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## Governor’s Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs

*Virtual ZOOM*  
*Thursday, February 12, 2026*  
*6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.*

### Meeting Minutes

**Commissioners Present:**

**Dr. Amal K. Ali, Member**  
**Athar Bayoumi, Member**  
**Alissa Deaver, Member**  
**Gunay Evinch Member**  
**Rabbi Dr. Susan Grossman, Member**  
**Dr. Ayesha A. Gulistan, Member**  
**Mona Kishore, Chair**  
**Dr. Aharona (Roni) Rosenthal, Member**  
**Ala’a Wafa, Vice Chair**

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Ammar Abdulhamid, Member**  
**Dr. Majd ALGhatrif, Member**  
**Shivaani Arya, Member**  
**Anthony Browder, Member**  
**Mohammad Khalil, Member**

**GOCI Staff:**

**Dr. Antwan Brown, Admin. Director**  
**Cheryl Madigan – Executive Assistant**

**I. Call to Order and Procedural Reminders:**

**Mona Kishore, Chair** – Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m.

**II. Chair & GOCI Remarks:**

**Chair Mona Kishore** greeted everyone and briefly went over what would be discuss at the meeting.

**Administrative Director, Dr. Antwan Brown,** greeted everyone and thanked Exec. Director Larry Walker for all the great work he has given everyone. He stated that the new Special Secretary Maria Martinez will be starting next week.

**III. Adoption of the Agenda:**

**#1 Motion to adopt the agenda.**

Motion	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
To adopt the agenda.	Athar Bayoumi	Ala’a Wafa	9Y-0N-0A by hands



**IV. Approval of the 02/02/2026 Minutes:**

**#2 Motion to approve the minutes from 02/02/2026 SPS I meeting.**

Motion	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
Approval of the 02/02/2026 SPS I meeting minutes.	Rabbi Dr. Susan Grossman	Gunay Evinch	9Y-0N-0A by hands

**V. Mission and Vision Statements and Objectives:**

The commission went over the old statements and objectives and made changes.

**#3 Motion to adopt the new proposed mission and vision statements and objectives and only post the mission and vision statements to the website.**

Motion	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
To adopt the new proposed mission and vision statements and objectives and only post the mission and vision statements to the website.	Rabbi Dr. Susan Grossman	Ayesha Gulistan	8Y-0N-0A by hands

**VI. Working Groups:**

**Chair Kishore** went over the definition of workgroups. She asked who would like to join the following working groups.

- ❖ **Annapolis Symphony Orchestra (ASO) – MD 250 Celebration** – Members that already exist are Chair Kishore and Commissioner Abdulhamid. Commissioner’s Grossman, Evinch and Gulistan signed up to work on this working group. Erica (ED) from the ASO is speaking with Maryland Hall concerning sponsorship opportunities for the cost of the venue.
- ❖ **Peace Walk – Joint Commission Event – MD 250 Celebration** – The following commissioners that signed up for this working group were Commissioner’s Bayoumi, Rosenthal, Grossman, Gulistan, and Ali.
- ❖ **International Music Festival – MD 250 Celebration** – to partner with the Folklore Society of Greater Washington and dedicate a whole stage, which they have the musicians lined up. This could be a joint commission event. The following commissioners signed up for this working group were Commissioner’s Kishore, Evinch, and Grossman.
- ❖ **Rules & Guidelines on Fundraising:**  
Dr. Antwan briefly went over the State Ethic’s policies and guidelines. He also presented an example of a sponsorship letter. EA Madigan went over the sponsorship requirements and stated that all meetings need to be scheduled through GOCI.



**VII. Committees:**

- ❖ Strategic Communication/Legislation – **Commissioner Rabbi Susan Grossman** presented a Draft of a statement in support for the bills HB661 and SB308 for Muslim American Heritage Month and Jewish American Heritage Month, which was created last year. They determined that this will be a support letter for testimony and the commission will edit the statement and then call for a special call meeting to approve it. They will see if other commissions will be supporting these bills.

**VIII. Social Media Program:**

**AD Dr. Brown** stated that the commission and GOCI will need to present at least three items (events, community engagement, etc.) that can be posted to social media. There will be a link provided to upload the information and documents by GOCI’s communication department.

**IX. Closing Remarks:**

**Chair Kishore** wanted to recognize that next week is the beginning of Ramadan, which is a month of Reflection, prayer, service, forgiveness and generosity. She wished everyone Ramadan Mubarak and Ramadan Karim.

**XI. #4 Motion for Adjournment:**

Motion	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Vote
Adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.	Ala’a Wafa	Amal Ali	6Y-0N-0A by hands