

City of Richmond - Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force
Meeting held via Zoom: https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=38

MINUTES*
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021, 5:30 PM

**video recording and meeting transcript available*

I. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL - AGENDA REVIEW

Meeting called to order by Johann Fragd at 5:33 P.M.

PRESENT: M. Cantú, E. Chacon, L. Chacon, D. Gosney, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, A. Lee, L. Mangels, M. Njissang, J. Schlemmer, D. Small, A. Soto, B. Therriault, D. Tucker, T. Walker, L. Whitmore, B.K. Williams

ABSENT: D. Joseph, J. Lee, S. Leslie, N. Syon

II. MEETING PROCEDURES

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no emailed public comments and three (3) speakers.

1. Emily Ross commented on hearing about rape and comments about people's appearance in the meetings and to be mindful of safety.
2. Helene Burks commented that this is a deep issue and it shows what the community prioritizes and how to help our most vulnerable. There must be a shift in our mindset towards greater healing.
3. Eli Moore has participated in some community meetings and has previous experience in reentry work. There is a need for a fundamental systems change for a racially-just society. As a white person who had the privilege of second chances and given restorative work, everyone deserves that type of approach.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

1. A staff report was provided by Johann Fragd regarding a typo on the agenda pointed out by D. Small.
2. Michelle Milam mentioned that on Monday, April 19, 2021, a Community Hate Crime Forum is taking place. She asked Task Force members to reach out to her if they are interested in receiving more information.

V. PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, & ACTION ITEMS

1. DISCUSS Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force term limit extension - Board Member(s)

Initial comments by E. Chacon were made to extend the term limit of the Task Force and recommends that the Task Force is extended and co-chair nominations be implemented. R. Joseph added that the Task Force should be changed to a commission instead. Discussion continued.

A motion was made by J. Schlemmer that the recommendations from the Task Force as a whole and subcommittees be forwarded to the City Council and that recommendations that they agree require more work be forwarded to the appropriate standing commissions that are already in place. The motion died due to a lack of a second.

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A motion was made to table Agenda Item V-1 until June to have enough time to put forth more recommendations in place to ensure the Task Force is reaching its goals by B. Therriault; seconded by A. Soto; approved by the following vote:

Ayes: M. Cantú, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, A. Lee, L. Mangels, M. Njissang, A. Soto, B. Therriault, T. Walker, L. Whitmore, B.K. Williams

Noes: D. Gosney, D. Small

Abstain: E. Chacon, L. Chacon, J. Schlemmer

Absent: D. Joseph, J. Lee, S. Leslie, N. Syon, D. Tucker

Public Comment: There were no public speakers for this item.

2. Sub-Group Committee Reports and Recommendation Discussions

A motion was made to move Agenda Item 2-A to 2-D for the presentations, discussions, and actions item section to be discussed after hearing all other subgroup proposals by A. Soto; seconded by L. Chacon; approved by the following vote:

Ayes: M. Cantú, E. Chacon, L. Chacon, D. Gosney, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, A. Lee, L. Mangels, M. Njissang, J. Schlemmer, A. Soto, T. Walker, L. Whitmore,

Noes: B. Therriault

Abstain: D. Small, B.K. Williams

Absent: D. Joseph, J. Lee, S. Leslie, N. Syon, D. Tucker

a) Accountability as Safety

An overview of the subgroup's [recommendation](#) was provided by subgroup member L. Whitmore regarding the goals of the subgroup. Subgroup members also include B. Therriault, J. Lee, J. Schlemmer, L. Mangels, R. Joseph, and T. Walker. Goals of the subgroup include: 1) improving the training of all Richmond police officers by a) more hands-on/defensive tactics training and b) improved tracking mechanisms for reimbursable monies and 2) improving quality of 911 Communication System by a) City Council supporting AB988/Miles Hall Lifeline Act and b) hiring more dispatch operators to fill vacancies and c) separating police emergency and non-police response calls.

Public Comment:

There were six (6) speakers.

1. Carole Yu-Johnson agrees with previous comments made by D. Small and is in support of AB988.
2. Helene Burks comments that a different line for mental health response is needed. She is looking into mental health crisis lines information.
3. Sara Cantor provided context on AB988. Counties will provide service to these lines and not provide additional support so it is not the save-all and be-all.
4. Robin D. Lopez commented that the additional training is enacting more violence and it needs to be more refined and properly addressed. It sounds like trying to put more people in harm's way. It needs to connect more with racial and social justice.
5. Eli Moore commented that he is confused and finds these recommendations would move more money to the RPD and would need to instead reduce policing. He highlighted what happened in Minneapolis with their Police Department as an example.
6. Tawn Hall spoke about AB988 and the benefits of that bill. It brings mental health experts to these lines and will fund these call centers.

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b) Health & Safety

An overview was provided by subgroup member L. Chacon on public safety initiatives including homeless and unhoused interventions with support from SOS! Richmond as a proposed [recommendation](#). M. Njissang provided an overview on a gun violence prevention and intervention [recommendation](#) to increase ONS funding. K. Kilian-Lobos provided an overview on a [recommendation](#) and [budget](#) overview to pilot a Community Crisis Response program. Discussion ensued.

Public Comment:

There were six (6) speakers.

