

Champaign County Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 16, 2016
6:30 pm

I. Call to Order

Sara Balgoyen (sitting in for Chair Sam Byndom) called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Twelve members were present at this time.

II. Roll Call

Members Present:

M. Ar-Raheem, S. Balgoyen, L. Branham, E. Dee, A. Felty, D. Harber, R. Hughes, A. James, E. Patt, C. Randolph, K. Schneider, S. Silver, D. Turner, G. Walter.

Members Absent:

P. Burnside, B. Butts, S. Byndom, R. Byrd, A. Evans, H. Ross.

III. Approval of Agenda

Kevin Schneider moved to approve agenda. Artice James seconded. The motion carried.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Gerald Walter moved to approve the minutes. Esther Patt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

V. Public Participation

There were no public comments at the time of this agenda item.

VI. Presentation

Urbana Human Relations Office – Overview of the Final Report of the Urbana Traffic Stop Data Task Force

Peter Resnick – Chair of the Urbana Traffic Stop Data Task Force

H. Alex Bautista – Human Relations Officer

The presenters gave an overview of the final report of the task force. The task force was created by the Urbana City Council. They performed the following main tasks:

- 1) Literature Review of traffic stops and racial disparities
- 2) Statistics
- 3) Literature Review and Forum for impacts to the community
- 4) Review of current police procedures

The goal was to perform the study and then present it, with the idea that the City Council and the Mayor would do the bulk of the work to implement the recommendations. Peter recommended that the task force review the report in full, especially the sections on policing and community engagement. Alex presented some of the statistics from the report. Peter explained the difference between selective traffic enforcement (STEP) stops and non-STEP. A comparison of these types of stops showed that differences in numbers of traffic violations cannot be accounted for by differences in driving behavior across races. He explained that the police practices which cause disparities mostly fall within the category of rational policing decisions that have bad effects. They also discussed differences in hit-rates when vehicles are searched and the differences in charges and fines that result from traffic stops.

Gerry asked where the baseline population info came from. Peter responded that a lot of it came from census data and that they had to try to determine what the true driving population is. Gerry noted that Hispanic is not a racial category in the census. Peter said that the officer's discretion is used for determining race at a traffic stop.

Amy asked if this is being adopted by Champaign Police, University of Illinois Police, or Champaign County Police. The presenters did not know the answer to the question but that they believe the departments are all aware of the study.

Demario Turner asked if canine searches were highlighted in the statistics. Peter said he does not believe they were.

Lynn Branham asked about their statisticians and how much work cost. Paul Testa who was a Ph.D. student did significant work for no reimbursement. He noted that a volunteer would be exceedingly helpful. Lynn also asked if they have any sense if bias training would be helpful to do on a county-wide basis. Peter responded that the Police Training Institute (PTI) already includes implicit bias training but that officers who may not have gone through PTI were recommended to take the training. Lynn asked if they had any specific recommendations for the Racial Justice Task Force. Peter noted that having subgroups was very helpful. He also stated that people will inevitably "arm wrestle" over particular issues and having strong leaders is helpful for moving on. Alex stated that the Human Relations Office was in full support of the task force and provided \$500 for the group. He encouraged having someone from the County serve in a support role for logistics. He also recommended reaching out for a writer.

Carolyn asked about the community forum and what they did with the results that came from that. Peter said that this data was narrative and that getting individuals to write stuff down was very helpful. A survey was also done which gave the committee quotable items to include in their report. He stated that doing more private conversations (one-on-one) would have been very helpful. Peter said he will send the survey they used.

Artice asked if the budget was provided or requested. Peter said it was in the original resolution. Alex said the task force spent about 75% of it which included copying, binding, food for community meetings.

Susan asked if they reviewed when traffic stops escalated to things such as resisting arrest. Peter talked about a report that discussed the fear of traffic stops for African American men, and said that they didn't have enough local information to further investigate. Alex discussed the importance of fear and how that impacts policing.

