

MONG EQUALITY COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 17213, Saint Paul, MN 55117

mongequalitycommittee@gmail.com

<https://MongEquality.org>

(651) 321-2139

March 29, 2022

Mr. Paul (Kong Patchay) Xiong and Board Members
Hmong 18 Council, Inc
1068 Payne Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55130

RE: Response to your invitation to mediate issues relating to the Stone Project at the MN China Friendship Garden

Dear Mr. Paul (Kong Patchay) Xiong and Board Members of Hmong 18 Council, Inc:

As Hmong 18 Council and its board members already know, the Stone Project at the MN China Friendship Garden has caused much controversy because the word "Moob" was inscribed on one of the stones welcoming guests to the garden. Our Hmong/Mong culture is unique in the sense that our people speak more than one dialect all around the world. In the United States, the majority of our Hmong/Mong people speak either Hmong/Mong Der (White dialect) or Hmong/Mong Leng (Green dialect). The word "Moob" refers to the Hmong/Mong people in the green dialect (green vernacular). The vast majority of the people in the Hmong/Mong community (both Hmong/Mong Der and Hmong/Mong Leng) were okay with the word "Moob" inscribed on the welcoming stone. However, when certain individuals saw it, they were offended arguing that the word "Moob" is not inclusive and is not standard. These individuals are City of St. Paul Councilmember Dai Thao, Mr. Kongsue Xiong (member of Hmong Advisory Committee to the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society (MCFGs)), Mr. Xai Nou Vang aka Xai Paul Vang (advisor of SGU Veteran), and Gangshi Khang (VP of SGU). Enclosed for your consideration, please find a screen shot of a post on Councilmember Dai Thao's Facebook page from September 21, 2021, where he says that "Moob" is not the standard spelling compared to Hmoob/Hmong. Videos of Mr. Kongsue Xiong, Mr. Xai Nou Vang and Mr. Gangshi Khang arguing against the word "Moob" can be viewed here: <https://mongequality.org/video-clips/>

The word "Moob" is in the green dialect (or Hmong/Mong green vernacular) which means and includes all Hmong/Mong people just like the word "Hmoob" in the white dialect includes all Hmong/Mong. It was written in the green dialect because the welcoming phrase inscribed on the stone was written in the green dialect. The phrase was written in the green dialect (vernacular) to show the connection between the Hmong/Mong people here in St. Paul and the Hmong/Mong people in China who vastly speak the green dialect. If the phrase was written in the white dialect, it

would have been written “Hmoob” instead, however, it was not written in the white dialect. Using “Hmoob” or “Hmong” would not fit the vernacular of the green Hmong/Mong sentence in context, it would be grammatically incorrect and it would have an absurd result. Many respected scholars in academia such as Dr. Yang Dao who speaks white dialect (respected Hmong/Mong scholar), Professor Bee Vang-Moua who speaks white dialect (Director of Hmong Program - Asian Languages and Literature Department, University of Minnesota) and Professor Lee Pao Xiong who speaks green dialect (Director of the Center for Hmong Studies and Instructor of American Government/Political Science and Hmong Studies, Concordia University) have expressed this same sentiment and view.

Clearly, this controversy brings to the surface deeper issues that the Hmong/Mong people have dealt with internally that is not just a mere spelling of a word. It exposes the hatred and discriminatory behavior of certain people such as Councilmember Dai Thao, Mr. Kongsue Xiong, Mr. Xai Nou Vang, and Mr. Gangshi Khang. Attached for your consideration is a post by Mr. Kongsue Xiong on his Facebook page where he slanders the Hmong/Mong Leng by calling them a group that have been cooked, have surrendered to the Chinese, are cowards, are half man half woman, and someone who is brainless. One can infer from his post that he not only has hatred towards Hmong/Mong Leng but he also has hatred towards the Chinese. It is evident that people such as these use rhetoric such as, “the word Moob is not standard and not inclusive” as a pretext to cancel the green Hmong/Mong dialect. Councilmember Dai Thao shifts blame to the Hmong Advisory Committee (HAC) of the MCFGs by claiming that, “they did not have community engagement.” He uses words such as “transparency” and “community engagement” as a pretense to give those who were not involved a chance to attack and bring down the green Hmong/Mong dialect. In an email dated December 14, 2021, from Councilmember Thao to Mr. Brett Hussong, Councilmember Thao shows his ignorance of the Hmong/Mong language and his bigotry by saying, **“It is the first (welcoming) stone that contains “Moob” that is not inclusive – creating the problem because it is written in the green dialect. The white dialect would write it as “Hmoob” and a neutral way of it would be written as “Hmong”. Hmong is the inclusive spelling because it is not dialect related.”** It is clear that if the word was written as “Hmoob” in his native white dialect, there would be no issue. Enclosed for your consideration is the aforementioned email.

