

Champaign County Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 10, 2016
6:30 pm

I. Call to Order

Sara Balgoyen called the meeting to order at 6:36.

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, G. Walter.

Members Absent:

S. Byndom, A. Evans, H. Ross, D. Turner, S. Lerner, A. Shelton.

III. Approval of Agenda

Esther Patt moved to eliminate item VI from the agenda. Maryam Ar-Raheem seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IV. Approval of Minutes

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

V. Public Participation

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

VI. Presentations

This item was removed from the agenda.

VII. Subcommittee Meetings

Sara noted that the 18-month timeline for the task force is due to end in July of 2017. There was a discussion of if and when to go to the County Board to ask for an extension to the timeline. Esther suggested waiting until after the class has presented their data and report. Esther also noted that the class has invited the task force to their final class to share their findings on December 6th at 2:00pm.

Sara noted that a student wants to continue working on the data project. It was noted that there is no restriction on using the FOIA data beyond the class.

Lynn shared that their Legal Processes subcommittee has begun splitting up specific tasks, all of which could begin before the data is shared by the class. She encouraged the groups to develop similar items and also asked if setting target dates for the subcommittees to do tasks was a good idea. She also brought up the idea that someone should look into other studies of racial

disparities so that the task force can use other results in addition to our own. This task may get overlooked if the subcommittees focus on their areas only.

Esther highlighted the importance of using the data that is local to show local officials that racial disparity is a problem.

Carolyn asked about the format of the final report to help determine what the subcommittees should be working on. Sara shared her thoughts on the format of the paper. Esther expressed interest using a similar format to the report of the Community Justice Task Force. Lynn noted that some of the pieces of the report could be very big because of the research that exists and suggested that the task force should identify rough page limits for commentary. Kevin agreed that keeping the recommendation to two pages is a good idea. Esther suggested having primary and secondary recommendations. Artice brought up the issue of some recommendations that the County Board could not impact. Esther said one recommendation could be advocating for changes in state laws. Amy noted that Patsi Petri stated that a list of what should be done, even if it cannot be done by the County Board, is still OK. Recommendations could be broken down by who is responsible for each change. Ryan noted that the Community Engagement subcommittee believes part of its mission will be to share the results of the task force throughout the community. Lynn posed the idea of getting commitments from some of the agencies to follow up on the recommendations, which will require communicating with both the community and the criminal justice officials and agencies.

Esther shared her experience reaching out to the public defender's office. She did not receive a response via email and then was told that the public defender would not meet with Esther or the task force. A discussion about how to approach the public defender occurred.

Carolyn noted that we need to consider how the report is created for the County Board and for the community, which could include doing community outreach for before final recommendations are submitted.

The Community Engagement, Legal Processes, and Juvenile Justice subcommittees met and then presented summaries of their meetings. The minutes from the subcommittees can be found below.

VIII. New Business

There was no new business.

IX. Task Force Member Comments

Ryan noted that subcommittee minutes need to be approved at future subcommittee meetings.

X. Adjournment

Gerry moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.

Subcommittee Meetings

Legal Process Subcommittee

Members Present: Lynn Branham, Esther Patt and Susan Silver

Members Absent: Kevin Schneider and Demario Turner

Discussion: Members discussed financial release conditions and approved an action plan for completing tasks researching issues related to financial release.

Community Engagement Subcommittee

Members Present: David Harber, Gerry Walter, Ryan Hughes, Carolyn Randolph

Members Absent: Sam Byndom

Action Plan Discussion: The subcommittee identified key tasks that the group could accomplish now through the end of our term.

David Harber suggested that the RJTF celebrate its one-year anniversary with a media blitz (i.e. press release to various news media outlets outlining the work that RJTF is doing and where we are going).

It was suggested that we host a series of community events that present to various stakeholders several potential recommendations or actionable items. This would allow community members to provide feedback and future directions about final recommendations to the Champaign County Board. We agreed that each subcommittee should submit a list of potential actions no later than May 1, 2017.

Gerry Walter and Ryan Hughes raised concerns about the format of the events. We agreed to revisit the format at our next subcommittee meeting.

Carolyn Randolph volunteered to develop and distribute a tentative action plan detailing each task and/or phase decided upon by the subcommittee.

Juvenile Justice Subcommittee

Members Present: Maryam Ar-Raheem, Sara Balgoyen, Ellyn Dee

Data Discussion:

The Committee outlined the data we're going to collect:

- Champaign Schools SRO data: Sara
- Urbana Schools SRO data: Maryham
- Rantoul Schools SRO data:

Data looking for:

- # of arrests
- Race

- Gender
- Type of arrest
- Outcome (diversion, detention, probation)

Other SRO info we want:

- Are there SRO's in the surrounding communities' schools? (i.e. St. Joseph, Mahomet, etc)
- Process for appointing or hiring SRO's
- Decision making process for including SRO's in incidents
- National level data
- What is the teaching curriculum?

Detention data - Sara

Police/arrest data