adding sexual orientation and gender identity protections under public accommodations, in addition to some housekeeping clean up. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared this has been a big topic of conversation in City Council, protections mean you can have your complaints heard and see due process.

- v. If you have things to elevate to HRC, share them with Vice Chair Pilehvar.

IV. Committee Reports

a. Cultural Event

- i. Commissioner Lau shared the committee focused on event branding, want to have an identity that's unique to Tulsa Asia Fest. Passed out a handout with two potential identifiers. Committee likes Concept B.
- ii. Partnership with APIDA Tulsa is helping with social media.
- iii. Sponsorship structure:
 - 1. Williams is a presenting sponsor with a \$5,000 donation.
 - 2. Discussing how to integrate sponsorship recognition throughout the event, such as tote bags.
- iv. Sharing the vendor registration form in October.
- v. Discussed potential programming items. One committee member is passionate about an Asian fashion show.
- vi. Sub-team meetings will take place in late September.
- vii. Commission Discussion
 - 1. Vice Chair Pilehvar recommended an Islamic tile pattern instead of crescent moon in Concept A.
 - 2. Chairwoman Gilpin would like to see sponsorship asks to go out late this month or early October. Will want the event branding set before then. Encouraged commissioners to be involved in the event. Huge capacity at Arvest Convention Center.
 - 3. Commissioner Noshay: It's smart to think about the longevity of the event. Have you talked to German American society and others that host pillar events?
 - a. Commissioner Lau would like to talk to them formally.
 - b. Commissioner Noshay suggested thinking about iconic Tulsa events that also generate a lot of revenue. Worthwhile to look at those organizations to see if there is something we can learn from.
 - 4. Chairwoman Gilpin: want to submit this event for a national Anvil award, need documentation for planning and budget. Appreciates Commissioner Lau's attention to detail.



5. Commissioner Nguyen: What does the partnership with APIDA look like?
 - a. Commissioner Lau: APIDA will help spread the word, fill in gaps based on what AAC can and can't do with marketing.
- viii. Commissioner Lau: Call to action – spread the word for the event
 1. Paving the way for other Asian cultural celebrations.
- b. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen provided a list of upcoming events.
 1. Hmong Listening Session hosted by APIDA Tulsa: Opportunity to hear directly from the Hmong community about their strengths and needs. Would be great to have commissioners attend and listen, especially from Data & Research Committee.
 2. Twisted Arts Film Festival: Theme is queer love, AAC is sponsoring. Two Asian films are screening on Saturday, September 13. Invite to AAC to set up a resource table and have a commissioner speak before the screening.
 - a. Vice Chair Pilehvar volunteered to speak and set up the resource table.
 - b. AAC received 10 free tickets to film screenings throughout the festival. Reach out to Commissioner Nguyen if you are interested.
 3. Welcoming Week Kickoff Event: September 12
 - ii. Updates from recent events: India Fest
 1. Commissioners Nguyen, Noshay, and Lau tabled. Big event, great connections with organizations and individuals in attendance and had 14 individuals sign up for the newsletter.
 2. Elevated the disconnect between AAC and South Asian/Indian community. Great diversity within South Asian community, gained new connections. Don't want AAC showing up to be a one-time situation.
 - iii. Canceled appearance to table at Tulsa Drillers game. Thinking about if we were doing something because it was a preference, requirement, or tradition. Helpful to think through moving forward.
 1. Chairwoman Gilpin reminded commissioners that AAC is new, need to focus on building awareness among AAPI community first before building the capacity for at-large Tulsa awareness.
- c. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Wang reported on Luminary Awards in Commissioner Kasim's absence.