By way of email and correspondence, Hmong 18 Council invited Mong Equality Committee to meet with Hmong 18 Council to mediate and find resolution to the tensions that have torn the Hmong/Mong community. We find Hmong 18 Council’s intentions disingenuous. We found evidence showing that Hmong 18 Council was a culprit from the beginning trying to cancel the green dialect cloaking its true intentions in rhetoric such as, “we have received complaints and outpour of the Stone Project.” Hmong 18 Council to this day have not disclosed the number of complaints it received whether they were in the hundreds or thousands. Contrary to Hmong 18 Council’s assertion that it received complaints, corroboration from other sources shows that Hmong 18 Council was in fact the main culprit not happy with the inscription from the beginning. In the same email mentioned above, Councilmember Thao writes, **“When 18 Council saw “Moob” inscribed on the welcoming stone (first stone), the 18 council members present talked among themselves that there would be an issue because it was not inclusive.”** Clearly, there was no outpouring of complaints as asserted by Hmong 18 Council, but the complaints were in fact by Hmong 18 Council itself from the beginning.

Hmong 18 Council has revealed itself as an organization that is discriminatory and prejudice and does not appreciate the many different Hmong/Mong dialects. In a Facebook post, Mr. Brian Xiong, the program director for Hmong 18 Council writes, **“Whether you’re White Hmong, Black Hmong, Green Hmong, Stripe Hmong, Yellow Hmong, Blue Hmong, or LGBTQ+ Hmong. YOU ARE HMONG or HMOOB.”** By grouping all the Hmong/Mong of different dialects as just Hmong or Hmoob, Mr. Xiong, Hmong 18 Council’s program director, tries to strip away their language and identity. He does not appreciate their uniqueness. He reveals his ethnocentric view that Hmong/Hmoob is superior. Enclosed for your consideration is the Facebook post by Mr. Brian Xiong.

Hmong 18 Council claims to be a neutral third party wanting to heal the community; however, it has taken actions to the contrary. It attempted on a couple occasions to change the word “Moob” on the first stone. The first attempt was in 2021 when it claimed that it had no knowledge of and “were never included in the process by the Advisory Committee” (see Councilmember Dai Thao’s email dated December 14, 2021). As Hmong 18 Council knows well, a board member of its own organization, Mr. Song Neng Her was and is still a current board of the Hmong Advisory Board for the MCFGs. Based on discussions with the advisory board, Mr. Song Neng Her was absent from the committee meetings on many occasions. It is quite disgraceful to feign ignorance when one of Hmong 18 Council’s own board member was and is still part of the decision-making process. Enclosed for your consideration is a copy of the list and biography of the Hmong Advisory Committee member which includes one of Hmong 18 Council’s board member Mr. Song Neng Her.

The second attempt was in a letter dated February 15, 2022, from Mr. Paul (Kong Patchay) Xiong, president of Hmong 18 Council to Mr. William Zajicek, President of MCFGs. In the letter, Hmong 18 Council requests that, **“in order for the Hmong community and Hmong 18 Council to move forward with any future projects, we would like the Board of MN China Friendship Garden Society to re-visit the Stone Project (4 Stones for the Hmong).”** In the same letter, Hmong 18 Council indicated that it conferred with Mr. Kongsue Xiong, about guidelines that were provided to the Hmong Advisory Committee. This is the same Kongsue Xiong that called the people speaking Hmong/Mong green dialect half man half woman. A copy of the letter dated February 15, 2022, is enclosed for your consideration.

The third attempt by Hmong 18 Council occurred recently. On or about the end of February 2022 or beginning of March 2022, Mr. Mike Hahm of the City of St. Paul Parks and Recreation made a decision to keep the wording on the stones the same. In an effort to sidestep this decision, Hmong 18 Council distributed a document entitled, “Clan Resolution for the Changsha China Friendship Garden: Phase One – Stone Project” to the leaders of the Hmong 18 clans. If Hmong 18 Council was truly unbiased, why did it distribute this “clan resolution” even after the City of St. Paul had already made a decision? Hmong 18 Council’s efforts to try to cancel the green Hmong/Mong dialect is evident and is not supported by the vast majority in the Hmong/Community. A copy of Clan Resolution for the Changsha China Friendship Garden: Phase One – Stone Project is enclosed for your consideration.

