



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION TASK FORCE
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on July 12, 2022

DATE: Tuesday, June 21, 2022
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members:

Present	Absent
Samantha Carter	
Aaron Esry	
Stephanie Fortado	
Jenny Lokshin	
Jim McGuire	
Diane Michaels	
Kyle Patterson	

County Staff: Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Patterson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

II. Roll Call

A verbal roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Esry to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Carter. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. May 17, 2022

MOTION by Ms. Lokshin to approve the minutes of May 17, 2022; seconded by Ms. Carter. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

V. Public Participation

None

VI. Communications

Ms. Lokshin acknowledged the death of 18-year-old Prentiss Jackson this week in Champaign. She urged the Committee to do everything they can to prevent this type of violence.

VII. Presentations

A. Tim Bartlett, Urbana Park District

Tim Bartlett, Urbana Park District Executive Director, introduced their plan for a health and wellness center and their request for \$2.5 million from the ARPA funds. Mr. Bartlett explained this center would help address reaching underrepresented groups and will be located in a “hot spot”. He gave an overview of their current funding, the current floorplans and the possible floorplan if this funding is received.

Corky Emberson, Urbana Park District Recreation Superintendent, gave an overview of what the Park District does from an outreach perspective, how the health and wellness center will help prevent community violence and some of the programs they will be providing. He explained details of their scholarships and free amenities. He also spoke about the partnerships they have with others in the community to coordinate programming together. They would like to break ground this fall with an anticipated opening date in October 2023.

Mr. McGuire asked what would happen with their lease at the Brookens Center and how they are doing with staffing now and how this building will impact their staffing. Mr. Bartlett explained they would like to keep their lease arrangement for the soccer fields outside, but they would plan to move out of the Brookens gym around the same time as the County moves to the Plaza. Mr. Emberson explained their current staff would be working out of this new facility, but they would need to hire some part-time staff.

Ms. Michaels asked how they would include the outlying communities in this center since this is county-wide funding. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Emberson explained they are working to find ways to include the outside communities while still working around their geo-political boundary requirements.

Ms. Carter expressed her support for their affordable options and partnerships with other community programs. She also asked if there was an age limit to their programs and it was explained that they will have programs for all ages. Finally, she suggested they partner with the MTD to help people with transportation to their center. Mr. Bartlett added that they did many studies to find a good location for this center that would serve a part of the community that does not have any facilities and would be within walking distance for many.

Ms. Fortado asked if they have requested ARPA funds from the City of Urbana. Mr. Bartlett said they are also asking the city, but they cannot wait for the city to make a decision. If they received money from both the County and the City, they would use the additional funds for other parts of the project like their outdoor facilities which are in the next phase of their plans. Mr. Esry asked if they only received partial funding would they be able to build part of the plans and finish later. Mr. Emberson explained their alternate options and how they would choose according to the funding that is received.

B. Banio Koroma Jr., Manhood Training Camp

Mr. Koroma, a local mentor and youth advocate, came on behalf of A Vision to Succeed, a cultural and social organization that is working to change the social norm and culture of violence in the community. He explained how they are working to counter the culturally toxic masculinity young men are learning by teaching them ethics and honorable ways to earn money. He gave details of his programs and how they plan to expand over time. Their ultimate goal is to train these young men to be junior mentors so they can impact their peer groups. Studies show that impacting 25% of the population can change the culture and that similar programs have reduced gun violence by 35%. He is requesting \$44,337 for the first year of programming.

Ms. Carter asked if there are any fee waivers or scholarships for their programs and how often they meet. Mr. Koroma explained that they do have several different opportunities for their program fees to be covered and that they meet once a month but plan to meet weekly once school begins. Ms. Michaels asked how the ARPA funding would be used. Mr. Koroma stated he has an official request with a budget that he would like to share with everyone.

C. Tracy Dace, DREAAM House

Tracy Dace, Founder and CEO of DREAAM, gave some background on the DREAAM program, the ages they support, their current programs and future goals. He explained their three strategies: Wellness for All, Hope for Boys and Black Family Wellness; for their Hope for the Future initiative. This will be a two-year pilot initiative to impact over 1000 families with wellness programs to develop a pathway to violence prevention. He is requesting \$500,000 of ARPA funds to create an early childhood village and building out the Hope for the Future initiative in Rantoul and Urbana.

Mr. Dace explained the concept of the early childhood village more in-depth, stating they would have a central village location with separate satellite locations throughout the county. Ms. Michaels asked if this would be like Head Start or in partnership with Head Start. Mr. Dace explained that they do currently partner with Head Start and his vision is to start this as a partner with Head Start and then move it into more of a community-based facility.

Mr. McGuire listed some of the County's current programs: Head Start and the Youth Assessment Center; and questioned why the County should fund duplicate services. Mr. Dace explained that it is vital to duplicate services as there aren't currently enough services for the need in the community and the community needs different options to choose from. He stated that the Youth Assessment Center has had to refer youth to his program for services. In 2015 his program started with 10 boys, and they will be serving 500 youth this summer.

VIII. Other Business

- A. Discussion of funding plans and next steps
- B. Next meeting date and time

Mr. Patterson proposed for the Committee to meet in July to have a more focused discussion on funding plans and to make a recommendation to the County Board. The next meeting will be held on July 12th at 6:00 p.m.

Discussion continued about the current funding appropriation of \$1.4 million for this fiscal year and the Democratic Caucus' intention to appropriate \$2.6 million from the second disbursement of ARPA funds. Mr. McGuire mentioned the funding some of these groups have already received and would like to subtract that amount from their current requests in order to support all of the programs appropriately.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Patterson adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.