- ii. The nomination deadline was extended to September 15. Don't know how many nominations have been received yet.
 - iii. The committee is working on solidifying the event agenda, thank you letters, and other materials. By end of the month, the catering and entertainment plan will be finalized.
 - iv. Seven sponsors and 40 tickets sold so far.
 - v. Commissioner Noshay asked if the nominations numbers can be shared so commissioners can help fill in gaps. Chairwoman Gilpin will reach out to Lachelle to get that number and Lexi will send a follow up
- d. Data and Research
- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar: The committee will be launching two projects.
 - 1. 211 Eastern Oklahoma Marketing
 - a. It will take some time to have a meaningful product for the community.
 - b. Provide Tulsa Area United Way/211 with a one-pager of recommended languages, messaging, and tools so in a year there will be an increase in translated calls to 211 in those languages.
 - c. AAC can have a concrete role in ground-level change.
 - d. Five languages the committee is focused on: Arabic, Vietnamese, Burmese, Dari/Persian, and Pashto
 - e. What do these communities need? Where is the best place to market to these communities?
 - f. What tools can support anyone who uses 211? Examples: video walk-through demonstrating language selection, website translation, and more.
 - 2. Stories of Asian Tulsa
 - a. Will create a vision for storytelling, schedule of interviews, standard questions, structure for story submissions, and more.
 - i. Build a repository of stories to use in a variety of ways. Opportunity to further engage folks when tabling, can use for op-eds, feature at Tulsa Asia Fest.
 - ii. Need to determine how stories will be used and establishing privacy systems. Recognize the vulnerability in telling your story.
 - b. Help Tulsans understand range of experiences within Asian community. Help Asian Tulsans see what bonds us.



- c. Chairwoman Gilpin: Circle Cinema could be a good partner, feature stories in their gallery for AAPI Heritage Month
 - d. Vice Chair Pilehvar proposes starting with commissioners telling their stories. Welcome ideas from commissioners on how to utilize stories.
 - e. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected this is a great opportunity to capture video and photo.
- ii. Next meeting: 9/18 at 6pm

V. Old Business

- a. Chairwoman congratulated the commission for willing a PRSA Tulsa Silverlink Award for Lunar New Year 2025.

VI. New Business – no new business

VII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Neon Fest is this week at Post Oak.
- b. Oklahoma Tamil Sangam: Tamil Kootam on October 11 at Mary Glass Performing Arts Center (Owasso)
 - i. About 200 – 300 families in Oklahoma are part of this organization.
- c. Bengali Association of Greater Tulsa: Durga Puja on September 27 at LaFortune Park
 - i. Biggest annual event in the Bengali community.
- d. Public Comments
 - i. Dr. Manju Kaul shared her appreciation for making the connection with AAC, look forward to more work together.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 10
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | October 7, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Athan Lau, Cecilia Nguyen, Sofia Noshay, Bee Paredes, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao, Yi Zhang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Hieu Lê, Yasamin Nawabi, Vivian Wang

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve September minutes.
 - i. Commissioner Lau made a motion, Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 1. Aye: 8
 - a. Commissioners Huynh and Noshay were not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, September minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin has been involved in a few of the committees' work. AAC is planning two events simultaneously—the Luminary Awards and Tulsa Asia Fest.
- b. Commissioner Noshay arrived at 12:05 pm.
- c. Vice Chair Pilehvar attended Twisted Arts Festival to speak about AAC. This prompted her to give more thought to where and how AAC shows up in the community.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen shared there are two tabling opportunities coming up this month and passed out a handout with a list of upcoming events (Appendix 1).
 1. TU's Moon Festival: Thursday, October 16
 2. Hmong New Year: Saturday, October 25
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin proposed designing a small takeaway card with a QR code, Lexi reminded commissioners that they have business cards. Vice Chair Pilehvar and Chairwoman Gilpin will work together to print more data one pagers.
 - ii. Commissioner Huynh arrived at 12:08.
 - iii. Hmong New Year is also looking for event volunteers.
 - iv. Committee is working on their strategic plan.
 1. Have done well increasing AAC's visibility, but many community leaders from small or newer immigrant groups don't know how to engage and feel