As an organization that supports diversity, equity and inclusion, it is disgraceful and shameful that Hmong 18 Council and its board of directors have upended these values. Hmong 18 Council does not represent the value of the majority of the Hmong/Mong in Minnesota. Hmong 18 Council and its board of directors represent themselves and their own self-serving and bigoted values. Hmong 18 Council’s oppressive actions are exactly the same as the communist cancellation of

Hmong/Mong identity that our people have suffered. Hmong 18 Council and its board of directors do not like it when others group our people as Miao, but what the organization, Councilmember Dai Thao, Mr. Kongsue Xiong, Mr. Xai Nou Vang, and Mr. Gangshi Khang are doing is forcing every Hmong/Mong into Hmoob. Our people is diverse and we speak many different dialects. This diversity makes us unique and it is who we are. The day the stones are changed to English or a "standard" Hmong/Mong word is the day that Hmong 18 Council and its board of directors have successfully canceled the Hmong/Mong identity.

The information that we have provided 18 Council in this letter will also be provided to the Hmong/Mong community and 18 Council's financial supporters. We advise that the Hmong 18 Council board members make a public apology to both the white and green Hmong/Mong. However, this is up to Hmong 18 Council. As the board members have shown incompetence, discrimination and bigotry, we advise that the board members take steps to learn more and appreciate the Hmong/Mong culture. If Hmong 18 Council is unwilling to take steps to better further the organization, then we advise that the board members step down and allow more qualified people to lead this organization. If Hmong 18 Council wishes to respond, please do so within 5 business days from the date of this letter. Any mediation is not possible at this time as Hmong 18 Council's actions, as evidenced by undisputed facts, have shown that it is not a neutral party in this matter but a biased instigator.

Sincerely,



Zong Khangg Yang
Chair of Mong Equality Committee

Enclosures: 1- Copy of screenshot from Dai Thao's Facebook page, 2 - Copy of screenshot from Kongsue Xiong's Facebook page, 3 - Copy of email dated December 14, 2021, from Mr. Thao to Mr. Brett Hussong, 4 - Copy of screenshot by Mr. Brian Xiong, 5 - Copy of list and biography of Hmong Advisory Committee (which includes Mr. Song Neng Her), 6 - Copy of letter dated February 22, 2022, from 18 Council to Mr. Zajcek, 7 - Copy of Hmong 18 Council Clan Resolution for the Changsha China Friendship Garden: Phase one-Stone Project.

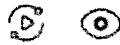
CC: William Zajcek, President MCFGs
Brett Hussong, St. Paul Parks and Recreation
City of St. Paul
Councilman Dai Thao
A-Sign
HAP
KiWave
HiWay Credit Union
Running Aces
Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans

12:50

5GUC 42%

5:47

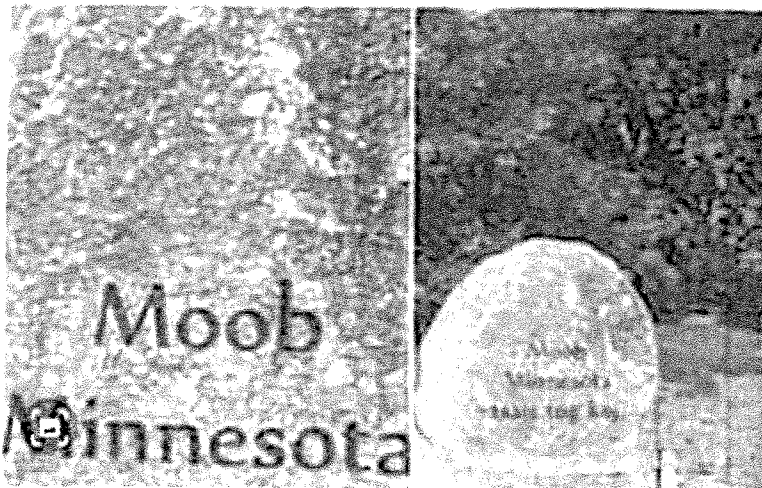
99%



Dai Thao

Sep 21 · 🌐

I saw this at Changsha/St. Paul friendship garden. What is your thought on using the Moob spelling compare to the standard Hmoob/Hmong?



