

Meeting Summary for SAAA Commission Meeting SPS-II

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Quick recap

The meeting involved discussions about various programs and events, including the Vocational Exploration Act, the Maryland Core Servicer Option, and the upcoming business conference. The team also discussed the upcoming Maryland 250 event and the need for better communication and coordination for future events. Concerns were raised about transparency in financial matters, and the need for more volunteers and suggestions for the Strategic Plan were emphasized.

Next steps

Cheryl to upload the business conference flyer to the website.

Christina to send out invitation letters for the business conference by Friday.

Archana to reach out to Senator Angela Alsobrooks and Congressman Jamie Raskin regarding the business conference.

Faisal to coordinate with Archana and Obeyed on reaching out to invite officials for the business conference.

Christina to set up a separate meeting for all commissioners to discuss the business conference details.

Aman to lead the planning for the Maryland 250 celebration events.

Cheryl to inquire about the requirements for getting events placed on the Maryland 250 website.

Christina will forward the legislative night invitation to commissioners who didn't receive it.

Raza to reach out to local delegates to encourage attendance at the legislative night event.

Devang to send out the bill number for the Montgomery County holiday bill to all commissioners.

All commissioners to reach out to their delegates and state senators about the Montgomery County holiday bill once Devang provides the bill number.

Summary

Meeting Attendance and Quorum Discussion

The meeting began with a discussion about the meeting's participants and the need for a quorum. The participants included representatives from various organizations, including the Governor's office. The meeting was led by Preet, who emphasized the importance of attendance and the need for participants to inform Lisa if they couldn't attend. The meeting also included a special guest, Secretary Paul Matero, and other special guests, Tess Hetzel and Zainab Ramadanalay. The meeting was called to order, and Preet reminded the participants to turn off their phones and put their mics on mute. The meeting was recorded for future reference.

Secretary's Presentation and New Guests

In the meeting, Raza requested that the Secretary's presentation be included as part of the new business agenda to improve the historical record. Preet agreed and the agenda was approved. The minutes from the previous meeting were also approved. Christina then introduced the special guests, including Secretary Paul Montero, Tess Hetzel, and Zainab Rama from the Department of Civic Service and Civic Innovation. Montero was invited to share more about the programs in his department.

Vocational Exploration Act and Maryland Core

Paul discussed the Vocational Exploration Act, which brings all AmeriCorps programming in Maryland under their umbrella and creates the Maryland Core Servicer Option, a program for people who've graduated high school in the last three years. He highlighted the program's goal to help young people stay in Maryland and invest in the state. Zeinab, a current member of the program, shared her experience and how the program has given her a sense of belonging and purpose. Tess explained the application process for the program, which is now open. Ahmed asked about the host site application process, to which Paul responded that any organization interested in hosting a member should sign up as a host site partner. Raza raised concerns about the program's eligibility criteria and the impact of recent federal changes on high school graduation rates. Paul responded that the program is open to the widest range of people, including those who may have dropped out or not earned their high school diploma, and does not require citizenship. He also mentioned that the program provides wraparound supports to ensure members can access the service.

Business Conference Sponsorship and Budget

In the meeting, Preet and the team discussed the upcoming business conference, with Faisal providing updates on the finalized agenda and venue. They also discussed sponsorship levels, with Faisal confirming that they were looking for two platinum sponsors and four gold sponsors. The team also discussed the budget for the event, with Faisal estimating it to be around \$30,000. There was a discussion about whether the funds raised would be shared between the two commissions, with Christina clarifying that the funds would be carried over for the same event in the future. The team also discussed the sponsorship letter that had been sent out, with Cheryl offering to resend it to everyone.

Conference Financial Planning and Sponsorship

The team discussed the financial aspects of an upcoming business conference. Raza expressed concern about transparency regarding financial needs and revenue. Cheryl clarified that the sponsorship form allows sponsors to specify if they have any restrictions on how their funds can be used. Faisal explained that the conference's cost is still being finalized due to ongoing negotiations with vendors. Devang and Preet suggested that the conference should use the existing \$17,000 before raising more funds. Ahmed suggested having an itemized list of

expenses to better understand the financial needs. The team agreed to have a separate meeting to discuss the conference's budget and sponsorship details.

Baisakhi Event, Survey, and Legislative Updates

In the meeting, Faisal discussed the confirmation of Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller and the pending response from the governor. Christina clarified that no formal invitations had been sent yet, and verbal confirmations should not be considered. Faisal expressed concern about the timing of sending out invitations. Raza offered to help find a venue for the Baisakhi event in April, as the community college in Howard County was also requested by the Asian Pacific month of May. Raza also updated on the survey for the education committee, which had received 225 responses but lacked representation from some counties. Bishal proposed an annual wellness event for the South Asian community, with a tentative date in October. Devang updated on the holiday bill, which had passed in Montgomery County but not in Howard County. The team also discussed a legislative night event on February 26th, which was confirmed to be a Google form registration.

Informal Meet and Greet Event

In the meeting, Christina explained the format of an upcoming event, which is an informal meet and greet for commissioners and legislators. Devang and Raza shared their experiences from previous events, highlighting the importance of building relationships and the potential for more significant events like a legislative night. Christina offered to provide contact information for delegates and senators to the commissioners. The team also discussed the upcoming business conference, with Christina confirming that invitations are being reviewed and will be sent out soon. Preet requested assistance in following up with the invited officials, and Archana agreed to help with this task.

Small Business Conference and Volunteers

The meeting involved discussions about the upcoming small business conference, with a focus on the involvement of the Department of Service and Civic Engagement. Raza proposed a motion to offer the department a table or an ad at no cost, which was tabled for further consideration. The team also discussed the need for more volunteers and the importance of coordinating efforts. There was also a discussion about the Strategic Plan and the need for suggestions and comments to be sent to the conference leaders. The team agreed to keep the bylaw reviews for a future meeting.

Maryland 250 Event Planning Discussed

Preet discussed the upcoming Maryland 250 event, which is set for 2026 and will be a year-long celebration. He suggested that the South Asian Commission should start planning for their participation in the event, possibly organizing activities in different counties. Harshid asked about the guidelines for participating in the event, to which Christina recommended checking

the official website for more information. Raza brought up the issue of their Business Conference not being listed on the Maryland 250 website, and suggested reaching out to the director for clarification. Cheryl agreed to look into the matter. Aman volunteered to lead the project of "250 acts of kindness" related to South Asian history in Maryland. Raza requested Cheryl to provide the criteria for events to be listed on the Maryland 250 website.

Website and Event Prioritization Discussion

In the meeting, Raza discussed the need to showcase events on the Commission's website, not as an afterthought but as a priority. Preeti suggested that the GOCI website could host the information. However, Christina clarified that only the flyer could be uploaded, not the sponsorship form. A compromise was suggested where the sponsorship link could be included on the flyer. The conversation ended with plans for future meetings and discussions.

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