- disconnected with the City. Need more two-way communication focused on building relationships.
- v. Commissioner Nguyen proposed hosting leadership roundtable meetings—a recurring space for APIDA leaders to meet with Commissioners. This will help build a network of community leaders who will strengthen AAC’s ability to advise the City.
 - 1. Exchange feedback, ideas, and building alignment on community priorities and needs.
 - 2. Capacity is important, going to start small and build momentum up to Tulsa Asia Fest, then grow in summer 2026.
 - 3. Culture committee is currently small, need extra minds and hands to support. Would love to have more commissioners and community members join who want to support this idea.
 - 4. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected that it’s important to build relationships instead of interacting with folks in one-off situations. Waiting until June to launch this would be wise to allow for time to regroup after Tulsa Asia Fest. This will be a great initiative, thanks Commissioner Nguyen for having vision and seeing the need. Need to clearly align with objectives to be careful with time, resources, and team capacity. Can't do all community events all the time.
 - 5. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted that it can be helpful to meet with people one-on-one before bringing a group together. Also, this initiative can overlap with the stories project.
 - b. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Kasim reported that Luminary Awards preparations have come a long way. The event is shaping up to be a wonderful celebration for individuals and organizations making an impact in our community.
 - ii. Committee will meet tomorrow (10/8) at 6 pm to select awardees.
 - iii. Chairwoman Gilpin will order trophies.
 - iv. Commissioner Noshay: How do you feel about the number and qualifications of nominees?
 - 1. Commissioner Kasim: Not sure yet, going to look at this tomorrow. Depending on how things go, might not have final awardees decided tomorrow, may have to verify information.
 - 2. Commissioner Noshay: can those who can’t attend in person be supportive?
 - 3. Commissioner Kasim: It will be difficult to contribute virtually.
 - 4. Chairwoman Gilpin: There were over 30 submissions, great response. May want to narrow down to two to three nominees per category. Want everyone to have a voice in the selection process.
 - v. Tickets are on sale, and sponsorships are coming in. Catering is ordered.
 - vi. Commissioners can help with event set up so everything is ready before guests arrive. Still solidifying the agenda.



- vii. Commissioner Nguyen asked for a flyer and ticket information to include in the newsletter.
- viii. Commissioner Kasim reminded AAC that any funds that are raised beyond event costs will go to the scholarship fund.
- c. Data and Research
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar proposed submitting the data one pager to the Mayor's Office and City Council, as AAC hasn't made a formal submission yet. The committee has made some tweaks to better cater to what this audience will look for and will share the updated version. This is an opportunity to prompt an official pause and inform City Council and the Mayor's Office about who AAC serves.
 - ii. Stories of Asian Tulsans project (Appendix 2) is ready to pilot with commissioners. Vice Chair Pilehvar hopes that by the next AAC meeting, commissioners have submitted their own story (written or video) and supported two people they know to submit their story. Share feedback on the process with Vice Chair Pilehvar so the committee can roll out on a larger scale in November.
 - 1. Considerations:
 - a. Where should people reach out with issues/questions?
 - b. To upload a video, folks have to log into a Google account, which could be a barrier.
 - c. Tried to anticipate questions/concerns such as privacy but can't foresee everything. Want to have safest, most empowering experience possible before collecting stories from the broader community.
 - 2. Vice Chair Pilehvar will work with Lexi to send a reminder email to commissioners before next meeting to complete this.
 - iii. Chairwoman Gilpin suggested creating an introduction for the project.
 - iv. Vice Chair Pilehvar highlighted the three project goals:
 - 1. Our community better understands each other.
 - 2. City better understands who is included in the Asian community.
 - 3. AAC better understands who we serve.
 - v. These stories could be amazing content for a local documentary maker to create a film or have a series of articles to highlight heritage month. Right now, it is mostly a story bank to use as a launch pad for other projects.
 - 1. It is important to start with individuals' stories to avoid reducing people to only their nationalities or other parts of their identities.
 - vi. Commissioner Lau suggested adding data on how many dollars Asian contribute to Tulsa's economy. Vice Chair Pilehvar considered include the Equality Indicator related to this; however, the committee didn't want to tell one single narrative of the community.
 - vii. Commissioner Noshay: Previously referenced a Black-owned business guide, considered doing something similar for Asian-owned businesses.
 - 1. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted the Asian community doesn't have a chamber of commerce, so AAC can start by reaching out to business owners and asking