7/10



Dai Thao FB



Replies

6w Like Reply

**Kongsue Xiong**

Vang Xiong moob leeg yog
 moob sav, cov nyoo Suav.
 Hmoob dawb yog huab tais
 Chu cov neeg ib txwm tsis tau
 nyoo leej twg. Moob leeg yog
 cov followers xwb vim lawv
 raug hau siav heev lawm, tsis
 kam txheem tsov rog. Hmoob
 dawb thiaj yog cov tiv thaiv
 yeeb ncuab xwb. Niaj hnuv no
 peb Hmoob lub npe nrov
 thoob ntiaj teb los vim yog
 Hmoob dawb cov thawj coj
 tus lheev xwm. Peb sawv
 daws yuav tau pom thiab
 hwm qhov no. Txog caij tsis
 sis lub npe moob lawm... vim
 tsis muaj neeg hwm lub npe
 moob lawm. No international
 recognition for moob. Nws
 txhais los tsis zoo thiab.

Cov npe tsis zoo rau Hmoob
 muaj li no.

1. Miao = never grow. Tsis loj

.....



Write a reply...



Kongsue Xiong FB



Replies

sis lub npe moob lawm... vim
 tsis muaj neeg hwm lub npe
 moob lawm. No international
 recognition for moob. Nws
 txhais los tsis zoo thiab.

Cov npe tsis zoo rau Hmoob
 muaj li no.

1. Miao = never grow. Tsis loj
 hlob. Vam meej tsis tau. Ua
 tsis tau ib heev neeg.
2. Meo= half man half animal.
 Ib nrab yog neeg ib nrab yog
 tshiaj. Lwm hom neeg siab
 yus qaij.
3. Moob= half man and half
 woman. Ib nrab poj niam ib
 nrab txiv neej.. .coj tsis xwb
 txiv neej...los yog tsis qoos
 noob. Testosterone isn't
 normal....txij neej muaj mis.
 Also, lus hmoob, moob txhais
 hais tias a coma, stroke, twg
 hlwb. Los yog tuag tsis tu
 siab....ua ntooj ntoom.

See translation

0w Like Reply



Vang Xiong



Image

Video



0w

Like

Reply



Translation of Kongsue Xiong response to Vang Xiong on Kongsue Xiong's Facebook:

Vang Xiong, moob Leng (Green/Blue Mong) are moob who are cooked, who surrendered to the Chinese. Hmoob Der (White Hmong) are King Chu's people who have never surrender to anyone. Moob Leng are only followers because they have been boiled until cooked, they do not defend against war. Hmoob Der are the only ones who defend against the enemy. Today our Hmoob name has become known around the world because of the Hmoob Der leaders who are capable. We all should see and respect this. It's time not to use the word Moob any longer... because no one respects the name moob anymore. No international recognition for moob. The translation of the name is bad also.

The name that is bad for Hmoob are as follows.

1. Miao = never grow. Does not grow. Does not prosper. Cannot be a group of people.
2. Meo = half man half animal. One half is a person one half is an animal. Other people see you as little.
3. Moob = half man and half woman. Half woman half man.. cannot be a man...or not manly. Testosterone isn't normal....man with breasts. Also, in hmoob, moob translated means coma, stroke, brain with no activity. Or someone dead who is breathing....brainless.

Gender Pronouns: she/her/hers
15 W Kellogg Blvd, City Hall 320-B
Saint Paul, MN 55102
P: 651-266-8660
Ward6@stpaul.gov
www.StPaul.gov

*Email from CM Dai Thao to
Brett Hussong*

From: Thao, Dai (CI-StPaul) <dai.thao@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 3:51 PM
To: Hussong, Brett (CI-StPaul) <brett.hussong@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Cc: Yang, Daniel (CI-StPaul) <Daniel.Yang@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Hahn, Michael (CI-StPaul) <michael.hahn@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Messer, Alice (CI-StPaul) <alice.messer@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Stewart, Ellen (CI-StPaul) <ellen.stewart@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; MN China Friendship Garden Society <mcfgs@mnchinagarden.org>
Subject: Re: Phalen China Garden Dialect Discussion

Brett,

Thank you for the communication. I appreciate the incredible work you and your team are doing. I want you to know it wasn't your fault. In our discovery from interviews with the Hmong 18 Council and other stakeholders from the community, we learned the Hmong 18 Council and community stakeholders (SGU Veterans, elders, and community members) were never included in the process by the Advisory Committee. We also learned there are stones on site with green and white dialects which these organizations and leaders support and celebrate. It is the first (welcoming) stone that contains "Moob" that is not inclusive - creating the problem because it is written in the green dialect. The white dialect would write it as "Hmoob" and a neutral way of it would be written as "Hmong". Hmong is the inclusive spelling because it is not dialect related. * * *

