



ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER ORGANIZATION

**Asian Pacific
Islander Organization**

MINUTES OF APIO TELECONFERENCE DECEMBER 20, 2011 4:30 P.M. EST

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*A professional employee group of
NRCS*

Visit us at www.apio.org

*Non Profit Status
#DLN 503150066*

Participants: Jay Mar, Angela Biggs, Reese Libby, Ly Phuong, Kurencio Ngowakl, Shawn McVey, Liz Warner, Joe Tuquero, Nick Vira and Oliver Miranda

Call to Order

Jay called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM EST.

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes All

The November 15, 2011 minutes was reviewed. Nick presented a motion to approve the minutes and Angela provided second on the motion. The Council voted to approve the minutes.

President's/Committee Update Jay Mar, President

- Jay tried to contact Dr. Homer Wilkes regarding the status of APIO Cooperative Agreement with NRCS. He also plans to visit the Chief to discuss the Agreement.
- Jay mentioned his discussion with Pooh Vongkhamdy today regarding the location of AAPI groups. Pooh have worked with Vietnamese, Hmong and Laotian communities. It was indicated that we need to have adequate information on location of AAPI producers in the U.S. to conduct effective outreach program. It was indicated that a better assessment of the location of these communities is needed. This is important because some AAPI producers rent land and use non-traditional agricultural production that inadvertently results on not being included in agricultural statistics.
- Angela said that APIO has not done any formal research on this issue. It was indicated that APIO can work with Kurencio. The AAPI SEPMs have information on local AAPI communities and use this type of information for recruitment.
- Shawn reiterated that the use of local knowledge is imperative since there are no lists or archived information available.
- Jay said that according to Dr. Frank Clearfield that there is a group under the "USDA StrikeForce Initiative," to service limited resource and socially disadvantaged including Latino producers in Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, and recently to Utah and Colorado. Dr. Clearfield had asked Jay about AAPI producers for outreach on this initiative.
- Liz mentioned that there may be AAPI national organizations that we can tap into to identify local AAPI farming communities.
- Phuong indicated that California has a lot of AAPI communities. She added that Hue Dang is in charge of outreach to Hmong communities. They are trying to identify barriers in outreach. She added that there are local community markets that provide grants on outreach to small farmers.
- Angela said that there is a national Hmong conference that some APIO members have attended. Angela and Shawn identified Ka Ying Vang of NRCS WI, and John Xiong of NRCS MN had attended this conference.

- Jay commended the successful VTC, and thanked everyone for their contribution. He added that APIO is the first to utilize this new technology.

Committee Updates Committee Representatives

- (Communications) Liz indicated that a newsletter is being prepared in January. Articles may be submitted by January 6, 2012. Jay encouraged everyone to contribute to the newsletter. He emphasized the importance of marketing APIO and promoting visibility.
- (Communications) Liz will update the brochure at the APIO website. She indicated that there is not a lot of change in membership, and membership dues. Jay will follow up with Gina on the committee membership interest. Reese indicated that he has the list and will send out to the council. Angela forwarded copy of the spreadsheet received from Reese.
- (Communications) Liz plans to have a communications committee teleconference early in 2012 to discuss the web site and way to improve communications among members.
- (Constitution and Bylaws Committee) Shawn reminded the Council that the Constitution & Bylaws Committee needed a new chairperson. The Council proposed that Doug Davenport be appointed and that Nick will be second choice. Nick suggested that APIO must obtain a copy of the final Constitution and Bylaws documents for posting. It was suggested that this document shall be distributed to the members.

Treasurer's Report Nick Vira, Treasurer

- Nick indicated that APIO has ten new members.

National SEPM Update & Translation Service... Kurencio Ngowakl, National Program Manager, Jay Mar and Angela Biggs

- Kurencio provided information that translation service may need to involve an AD 700 with statement of justification. This will address the issue of FTE requirement. He added that the statement of work has to be specific on who will do it and what work will be done. Angela clarified that translation will be done by APIO and will be free of charge until that time when we get more clarification on the APIO-NRCS Cooperative Agreement.
- Jay indicated that Diane Gelburd had information on translation services to 170 languages available instantly through a GSA schedule using an 800-number.
- Angela explained that APIO can do translation through its membership or have a private translation service under contract. It was suggested that APIO look at GSA and compare their rate to have a better decision on this matter.
- Kurencio indicated that there is now a thirty percent turnover now for AAPI SEPMs in NRCS and that there is an increasing trend. Seventy individuals signed up and received SEPM training. Sharyn Alvarez was in charge of this activity. They found that there is a need to improve work relationship between SEPMs and HR to help SEPMs implement their programs.

APIO Proposal for Partnership Agreements Jay Mar

- Jay will follow up on the agreements.

Appointment of Scholarship Committee Chair Jay Mar, Council

- Reese is planning to do teleconference for the committee. He indicated that there are five members. He is planning to schedule on January 5 2012. The members of the committee include Gina Schworm, Cheryl Morton, Cynthia Stiles, and Laila Jayyousi. It was indicated that Carolyn Miller can set up teleconference for the committee.
- Reese indicated Dave Fischer has provided pertinent information and the latter will participate at the teleconference. The committee had received two inquiries for scholarship.

Appointment of Constitution and By-Laws Committee Chair Gary Parks

- Jay will call Doug Davenport for the committee chair appointment and Nick will be alternate.

APIO Members Database Jay Mar

- Nick explained that the new membership form now has a box to indicate what committee the individual is interested to serve. Nick updates the list as appropriate and provides this information to Gina, Angela and Jay.

Mentoring Program Angela Biggs, Hue Dang, Jay Mar

- Angela indicated that the Mentoring Program is ready and scheduled for January 2012. She thanked Reese for assistance on matching participants. They are working on information on DiSC. One participant has already had this training. She reminded that participants must renew their membership to APIO. Jay will send out information to the participants. There are eleven protégés and same number of mentors with one back up.
- Joe said that he applied for the mentoring program but forgot to put APIO on his application, and was concerned that 5 PM EST training will be 4 AM the next day in Guam.
- Angela found that Joe's name was not on the list and will have to check and follow up on this information.
- Jay said that this is another first for APIO to participate in the implementation of Mentoring Program. He thanked Angela, Hue, and others for this endeavor.

Soil Survey Assistance for the Manzanar National Historic Site Gary Parks

- Shawn said that there will be another, more complete article on this item. He explained that this core project is not new and is a re-compilation project.

APIO Newsletter Jay Mar

- Liz reiterated the deadline for submission of news article on January 5, 2012.

2013 Joint Conference Jay Mar, Angela Biggs

- Jay will talk to Dr. Homer Wilkes on this matter. There was previous contact with SRM but nothing specific at this time.

Other All

- Angela sent email on Developmental Opportunity to participate in the planning of Regional Payment Process scheduled for 2013. NHQ is looking for 50 individuals from field, state, and other offices.
- Jay encouraged members to participate and promote visibility of AAPI. He reiterated his vision for APIO on visibility and leadership development.
- Reese inquired about renewing membership online. Angela and Nick indicated that APIO does not have that setup at this time. It was said that an online system is costly to implement.
- Phuong expressed concern that she has not received notification from mentoring program even though she has signed up to be a mentor twice. Jay and Angela responded that notifications will be forthcoming.
- Nick suggested that a deadline be set to renew APIO membership for participation with the mentorship program. This will be January 24, 2012.
- The next teleconference will be on January 31, 2012 with teleconference at 4:00 PM EST Tuesday. Then we will revert back to third Tuesday of the Month
- The Council adjourned the teleconference