- them what connections they have to other businesses. Want to ensure the community wants this.
2. Commissioner Noshay: Could commissioners utilize the existing spreadsheet of organizations to start a list as the project unfolds? Noticed a lack of South Asian organizations and the opportunity to include the type of business.
 3. Vice Chair Pilehvar agreed this would be useful, need to convert list to a spreadsheet.
 4. Commissioner Noshay: The story project is an opportunity to activate people at tabling opportunities.
 5. Vice Chair Pilehvar agrees it will be nice to receive and share stories at events.
- viii. Vice Chair Pilehvar offered support as folks are trying out the process.
- ix. Next meeting is online on October 28.
- d. Cultural Event
- i. Commissioner Lau shared there is a lot going on with Tulsa Asia Fest.
 - ii. The vendor application draft is ready and will be finalized soon. Will ask business if they are Asian-owned and what type of business they are.
 - iii. Leaning on community partners to support with marketing. APIDA is hosting a website for Tulsa Asia Fest and will also create a Facebook page.
 - iv. Touring Arvest Convention Center on 10/15.
 - v. Would love to have a dedicated area for Stories of Asian Tulsa.
 - vi. Tulsa Asia Fest will be on Saturday, January 31, 3 – 8 pm.
 - vii. Free parking was secured thanks to PartnerTulsa.
 - viii. Sponsorship packet launched. Williams is secured at \$5k as Visionary Partner. The goal is to raise \$15,000 – 20,000 for the event.
 1. Commissioner Noshay asked about the sponsorship tiers and goals.
Commissioner Lau shared the funds will go towards rental items (ie: tables, chairs, lighting) and festival merch (ie: tote bags). Hope Tulsa Asia Fest can be a space for people to learn, have a fun time, and have a tangible takeaway item.
 - ix. The committee will meet twice monthly October – December. The focus for the rest of October is securing sponsors and creating the Tulsa Asia Fest flyer. Commissioner invited commissioners to join the committee, will share invite with everyone.
 - x. Commissioner Noshay confirmed the event is free to the public, and Commissioner Lau said yes, admission is free.
 - xi. Chairwoman Gilpin asked about food supply, considering it's a five-hour event. Commissioner Lau said they will prioritize reaching out to Tulsa vendors but will also reach out to Oklahoma City vendors. Recently attended Oklahoma City's Asian Night Market with 20,000+ attendees and there were several vendors.
 - xii. Chairwoman Gilpin noted the committee needs to coordinate with convention center staff to understand traffic flow, food truck capacity, and what costs will be additional and what is included in the venue rental.



- xiii. Commissioner Kasim asked if there are licensing requirements. Commissioner Lau noted they will lean on the convention center staff to determine that, will have answers at the tour.
- xiv. Commissioner Noshay noted the committee can use the Data Committee's spreadsheet as a contact list. Commissioner Kasim thinks there will be many businesses that will want to participate.

V. Old Business – no old business

VI. New Business

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin is chairing YWCA Tulsa's 2026 Pinnacle Awards. Important time to elevate women's and Asian women's voices. Encouraged commissioners to nominate an individual or business for awards. Nominations close on October 18.

VII. Announcements / Public Comments

- a. Commissioner Lau wished everyone a Happy Moon Festival.
- b. Commissioner Noshay shared that she's working with Circle Cinema on community events that are AAPI-centered to curate a more robust cultural experience. Will likely do a K-Pop Demon Hunters singalong in February. Welcome AAC's input on events.
- c. Chairwoman Gilpin reflected on how remarkable the work of the commission (collectively and individually) is with only two years in existence.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Noshay seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 10
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 12:56 pm.