According to the Hmong 18 Council, they want to be apart of the process but the Advisory Committee never involved them on the stones project. There was never community engagement. The Hmong 18 Council felt the Advisory Committee only invited the Hmong 18 Council and community leaders to the ribbon cutting to use their presence to create the illusion of support. When 18 Council saw "Moob" inscribed on the welcoming stone (first stone), the 18 Council members present talked among themselves that there would be an issue because it was not inclusive. The inclusive spelling would be the English spelling "Hmong" which encompasses all Hmong dialects. * * *

After the ribbon cutting, the complains started coming in. Mr. Thaying then called 18 Council President to discuss the problem and asked for advice. The President shared his concerns at that time, and recommended Mr. Thaying fix the problem to avoid further problem. Mr. Thaying informed the 18 Council President it would cost \$500 to fix. Mr. President then said, \$500 is not a lot, I am sure everyone can give a little to come up with the money.

My recommendations would be the following:

1. The Advisory Committee should be in compliance to create a transparent and inclusive forum for community engagement. They must go back and work with community members, Hmong 18 Council and stakeholders to be inclusive and transparent to resolve the problem. If the advisory committee fails to be in compliance then they should be dissolved by the City and a new advisory committee be formed.
- 2.
3. The Advisory Committee to be trained on their role, responsibilities, and transparency working with the community. This is critical because we want to mitigate problems with future phases of the project. Training should be on an annual basis or part of an onboarding process.
- 4.
5. The Ward 1 and 6 offices should get regular or monthly (whichever is feasible) debrief on the project going forward to help prevent problems in the future.

Kindly,

Dai

From: Hussong, Brett (CI-StPaul) <brett.hussong@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 10:54 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Cc: Yang, Daniel (CI-StPaul) <Daniel.Yang@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Hahn, Michael (CI-StPaul) <michael.hahn@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Messer, Alice (CI-StPaul) <alice.messer@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Stewart, Ellen (CI-StPaul) <ellen.stewart@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; MN China Friendship Garden Society <mcfgs@mnchinagarden.org>
Subject: RE: Phalen China Garden Dialect Discussion

Councilmembers Thao & Yang,

I'm following up with the China Garden dialect discussion and the Department of Parks and Recreation's process going forward. We feel the Department is not in the position to determine the outcome of the dialect question because we are not the experts. In order to advance the discussion, we are requesting that Ward 1 & Ward 6 come to a mutually agreed upon solution and recommendation that would be supported by the community. Please reply to this email and indicate your willingness to provide a decision by the end of the year. The project website has much of the background information. Please let me know if there is anything else that I can help provide so that you are able to come to a decision.

Thank you,

Brett Hussong, PLA
Lead Landscape Architect
Pronouns: He/Him/His
Parks and Recreation – Design & Construction



Brian V. Xiong

Interesting how history repeats itself: the CHINESE divided the Hmong for hundreds of years and finally gained (somewhat) independence in America. A CHINA friendship garden was built in the center of Saint Paul's Lake Phalen where the Hmong people will continue to divide themselves again based on a rock's name.

Brian Xiong FB

SAY whatever you like, CALL whatever you want, and SPELL however you feel fit. Hmong is internationally known as "HMONG" and/or "HMOOB."

Whether you're a White Hmong, Black Hmong, Green Hmong, Stripe Hmong, Yellow Hmong, Blue Hmong, or LGBTQ+ Hmong. YOU ARE HMONG or HMOOB.

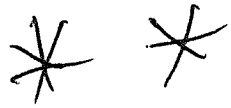
* *

Whether you're a Hmong CHANG, Hmong CHUE, Hmong CHENG, Hmong FANG, Hmong HANG, Hmong HER, Hmong KHANG, Hmong KONG, Hmong KUE, Hmong LOR/LO/LAO. Hmong



Hmong LOR/LO/LAO, Hmong
LEE/LY, Hmong MOUA/
MOUACHEUPAO, Hmong PHA,
Hmong THAO/THOR, Hmong
VANG, Hmong VUE/VU, Hmong
XIONG/SONG, and Hmong YANG
----- you're are HMONG or
HMOOB.

