



ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER ORGANIZATION

Asian Pacific Islander Organization

APIO Teleconference Meeting Minutes April 21, 2011

APIO

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A professional employee group of
NRCS

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Non Profit Status
#DLN 503150066

Attendees: Pete Bautista, Angela Biggs, Cheryl Morton, Kent Matsutani, Nick Vira, Dave Fischer, Kurencio Ngowakl, Yuri Plowden, Gina Schworm, Jay Mar, Mani Phengrasmy

1. Old Business: Review and approval of March Meeting Minutes
Minutes have been motioned Dave Fischer and seconded Cheryl Morton to be approved. Approved by council
2. New Business: Officer Reports
 - a. President Update-Pete
 - i. APIO 2011 Conference Contingency Planning and Approval status:
 1. Pete talked to Associate Chief Homer Wilkes, regarding the conference approval and support. Essentially the Associate Chief informed Pete that the agency supports the Conference and will support employee attendance on the clock, but will not cover travel expenses due to travel budget restrictions. Pete recommended cancellation due to travel restrictions.
 2. Pete will call the Marriott Hotel and inform them of our decision to cancel our contract with them and request for a Force Majeure exception in order to get our deposit back.
 3. **Council voted unanimously to cancel the 2011 APIO Conference in Providence, Rhode Island.**
 - ii. FAPAC conference –NRCS Exhibit and officer attendance:
 1. All four officers (Pete, Jay, Gina and Nick) slated to attend the conference have registered for conference in Bellevue, WA for May 9-13, 2011.
 - iii. Spring Newsletter – May (AAPI Month):
 1. Provide your articles to Pete and Liz Warner no later than 4/22 in order to be published by 1st of May, AAPI Month.
 - iv. Employee Org. Presidents 2nd QTR Meeting Update:
 1. Meeting with Chief: Meeting is scheduled to meet with Chief on May 3rd and Presidents, discussed on talking points.
 2. MOU with Organizations: All organizations are in support of the MOU with NRCS individually.

3. Joint 2013 Conference plans: Organization to move forward with plans for joint conference and garner NLT support.
 - v. Miscellaneous:
 1. APIO to be part of the USDA APA Heritage Month, May 17th at USDA Building Auditorium WDC
 2. WHIAAPI Newsletter and activities: Pete has been sharing WHI-AAPI developments.
 3. Farmer of the year and scholarships
 - a. Let's hold off the decision regarding scholarships until we know we have the money to fund the scholarship project.
 - b. Farmer of the year can be announced.
 - b. Treasures Report – Nick
 - i. Awards committee can decide on what they want to do about the awards or acknowledgements to lifetime members.
 - ii. Nick to contact RI regarding the conference sponsorship financial support.
 - c. Exec. VP: 2012 Conference – Jay M.
 - i. Conference may be shifted towards a joint venture. Decisions are pending, suggestions are welcome.
3. NAAPI – SEPM Update – Kurencio
 - a. Appreciation for APIO's efforts with this year's conference, regardless the outcome.
 - b. 3rd QTR SEPM Telecom on April 26, 3:30pm (EST)
 - c. SEPM Barrier: Language-written and spoken
 - d. Share Point Site – Dynamic Venue
 - e. NRCS Poster AAPI Winner – Jim Cairns, CA
 4. Committee Updates:
 - a. 2011 Conference Planning Committee Update – Yuri Discussed and determined to cancel for 2011
 - b. Scholarship Update-Dave Fischer
 - i. The deadline for applicants was March 31. I received and logged 16 applications. I've narrowed the field down to 8 eligible candidates. Along with a committee member, we will rank those and make a decision within my target date of May 6.
 - c. Awards Update-Phuong-Not in attendance
 - d. Communications Committee -Liz and Kent Not in attendance
 - i. New Website Update-Pete will review his submission. Cheryl will finalize and submit article re: Larry's career and retirement.
 - e. By-Laws and Elections Committee – Doug Davenport and Gary Parks: Not in attendance
 - i. FY 2011 Elections
 - ii. Updates to By-Laws to be voted in this year

- f. Angela Biggs-Mentoring Committee update
Need to revisit now that the conference is cancelled. Need to address alternative plan to get that program up and running.

5. Regional Representative Update

- a. Assessment Conference attendance for your regions.
 - b. Current Developments – AAPI month regional activities
 - i. Hawaii Regional Representative - Our major concern is the issue of Return Rights. As a recap, this policy allows for employees coming into Hawaii, Guam, Alaska, et al, the right to return to the Mainland US after a 3 year tour of duty. Employees from Hawaii, Guam, Alaska, et al, do not have this right. APIO and others, over the years, have petitioned NHQ to recognize this right for all employees. Management, in short, claims prerogative and thus has denied our request. Furthermore, they have IGNORED our latest attempt asking for reconsideration. Push-come-to-shove, I think this would be considered discrimination in any court of law in this country. Employees in Hawaii are not happy with this policy. Our patience wears thin.
6. Other: Yi Kum from Tennessee is the newly appointed APIO Southern Representative, replacing Nga Watts. Thank you, Yi and Nga!