AAC | ASIAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

OCTOBER UPCOMING EVENTS



- **Tami Koottam 2025 - Oklahoma Tamil Sangam**
 - **Date/Time:** Saturday, October 11th, 2 PM - 8 PM
 - **Location:** Mary Glass Performing Arts Center, Owasso OK
 - **Event Highlights:** Kollywood dances, Classical Dance Performances, Songs, Dinner
 - Adults \$20, Kids (Age 6-12) \$15, Kids (Age 5 & below) FREE
 - **University of Tulsa - Moon Festival -**
 - ****AAC Tabling Opportunity! Contact cecilianguyen918@gmail.com**
 - **Date/Time:** Thursday, October 16th, 6-9 PM
 - **Location:** Lorton Performance Center (550 S Gary Pl)
 - *FREE* for TU students, \$10 RSVP, \$15 at the door
 - **Oklahoma Hmong New Year Celebration -**
 - ****Volunteers Needed! Contact hmaao.staff@gmail.com**
 - **Date/Time:** Saturday, October 25th - Sunday, October 26th
 - **Location:** 19400 E 630 Rd, Inola, OK 74036
 - **India Food & Arts Festival (IFAF)**
 - **Date/Time:** Sunday, October 26th, 11 AM - 9 PM
 - **Location:** Scissortail Park, Oklahoma City
-
- **2025 Asian Affairs Luminary Awards**
 - **Date/Time:** Tuesday, November 18th, 12 PM - 1:30 PM
 - **Location:** 101 Archer
 - **Tulsa Asia Fest**
 - **Date/Time:** Saturday, January 31st, 2026
 - **Location:** Arvest Convention Center

Asian Affairs Commission: Stories of Asian Tulsa

Video Capture Guidance

To ensure a high quality video, please adhere to the following:

- **Video Quality:**
 - Record your video in portrait orientation (holding your phone upright)
 - If possible, do not record as a selfie and use a stand or a friend to record you
 - Try to record in a well-lit room with minimal background noise
- **Video Content:**
 - Start the video with the following script:
 - My name is _____, I am a Tulsan, and I am (how you identify).
 - If you would like to record your video in a language besides English, please include English subtitles or another mode of translation to support us in sharing your story.
 - Keep the video length under 1:30. If you are answering multiple questions, please do so in separate submissions.
 - If you have trouble uploading your video, please contact _____.

Pick at least one of the questions below to answer in the video:

- What's a favorite tradition, food, or custom in your family or community?
- Share a small moment or story that made you feel proud of your heritage?
- What's one thing about your culture or identity you wish more people knew?
- How has your cultural identity influenced your life experience?
- Who or what has influenced your experience in your community the most?
- What's your hope for Asian American communities in the next 10–20 years?

Commissioner Asks:

1. **By our next meeting on 11/4, please engage in the process by:**
 - a. [Submitting your own story in written or video form.](#)
 - b. Supporting **two** Asian Tulsans in your circle to share their story, and
 - c. **Share your feedback** about the process and how to strengthen it in the final question of the survey before a full public rollout (or by emailing parisapilehvar@gmail.com)
2. **Optional:** Join our next Data and Research meeting on Tuesday, 10/28 from 11-12 to share your feedback and help us strengthen the process.



Note: to preserve the ability to upload files directly into the form, Google login is required.



Asian Affairs Commission

Regular Meeting | November 4, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Sarah Gilpin, Ha Huynh, Masood Kasim, Hieu Lê, Yasamin Nawabi, Cecilia Nguyen, Sofia Noshay, Parisa Pilehvar, Anna Thao, Vivian Wang

Commissioners Absent: Meg Chang, Bee Paredes, Yi Zhang

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to approve October minutes.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Kasim seconded.
 1. Aye: 9
 - a. Commissioner Nawabi was not yet present in the meeting.
 - ii. Motion carried, October minutes approved.

III. Chair / Vice Chair Report

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin read section 900 of Title V of City Ordinance related to residency requirements, shared that conversations will start with the City of Tulsa and Tulsa County to see if there is an opportunity to have AAC expand to add seats open to County residents.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin reminded commissioners that all Tulsa Asia Fest materials need to include the AAC identifier to ensure alignment.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Cultural Hubs and Community Advocacy
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen shared about recent events at which AAC tabled (TU Moon Festival and Oklahoma Hmong New Year) and the AAC's award from the PRSA Tulsa Silverlink Awards.
 - ii. Commissioner Nawabi arrived at 12:08.
 - iii. Shared a list of upcoming events.
 - iv. Compiling a list of community leaders to reach out to for the leadership forums but not moving forward with planning the forums until 2026.
- b. Workforce and Education
 - i. Commissioner Kasim noted that the Luminary Awards Ceremony is two weeks away.