Argue, debate, discuss, or
exchange whatever information
you like. For those of us in the
education and publication fields,
HMONG is internationally and
will always been known as (in
English) HMONG and (in native
language) HMOOB. Even Sunisa
Lee winning the Gold Medal, she
will always be written as HMONG
or HMOOB.



Go ahead and be creative of new names for this ethnic Hmong population: Hamong, Homong, Ahmong, Moob, Mong, HMong, MHong, HMoob. For most of our children and younger generation, we will move forward with (in English) "Hmong" and (in native language) "Hmoob" regardless which dialects or clans you from. It is the UNITY of a people, not the dialects/clans of leader(s) or group(s).

HMONG
Minnesota
Welcome You!

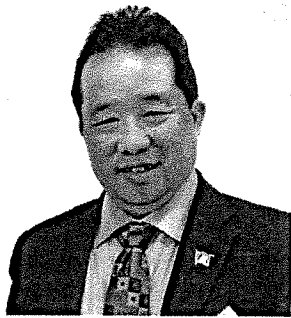


MCFGS HMONG ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Chair

Chair Advisor Ying Chuyangheu was born in a small village in Northern of Laos, and is the son of a City Council man, and the grandson of a Royal Councilman under the title "Phia Xai" from the King Sisavagvong of Laos. Ying earned his Master's degree in the Major of Law and Administration from the Institute Royale de Droit et Administration (IRDA) in Vientiane. Due to the Vietnam War, Ying was not able to pursue a legal degree. Subsequently, he left Laos with tears for Thailand in 1975, and then France in 1976. He and his family emigrated to the U.S in 1991. During his entire life, he has worked for non-profit organizations, and has been deeply involved in Hmong and Lao Cultural celebration events in the U.S and internationally. He is currently serving as the President of Hmong Heritage Preservation, Inc. He is also a serial entrepreneur with businesses domestic and international, including the Kacham WaterFall Resort in Luang Prabang Province, Laos, Hmong MN Senior Center in Little Canada, Minnesota, and 2Y Rental, Inc in St. Paul, MN.



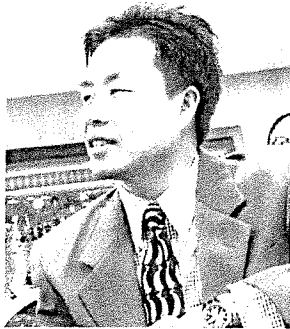
Secretary

Advisor Francis T. Thao currently serves as Secretary for the MCFGS Hmong Advisory Committee and Hmong Heritage Preservation, Inc. He currently works as an Early Childhood Professional and Personal Care Assistant. He resides on the East Side of St. Paul, Minnesota. He has been an advocate volunteer to assist Hmong Community Non-Profit Organizations from 1987 to the present time and has served as Treasurer, Secretary, Economic development, Event Organizer, and President. His hobbies: Photo and Videography, Photos and Videos Editing, Hiking, Hunting, Fishing, and Traveling.



Treasurer

Advisor Jay Her has been an East Side Saint Paul resident for more than a decade. He is an active participant in East Side community activities and its electoral processes. Besides volunteering as a member of the MCFGS Hmong Advisory Committee, he is also currently a volunteer member of Hmong Heritage Preservation, Inc. It is a non-profit organization with a mission to research, collect and preserve Hmong traditions, culture and identity. He is the Chair of the International Relation Committee of the Hmong Heritage Preservation. Jay has a medical degree from the University of Latin America -School of Medicine, and is a certified medical language facilitator at Regions Hospital. His most compassionate life-long interest is the pursuit of self-rediscovery.



Public Relations

Advisor Kong Sue Xiong is the Founder and CEO of Asian American Broadcasting, LLC (KFXN AM690) and Manager for KS Fortune Investment, LLC (real estate business) in the Twins Cities. He speaks Hmong, Lao, Thai, and English. He received his BA with double majors in Education and Psychology from Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. Additional professional and community activities include: 1. Main host for KFXN AM690 (a serious talk show of "Hmong in the modern time"); 2. Member of Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) and Entrepreneur of the year 2015; 3. Hmong cultural and language expert and researcher since 2000; 4. Co-Founder of Hmong Mojthem, a special overseas Radio program 2006-2009; 5. Drug and Alcohol Counselor for Hennepin County 2002-2009; 6. Parent Education and Empowerment for Minneapolis School District 2002-2003; 7. Bible translator for Luther Church sponsored by Concordia University 2000.



