

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 28, 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 5:34 P.M.

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

ABSENT: D. Joseph, A. Soto

II. MEETING PROCEDURES

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were six (6) emailed public comments (ATTACHMENT A), and nine (9) speakers.

1. Sou PK emailed that the youth of Richmond fully support reinvesting in our communities.
2. Luna Marie Keo emailed that reallocating from the Richmond Police Department is what our community needs. She noted a motion by Mayor Tom Butt from June 2020 to defund the RPD and asked that those who have come to this meeting have that same energy when it comes to investing in our youth and our communities.
3. Senia Algrya emailed about her childhood experiences and highlighted how Richmond has neglected her siblings and friends. She noted a positive experience with YouthWORKS and supports reinvesting more money for 1,000 youth included in the Task Force's proposal.
4. Lizeth Rodriguez emailed asking that City Council redistribute the funds from the police and invest in our youth and community. She believes that our youth have so much potential but when they are not given the appropriate resources to flourish they cannot grow to their fullest potential. She noted it is an issue since it is the same institute that is causing our youth to be harassed and incarcerated.
5. Katrinka Ruk emailed that further downsizing an already depleted police department is not the answer. She highlighted some information from the Mayor's e-newsletter and wrote that this proposal would leave fewer than 100 officers. She does not agree that there has been sufficient outreach, education and involvement of all citizens of Richmond and highlighted some suggestions.
6. Ahmad Anderson noted that Richmond needs more community engagement, a side-by-side analysis of demographics, and headcount for the budget and safety for the community. He suggests scaling it to a pilot platform.
7. Jan Mignone commented on how innovative these projects for youth are and suggested that the Task Force look at the Department of Children and Youth for these proposals due to the funds available. She does not want Richmond to look like Oakland.
8. Carla Perez agreed with Ahmad Anderson that the RPD is understaffed. She is concerned that calls for services will be further impacted. Richmond needs more funding, not less.
9. Annie Pennell supports the proposals and no longer feels comfortable using RPD putting her black and brown friends at risk. She encourages folks to look beyond the RPD that adds services for the right calls.
10. David K. was wondering if the proposals were written down in a comprehensive report with expected outcomes, cost and benefits, and that sort of information.

City of Richmond - Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force

Meeting held via Zoom: https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=38

11. Cheryl Mayer noted a previous experience being shot at by RPD in the Iron Triangle and is not in favor of defunding the police. She supports these agencies to partner with the police department, as it has changed in the past few years. She is concerned that it is a radical, dramatic change that will not work.
12. Sarah Pendleton Knoll supports these proposals and finds good programs are not capturing the impact of these as alternatives to policing. She also supports the Community Crisis Response Program proposal.
13. Francisco Andres Salas Tamayo supports the work and proposals of the Task Force and asked if people knew about the school-to-prison pipeline and how they profit off people of color. He shared a poem inspired by the proposals.
14. Philip Mehas is supportive of the community policing but not the system and noted the Mayor's e-forum and how only once a gun fire was shot--it indicates how many calls do not require the police with a firearm. He noted there are other types of people who can be sent instead of a police officer.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

1. Johann Fragd updated the Task Force on voting and motion procedures. She also noted an email that will be sent out to Task Force members regarding rosters and meeting information confirmation.
2. Jim Nantell noted the addition of Agenda Item V-4 for any updates and/or changes made by subgroups. He also noted Agenda Item V-3 does not have to be addressed tonight.

V. PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, & ACTION ITEMS

1. **RECEIVE and CONSIDER any updated Recommendations from Accountability as Safety subcommittee of the Task Force.**

Subcommittee members are R. Joseph, J. Lee, L. Mangels, J. Schlemmer, B. Therriault, T. Walker, L. Whitmore. Subcommittee member B. Therriault updated the Task Force on their [recommendation proposals](#). Discussion ensued.

Public Comment:

There were seven (7) speakers

1. Floy Andrews urges the Task Force to move as quickly as possible considering the state of our country. Changes need to be made for policing. She urges the Task Force to bring forward proposals that are ready now and bring the other ones when they are ready.
2. Harrison Blatt noted comments from Mayor Butt from his e-forum and his disconcert for the proposals. He highlighted T. Walker positively and her work. He also urged the white men on this council to check their privilege and wants the Mayor to resign immediately.
3. Marena Brown is concerned about \$10 million being a lot of money taken from the RPD. She urges the Task Force to look at another model that is inclusive of the residents, the non-profits agencies, and the Police Department as a whole. She is concerned about armed mental health situations.
4. Carla Perez agrees with Marena Brown to work with the police instead of taking money away from them. There needs to be more outreach from the Task Force in the community. She finds the police department has done a great job but has a long way to go. She is concerned about who will manage the community crisis center.
5. Yenny Garcia suggested that more police do not mean more safety. She noted other cities have less police and more safety. She wants folks to get involved in the process and believes this is the best process for its citizens.