- ii. Commissioners do not need to purchase a ticket but do need to notify Commissioner Kasim before November 10 if you are not available to attend.
 - iii. Raised almost \$5k for the event.
 - iv. Set up will begin at 9 am, so if commissioners are available, they are encouraged to come help.
- c. Data and Research
- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar shared that four stories have been submitted for the Stories of Asian Tulsa project so far: Commissioners Wang and Le, Vice Chair Pilehvar, and her dad.
 - ii. Vice Chair Pilehvar directed commissioners to pull out their calendar and schedule time to submit their story or connect with someone they know to help them submit their story.
 - iii. Next meeting: November 20th at 6pm on Zoom
 - 1. Invited a Cultural Committee member to attend to help review stories.
 - iv. Vice Chair Pilehvar will create a small flyer to place on tables at Luminary Awards with a QR code to the story submission form.
 - v. Discussion ensued about where and how the form will be shared, prioritizing relationship building and security for those who are sharing their stories. Plan to have a booth or table at Tulsa Asia Fest to gather stories during the event. Also discussed ways the Workforce and Education Committee can partner on this project.
 - vi. Could have a showcase at Circle Cinema for Asian Heritage Month.
 - vii. This project is an opportunity to show size and diversity of Tulsa's Asian community. While it may seem simple, commissioners sharing the form with friends and family and helping to gather the stories demonstrates the connectivity and power of the Asian community.
 - viii. Commissioner Noshay suggested including a video or message from AAC at the top of the form to help explain the project to community members who access the form and are unsure of what the commission is or what the project's intent is.
 - ix. What are ways AAC can build knowledge with the community other than tabling at events?
 - 1. Data one-pager and leadership forums Commissioner Nguyen will be organizing. Inviting community to AAC meetings. Writing op-eds, earning media attention.
- d. Cultural Event
- i. Commissioner Nguyen provided the update on Tulsa Asia Fest planning.



- ii. Sponsorship update: \$6k raised, \$2,500 pending
- iii. Arvest Convention Center Grand Ballroom is booked and setup begins at 7am on January 30th (day of event).
- iv. Starting to gather interest from vendors, food trucks, nonprofits and other organizations that will table.
- v. Will reach out to universities, schools, and churches to get them involved.
- vi. Committee will begin meeting twice a month in November, then weekly in January.
- vii. Chairwoman Gilpin left the meeting at 12:46 and Vice Chair Pilehvar began presiding over the meeting.

V. Old Business – no old business

VI. New Business – no new business

VII. Announcements / Public Comments

a. Public Comments

- i. Athan Lau talked about his commitment and excitement for continuing to lead Tulsa Asia Fest as a community member.
- ii. Mike Tangella introduced himself, glad to hear about AAC's work.
- iii. Libby introduced herself and shared about Tulsa Flyer. Looking forward to connecting with commissioners and report more about the Asian community.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Vice Chair Pilehvar entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - i. Commissioner Nguyen made a motion, Commissioner Noshay seconded.
 - 1. Aye: 9
 - a. Chairwoman Gilpin left the meeting prior to the motion.
 - ii. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 12:51 pm.