Media

Advisor Dona Vu Yang is proud to be a Christian Hmong Woman and the oldest child of 10. She is currently a board member for Hmong Cultural Heritage Preservation Inc. and a member of the Hmong Advisory Committee for the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society. Her ancestors were from China. She was born in Laos. She lived in Thailand for 2 years, then in France for 11 years. She speaks Hmong, Lao, Thai, French, and English. She got her Bachelor's degree in computer science degree in Spokane, Washington, in 1992. She currently works as an Office Manager at the Wellness Adult Day Care in Saint Paul, MN. Her past experiences include 13 years as School Counselor at Saint Paul Student Placement Center, 2 years as Teacher Aid, 15 years as Hmong New Year Board Member in Minnesota, 8 years as Real Estate Agent, 20 years as Event Planner and Decorator, and 4 years as Multicultural Advisory Committee with Mental Health Department in Spokane Washington. Her hobbies are Hmong song writing, sewing, flowers arranging and traveling.

Culture

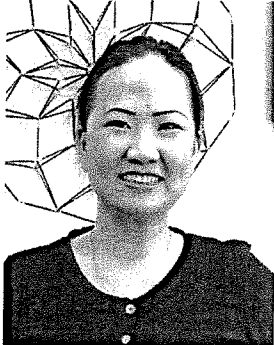
Advisor Ciecileann Nkauj Zoo Lis

Design

Advisor Vallen K. Her

Hmong 18 Representative

Advisor Song Neng Her

 Legal Counsel	Advisor Ma Mance Moua is an Attorney who possesses a broad base of legal experience in both the public and private sectors. Prior to establishing her own private practice, she was an Assistant Attorney General with the Wisconsin Department of Justice in its Civil Litigation Department. She is licensed in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Attorney Moua practices in the following legal areas: criminal law, personal injury/civil litigation, and family law. She is admitted to practice in the following courts: State of Wisconsin, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and the State of Minnesota.
 Board Liaison	Advisor Pa V Thao has been a MCFGS Hmong Advisory Committee member and joined the MCFGS Board in 2021. See complete bio above.
	Advisor Richard Som

MCFGS HONORARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

	Advisor Former Mayor George Latimer was the Mayor of St. Paul from 1976 to 1990. He is known for his redevelopment of St. Paul's downtown core, serving as mayor during a period when St. Paul's population was declining somewhat as some residents moved to suburban areas while the city's ethnic diversity increased as, among others, Hmong refugees from Vietnam and Laos resettled in Saint Paul. He served as dean of Hamline University's law school from 1990 to 1993. Latimer was also CEO of the National Equity Fund, which manages and provides affordable housing in 35 cities. He also worked in the business world, served as a Regent of the University of Minnesota, and worked as an arbitrator.
	Advisor Dr. Robert D. Jacobsen, Ph.D. is the founding curator of Asian art at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) where he is currently Chair of the Department of Asian Art Emeritus. He received his PhD in Asian art history with a minor in Chinese language and literature at the University of Minnesota. His dissertation concerned The Inlaid Bronzes of the Warring States Period and Their Revivals. He served as a research fellow in the Department of Antiquities at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan and was an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota in the Department of Art history. He worked with KTCA public television in the production of a six-part series on the art and culture of China: Made in China, which he narrated, that premiered in 2002. His recent books include <u>Classical Chinese Furniture in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts</u>, <u>Imperial Silks: Ch'ing Dynasty Textiles in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts</u>, <u>Appreciating China: Gifts From Ruth and Bruce Dayton</u>, and <u>Celestial Horses and</u>



HMONG 18 COUNCIL, INC.

February 15, 2022

Dear Mr. Zajicek & Ms. Mealey-Lohmann:

The Hmong 18 Council, Inc. serves the Hmong people in the state of Minnesota by bringing positive changes through racial and social justice, equity advocacy, and enhancing traditional values and practices to improve the lives of individuals and families.

Hmong 18 Council is composed of 18 elected/appointed representatives from the 18 Hmong clans. On behalf of Hmong 18 Council, I would like to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the China Friendship Garden Society for allowing Hmong Minnesotans to be part of the garden.

Since the unveiling of the Stone Project, there has been much controversy in the Hmong community over the engraved spelling of "Moob." The recent outpour of complaints and requests for resolution, prompted Hmong 18 Council to call a discussion with the leaders of the Stone Project.

On February 13, 2022, the Hmong 18 Council had a meeting with Mr. Ying Chuyangheu, Chair of the Hmong Advisory Committee of the MN China Friendship Garden Society, in regard to the Phase One – Stone Project. Mr. Chuyangheu indicated that there was no guideline and/or community input on the Phase One Project, as this non-community engagement was never established or supported from upper management of the Board of the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society.