1. Carole Yu-Johnson asked a question regarding a previous Safe RV project City of Richmond librarians and folks who are in proximity to the site and how safety may be addressed more humanely.
2. Helene Burks has been an educator for 10 years now. She commented on her experience of students losing their lives to gun violence. She added that her experiences with the mobile crisis centers have not been helpful and would need more certification that AB 988 would better support that.
3. Yenny Garcia commented on policing black and brown lives and highlighted that this program would be approved by her and would support this proposal.
4. Sara Cantor underscored Helen Burks' comments on the county's mental crisis line availability and that Richmond needs to take charge in mental health.
5. Jamie Bean is heartened by the commitment of the Task Force and that it will help people feel safer. He also mentioned that a public safety system where only some people feel safe is a broken system.
6. Denny Khamphanthong highlighted his childhood experience with police. He likes the idea of having older folks giving guidance to keep each other safe and how it rolls into these proposals.

c) Community Based Solutions

An overview of recommendations was provided by subgroup member E. Chacon. These [recommendations](#) are 1) a YouthWORKS 2021 proposal to serve up to 1,000 youth by expanding youth employment opportunities and 2) implementing new police practices that include written consent for traffic stop vehicle searches, banning pretextual stops, and a moratorium on traffic fees and fines until March 2022. Discussion ensued.

Public Comment:

There were six (6) speakers.

1. Frank Ortiz commented on including undocumented/ DACA youth in the proposal and more career development.
2. Helene Burks is in awe of being able to offer these proposals to youth. The need is amiss. It is needed at Kennedy High School. It gives a good message of feeling valued for youth, saves lives, and is needed now.
3. Sara Cantor commented that this shows the City of Richmond wants to invest in youth. She also added she wanted a racial breakdown of Police and 911 data as well.
4. Denny Khamphanthong highlighted his experience with API youth groups. He works as a community organizer doing summer projects in canvassing and phone banking and students gain skill sets. He supports this proposal.
5. Lavonia Bonobo commented that we need these resources in the community. It can help youth economically and can help them stay out of trouble.
6. Francisco Salas Tamayo supports this proposal. There is \$65 million available a year to supply teachers or fix potholes. It is a different approach to policing and can help.

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d) Smart Budget & Resource Allocations

An overview of the subgroup's [recommendation](#) was provided by subgroup member A. Soto on a Richmond Police Department budget analysis and reallocation proposal. There is a recommendation to have a proposed amount of RPD funds roughly estimated at \$10.2 million to be reallocated to other programs such as ONS, RichmondWORKS Summer Youth Program, SOS Street Teams, SOS Shower Power, and the SOS Transitional Village. Discussion ensued.

Public Comment:

There were nine (9) speakers.

1. Sadie Egan commented on not being afraid of what would happen if the budget was reduced. It is a paradigm shift.
2. Emily Ross wants to address the root causes of crime. She mentioned that she cannot support the recommendations from the other groups and unilaterally oppose them being funded from the Richmond Police Department.
3. Eli Moore commented that we are four decades in on mass incarceration and over policing. It won't be easy and it will be experimental. Mass incarceration is an experiment and it is devastating. We need to rebuild community systems that are sustainable.
4. Helene Burks commented that having accurate access to budget information is difficult but needed to do the work. She highlighted her experience with accessing school data. She is asking RPD to provide more detailed data.
5. Lavonia Bonobo highlighted a need for resources in the community. The police do not make her feel safe as a young, Black woman and would prefer not to call them for situations. She is in support of the proposal.
6. Stephanie Diaz highlighted that the RPD gets 40% of the City's general budget. She also mentioned that most of the police force do not live in Richmond and cannot understand what the community needs.
7. Jamie McBean commented that public safety does not have to be police-centric. He mentioned the RPD's community policing practices but suggested there are times when they are needed and when they are not.
8. Charles Woodfork highlighted the City of Richmond is not the best in managing its own facilities and money. They are feeding in the system of mass incarceration by not investing in these types of programs mentioned in the proposal.
9. Francisco Salas Tamayo reiterated the point of these programs in that they will reduce the presence of police. It has resulted in the loss of black and brown lives and oppresses people of color. He wants to reinvest in our community.

VI. ACTION ITEM RECAP

No recap was made.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made at 7:26 P.M. to extend the meeting by 30 minutes by R. Joseph; seconded by T. Walker; approved by the following vote:

Ayes: M. Cantú, E. Chacon, L. Chacon, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, A. Lee, M. Njissang, J. Schlemmer, D. Small, A. Soto, T. Walker, B.K. Williams

Noes: D. Gosney, B. Therriault, D. Tucker, L. Whitmore

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Abstain: L. Mangels

Absent: D. Joseph, J. Lee, S. Leslie, N. Syon

A motion was made at 7:50 P.M. to extend the meeting until all the presentations are completed by E. Chacon; seconded by M. Njissang; approved by the following vote:

Ayes: M. Cantú, E. Chacon, L. Chacon, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, A. Lee, M. Njissang, D. Small, A. Soto, T. Walker, B.K. Williams

Noes: D. Gosney, J. Schlemmer, B. Therriault, L. Whitmore

Abstain: L. Mangels, D. Tucker

Absent: D. Joseph, J. Lee, S. Leslie, N. Syon

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 P.M.