Asian Affairs Commission

Special Meeting | December 2, 2025 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Meg Chang, Sarah Gilpin, Masood Kasim, Hieu Lê, Sofia Noshay, Parisa Pilehvar, Vivian Wang

Commissioners Absent: Ha Huynh, Yasamin Nawabi, Cecilia Nguyen, Bee Paredes, Anna Thao, Yi Zhang

I. Call to Order

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

II. Update from Chairwoman Gilpin on AAC's 2026 Cultural Event

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin opened by stating that the AAC wants to bring transparency and integrity to everything they do. This meeting is to update commissioners and provide the community the opportunity to ask questions about Tulsa Asia Fest.
- b. Tulsa Asia Fest being hosted by AAC (and be extension City of Tulsa) enables AAC to use Arvest Convention Center facilities for free. Clarifying that Tulsa Asia Fest is solely hosted by AAC, although other organizations will contribute by having booths, selling food, and other ways.
- c. Chairwoman Gilpin talked with Committee Member Athan Lau, who mentioned he is interested in starting a nonprofit, which prompted the question if he would retain the name "Tulsa Asia Fest" or if AAC will. Chairwoman Gilpin believes there is more than enough room for everyone; however, clarity is needed to proceed together. Athan agreed that AAC can retain "Tulsa Asia Fest" as the signature cultural event name.
 - i. Discussion ensued regarding what the relationship between AAC and Athan's future nonprofit might be like.
 - ii. Vice Chair Pilehvar noted that it's beneficial to build out institutions that are part of and support Tulsa's Asian community. This commission and other institutions are new or don't exist yet, so everyone is learning how to navigate partnership, collaboration, and other aspects together as planning takes place.
- d. Chairwoman Gilpin underscored that we are all working towards the same goal of uplifting the Asian community. This is an opportunity to build trust.
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin invited Athan to the table to share. Athan noted that the community cares more about having an inclusive celebration of Asian cultures than what the event is called, so while he originally proposed his future nonprofit using "Tulsa Asia Fest" in years to come, he is happy for AAC to keep this name. He is very understanding that his



initial proposal won't work under the City's structure, and he appreciates having more clearly defined roles for all individuals and organizations participating in the event.

- i. Vice Chair Pilehvar mentioned that AAC's goal of leadership development is being lived out through Athan's plans to form a new organization.
- f. Commissioner Noshay noted that many of AAC's goals, such as providing professional opportunities and preservation of culture, are fulfilled by this event. Reflected on how wonderful the partnership with Arvest Convention Center is and what a huge value it is to AAC. This event could be a model to other communities. After the event, would like AAC to have strategic discussions about the future of Tulsa Asia Fest.

III. Election of Interim Cultural Event Committee Chair: Commissioner Sofia Noshay

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin entertained a motion to elect Commissioner Noshay as Interim Cultural Event Committee Chair.
 - i. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion, Commissioner Chang seconded.
 1. Aye: 7
 - ii. Motion carried, Commissioner Noshay elected as Interim Cultural Event Committee Chair.

IV. Discussion and Vote on New Cultural Event Name

- a. Per discussion, AAC will retain the name "Tulsa Asia Fest" as the cultural event name.
- b. Chairwoman Gilpin also noted the need for AAC to maintain the Tulsa Asia Fest website, tulsaasiafest.com.
 - i. Athan added that currently a committee member is paying for the domain, Chairwoman Gilpin shared AAC will pay this going forward and reimburse the committee member for what they've paid thus far.
- c. Commissioner Noshay added that Lexi is working on an MOU between the City and Athan to have signed documentation of this decision.
- d. Vice Chair Pilehvar made a motion for AAC to retain the name "Tulsa Asia Fest" contingent on an MOU being signed, Chairwoman Gilpin seconded.
 - i. Aye: 7
 - ii. Motion carried, AAC will retain the name "Tulsa Asia Fest" contingent on an MOU being signed.
- e. Chairwoman Gilpin encouraged all commissioners to participate in the event, now is crunch time and it's important everyone contributes. All ideas need to be funneled through Commissioner Noshay.
- f. Chairwoman Gilpin motioned to continue using "Asian Affairs Luminary Awards" as the name of the annual awards ceremony event, Vice Chair Pilehvar seconded.
 - i. Aye: 7, Nay: 0
 - ii. Motion carried, "Asian Affairs Luminary Awards" will continue as the annual awards ceremony event name.

V. Adjournment

- a. Chairwoman Gilpin adjourned the meeting at 12:56 pm.