Mr. Chuyangheu also reported that the Hmong Advisory Committee was not under any obligation to engage and/or consult with the Hmong MN Community at large about the Stone Project, as well as the writing that was engraved in the stones. As a result, any decision about the final product of the Stone Project (4 Stones for Hmong) was decided solely by the Hmong Advisory Committee.

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Contrary to Mr. Chuyangheu's representation, Mr. Kongsue Xiong, a member of the Hmong Advisory Committee of the MN China Friendship Garden Society, indicated that there was in fact a guideline provided to the Hmong Advisory Committee for community dialogues.

Since the Hmong 18 Council received many complaints from the Hmong community and individuals across the country and internationally from Southeast Asia about the spelling of "Moob" on the stone, we inquired Mr. Chuyangheu and the Hmong Advisory Committee as to whether they have any plans to resolve the spelling dispute as engraved on the stone. The Hmong Advisory Committee stated that they have no control over this situation at this time and deferred the Hmong community to the Board of China Friendship Garden Society for direction.

From the meeting with Mr. Chuyangheau, it is clear that the Hmong Advisory Committee has not consulted with the Hmong community nor the Hmong 18 Council regarding the Phase One – Stone Project. Because of the dispute and division among the Hmong community regarding the chosen of word, “Moob” as engraved, a meeting led by City Council Dai Thao was held on November 23, 2021, at the China Friendship Garden to address this community’s concern. Mr. Chuyanheu falsely announced that he and his committee have consulted with Hmong 18 Council about the Phase One – Stone Project.

On behalf of the Hmong community, we would like to know if the Board of China Friendship Garden has provided any guideline/protocol/process to the Hmong Advisory Committee. If there is any, we would like to request a copy.

The Hmong 18 Council also would like to take part or advisory role in any upcoming projects from the Board and Hmong Advisory Committee. It is our hope to prevent future misunderstanding and division among the Hmong community, such as in the case of the Phase One Project.

Finally, in order for the Hmong community and Hmong 18 Council to move forward with any future projects, we would like the Board of MN China Friendship Garden Society to re-visit the Stone Project (4 Stones for the Hmong). We also would like the Board to give us some time to have dialogue with the Hmong community for feedbacks. During our engagement with the Hmong Community, we would like the Board to put on hold of any usage of the following words, “Hmoob, Moob, or Hmong” to be used at the China Friendship Garden Society until further notice.

* *

Thank you so much for your attention and understanding of this matter.

Sincerely,



Paul (Kong Patchay) Xiong
President/CEO
Hmong 18 Council, Inc. of Minnesota



HONG 18 COUNCIL, INC.

Clan Resolution for the Changsha China Friendship Garden: Phase One– Stone Project

Please return a signed copy of this document by 11:59pm on Saturday, March 12, 2022
to the Hmong 18 Council, Inc. Office at 1568 Payne Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55130, or email to
President Paul (Kong Petchay) Xiong: pxiong@hmong18council.org

Please carefully discuss the issues regarding the stone writing: “Moo Minnesota Txais Tog Koj” and
answer the following questions that best describes your Clan’s position.

1. ☐ **Keep the stone writing (Moo Minnesota Txais Tog Koj) as installed?**

a. ☐ **YES** keep as installed. Please briefly state your reasons:

b. ☐ **NO**, change the stone writing “Moo Minnesota Txais Tog Koj” *Hmong 18
Council* must lead the effort to change the writing. If change, then what spelling and/or
writing should be used for the **Phase One–Stone Project** that best represents the Hmong
people? *(Please check one)*

i. ☐ Hmong *(English spelling)* “Hmong Minnesota Welcomes You”

ii. ☐ Hmoob *(White dialect spelling)* “Hmoob Minnesota Txais Tos Koj”

iii. ☐ Paj Xeem *(people and/or citizens)* “Paj Xeem Minnesota Txais Tos Koj”

iv. ☐ Others: _____

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2. ☐ **TAKE NO ACTION.** The *Hmong 18 Council* and/or *Clan Presidents* should take NO
ACTION and should NOT be involved with the decision to either *Keep* or *Change* the stone
writing. Briefly state your reasons:

3. Other recommendations?

☐ I am knowledgeable that my Clan has thoroughly discuss the issue and understand the impact
to our community at large. This response represents the position of my clan.