## LANGUAGE ACCESS ADVISORY COUNCIL (LAAC) MEETING MINUTES

**ZOOM MEETING**

Join by phone: 1 (346) 248-779  
Meeting ID: 940 3391 1954

**Wednesday, April 14, 2021**  
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

**PRESENT:**  Aphirak “A.P.” Bamrungruan, Ex-officio, Robin Wurtzel for Bill Hoshijo, Hawaii Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) Ex-officio, Cristina Arsuaga, Tulpe Day, Charlotte Huang, Linda Nuland-Ames, Lydia A. Pavon, Cari Uesugi, Terrina Wong, Chair, Suzanne Zeng, Vice-Chair

**EXCUSED:** Shirl Schumacher, Colin Whited for Kirby Shaw, Disability & Communication Access Board, Ex-officio, Jade Wong, Valentina Yarovaya

**GUESTS/STAFF:** OLA Staff: Wei Geng Lum, Edward Wada, Gail McGarvey

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<th>AGENDA ITEM</th>
<th>DISCUSSION</th>
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<td><strong>1. Call to Order</strong></td>
<td>Terrina Wong, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:39 AM with quorum.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Welcome and Introductions</strong></td>
<td>Chair welcomed the council to the Zoom meeting.</td>
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| **3. Approval of Minutes of February 10, 2021** | • Motion was made to approve the meeting minutes by Sue Zeng. Seconded by Cari Uesugi. No discussion.  
• Minutes for February 10, 2021 approved.  
• MOTION CARRIED. |
| **4. OLA Executive Director (ED) Report** | ED reported on the following:  
• **Status of two OLA bills from February.** HB728 and SB1230 were both killed. HB200 state budget Gov reversed his original decision for OLA of two positions and $169K operating budget. Instead the House Finance Committee restored OLA 100% - 5 positions + operating budget of $469K. However, WAM on Senate side reduced OLA to 4 positions with operating budget of $322K and cut vacant position. Therefore, the good news is that OLA will maintain independence as an attached agency  
• **Concurrent Resolutions involving OLA.** Senate resolution **SCR No.95** is requesting the Governor to convene a Working Group to develop recommendations for effectively communicating with LEP persons and persons with disabilities at the time of emergencies and natural disaster. House Resolution **No. 97** is a concurrent resolution. |
**SR No. 75 /House Concurrent Resolution No. 169** requesting the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to convene a working group to improve access to government services for immigrants and increase immigrant opportunities to make civic and economic contributions to the community. OLA is named to be part of the Work Group.

- **OLA participation in Kupuna community Covid-19 vaccinations.** OLA has been involved with partnering with community groups for Kupuna vaccinations; AARP, Elderly Affairs, Public Housing Authority and other organizations to get the elderly vaccinated of whom 25-30% of kupuna had language access limitations. OLA provided interpreters and UH Roadmap Initiative provided bilingual volunteers.

### 5. Report of the Interim Chair

Terrina Wong, Chair, expressed aloha and gratitude on behalf of the council to Sue Zeng whose last meeting was today. She recognized Sue as being the longest serving LAAC council member and having been an important advocacy for language access. ED also extended on behalf of OLA, a heartfelt thank you to Sue for her support, especially this past year during the Covid-19 pandemic. Sue Zeng said it was an honor working with the council and as she is no longer able to represent an institution of higher education, she must leave the council.

### 7. Items for Discussion

#### 2021 Legislative Session

- **Tongan IAC update.** Terrina Wong gave an update on IAC Tongan community vaccinations. Pacific Gateway Center (PGC) is partnering with Kalihi Palama working to reach the Tongan community. On March 20, 2021, they had a location, interpreters there to answer patient questions and elder leadership who were able to promote the safety of the vaccination. Next vaccinations scheduled for May 8 and May 22, 2021 on Oahu. Open to anyone. Volunteers also welcome.

- **Lawmakers and advocacy support for OLA.** This was a successful Legislative session for OLA who has had both lawmakers and strong advocacy support. OLA also had the opportunity to educate lawmakers and other organizations statewide.

#### Covid-19 Vaccinations to LEP Community

- Currently there is no formal work group for working with the LEP community. A lot of coordination and planning is required for working with immigrants to get them vaccinated. Discussion and suggestions on how to work better to expand and service the LEP community here and on the neighbor islands.

### 8. Next Meeting

Next council meeting date Wednesday, June 09, 2021 via Zoom, same time.

### 9. Announcements

- Terrina Wong will send flyers of upcoming LEP vaccination sites to share with the council.
- Cari Uesugi said that Department of Human Services (DHS) has another round of P-EBT cards coming out. This is a pandemic eligibility food stamp benefit which is given to families of public-school children that receive free school lunches.
- Sue Zeng said there are still people having language access issues with Unemployment Insurance (UI) and filing their claims – they are unable to contact UI and not able to get LEP assistance.

### 10. Adjournment

The Chair, Terrina Wong officially adjourned the meeting at 10:49 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Gail McGarvey