Artice said he would be interested in knowing the data on police relationship as it related to whether the police live in the community they work in. Peter said they did not look at it, and Alex said they will be looking at it. He also stated that the community's perception of the police is important. Lynn asked for a clarification of Artice's question. He responded that he was speaking about people who do not live within Champaign-Urbana but police the area.

Criminal Justice System Overview

Susan said she was not able to get anyone to present but she did interview some individuals and could speak about that. Sara suggested that we move the presentation.

Kevin suggested another date. Esther moved to table the presentation to the second meeting in July. Kevin seconded. The motion carried.

VII. Approval of Urbana Statement of Support

Kevin moved to approve the statement drafted at the previous meeting. Maryam Ar-Raheem seconded. The motion carried by voice vote. Ryan read the statement aloud.

Public Participation

Kristina Khan wanted to discuss the three deaths that have occurred in the county jail in the past 6 months. She noted that this is an unacceptable crisis. She also stated that the lack of response from the County is atrocious. Local groups brought individuals to the County board meeting this past week to share stories of experiences in the jail. She stated that one board member said it was good that no one got angry at the meeting. She stated that she believe the Black community has the right to be angry and say, "enough is enough." She asked that the task force create spaces to allow people to share their stories and to share their compassion and be open to emotions.

Maryam stated that she agrees that people have the right to be passionate when they share their stories.

Ryan and Carolyn said thank you specifically to Cristina, and Carolyn asked if Cristina could invite those who shared their stories to be filmed.

VIII. Community Events

Sara presented the ideas that have been developed for the format of the community forums including the responses sheet. She said that the goal of the forum is to get stories but also to get ideas for action steps.

Maryam clarified that the Saturday meeting was from 1-3pm. Kevin said the format section is probably enough for the formal agenda. Esther asked that when Kay is notified that she should

send specific notices for the meeting similar to the County Board meetings. Artice volunteered to purchase food and drink for the meetings. The NAACP and the NCAAM will donate up to \$100. Maryam asked if both events were being discussed.

Seven members said they will be at the Thursday meeting.

Six members said they will be at the Saturday meeting.

Sara asked about the introductory comments. Kevin said he thinks it should be as short as possible. Carolyn asked if there will be a sign in sheet. Sara said she will present the intro on Thursday and Maryam volunteered to do it on Saturday. Susan asked if the facilitator needs to take notes. Sara responded that they should be ready to take notes but they could also seek volunteers. Esther encouraged the task force that it tell the group that they can write stuff down to ensure their comments are recorded. Sara noted that opening hosts should give timekeeping roles to someone. Lynn noted another option that facilitators be given guides on how to facilitate, and that we could get facilitators who are not from the group.

Artice said that if there are groups that people do not have stories to share, then facilitators could bring data or talking points from the presentations that we have heard as a task force. Lynn disagreed about using data for talking points because it would represent the task force influencing individuals too much. Sara suggested having handouts that summarize some of the statistics the task force has received. Kevin did not think that handouts need to be shared. Maryam stated that the purpose of sharing the data is to give people concrete data about their experiences and that she believes sharing information is important. Kevin suggested handing out a schedule of the rest of the task force's meetings. Esther did not think it would be a good idea to hand out something that is 100 pages long. Ellyn stated that she agreed with Artice's idea of sharing simple bullet points like how bail impacts the community. Carolyn suggested printing a list of remaining meetings and having a list of the resources and reports we have looked at so far on the back. Susan noted that the NAACP has interesting fliers that could be shared. Sara asked everyone to send her everything they would like to see on the back of the schedule by Tuesday. Maryam stated on record that she does not think we should share a flier on how to interact with the community because it would be offensive for the task to do so.

Kevin moved that the remaining items on the agenda be postponed. Artice seconded the motion.

Carolyn stated that she would like the task force to get information of people who would be willing to share information with the task force in qualitative data form. Kevin suggested adding that to the response form. Demario asked about the social media component. Ryan stated that he will share on social media and he encouraged everyone to do that.

The motion to postpone agenda items passed.

POSTPONED ITEMS:

IX. Approval Social Media Platform

There were no public comments.

X. RJTF Budget

XI. Task Force Member Comments

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:43pm.