City of Richmond - Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force

Meeting held via Zoom: https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=38

6. Cheryl Mayer pointed out a need for community training in addition to police training. She believes that the community needs to learn how to interact with the proposed system. She urges the Task Force partner with community leaders, such as herself.
7. Cary Contreras imagines something different for our kids and believes that is what is happening. If you invest in the youth, things can change and give youth opportunities that do not exist right now. She has spoken with M. Cantú and believes youth can gain.

A motion was made to vote on the two recommendations, Goal #3 and Goal #5 that were submitted by the Accountability as Safety subcommittee by L. Whitmore; seconded by J. Schlemmer; the motion failed by the following vote:

Ayes: D. Gosney, J. Lee, J. Schlemmer, B. Therriault, D. Tucker, T. Walker, L. Whitmore

Noes: H. Burks, M. Cantú, E. Chacon, A. Lee, M. Njissang, D. Small,

Abstain: L. Chacon, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, L. Mangels,

Absent: D. Joseph, A. Soto, B.K. Williams

2. RECEIVE and PROVIDE STAFF DIRECTION regarding a report from Jim Nantell, Interim CSD Director, relative to best date options for presenting recommendations to the Richmond City Council.

Jim Nantell provided an update on presenting the Task Force's proposals to the City Council during a special meeting and their scheduling and backlogging issues. Discussion ensued.

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS

No member comments were made.

VII. ACTION ITEM RECAP

No action item recap was made.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

ATTACHMENT A

From: Laura Thomas <laurakthomas@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 1:58 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: Public Comments-Agenda Item 5

My name is Laura Thomas, a Richmond resident and homeowner for over 10 years. I support Richmond Re-imagining Public Safety and their proposal to re-allocate \$10 million from the RPD budget in order to fund crucial community services.

I believe the scope of RPD's responsibilities is too broad. As someone who suffers from mania as a result of my Bi-polar disorder I have been 5150'd by RPD three times.

I believe my privilege combined with RPD's good intentions have combined in a positive outcome for me overall. I also believe my situation would be better handled by mental health care providers rather than officers and handcuffs.

My mania has never resulted in suicidal or homicidal ideations and the fear and trauma I have sustained as a mentally ill patient in need of care and support in those challenging times is not because RPD did anything wrong, it's because they are not the people who should be receiving/answering the call when my mania takes hold. I respect and appreciate RPD's mission to provide community policing but no amount of community focused police work can replace the need for mental health care workers.

I believe RPD can better serve and protect if we significantly lighten the load of what they are expected to do. This can only happen if we divest funding of RPD and fund critical community services.

Thank you for your consideration,
Laura Thomas

--

Join the [Richmond Shoreline Alliance](#) in the fight for environmental justice.

From: Katrinka Ruk <kpruk@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Recreation
Cc: Johann Fragd; Guadalupe Morales; Stephanie Ny; Tom Butt - external; Laura Snideman
Subject: Public Comments - 04/28/21 Reimagining public Safety Community Task Force
Attachments: 04.28.21 ReimaginingPublicSafety.docx

COUNCIL OF INDUSTRIES

P.O. BOX 70088, PT. RICHMOND, CA 94807

(510)215-9325

501(C)(6) FED ID# 94-0672760

April 28, 2021

/email to: recreation@ci.richmond.ca.us/

To: Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force

Re: III. Public Comment

On behalf of the Council of Business and Industries (COI) we are submitting these comments for your review. We want to thank the committee for the time spent on issues that impact our neighbor and businesses' health and safety.

We want to reiterate the good work that the Office of Neighborhood Safety and SOS!Richmond are doing in the community in response to the problems of homelessness and mental health. Whereas we support increasing the resources available to help those populations, we oppose taking resources from the Richmond Police Department.

The needs for basic crime prevention, detection and enforcement are not lower, and our police department does not have excess resources to attend to those needs. We fear that the loss of 35 police officers will create an open environment to increase crimes – against our neighbors, businesses and even against those homeless to which the police resources were diverted.

Further downsizing an already depleted police department is not the answer. According to Mayor Butt's April 28th e-newsletter of the City's 157 sworn officers only 124 patrol and respond to calls for service due to position vacancies, light duty and administrative leave. This proposal would slash the RPD budget even further and take another 35 officers off the streets, leaving fewer than 100.

While we welcome discussion and debate of reasonable ideas, we do not agree that there has been sufficient outreach, education and involvement of all citizens of Richmond.

We suggest the following: (1) a more aggressive outreach to the community including meetings with the Neighborhood Councils, RNCC, community groups and businesses to determine their concerns and hear their recommendations; (2) assess the additional monies that the City is slated to receive, and, (3) establish a phase in pilot program(s) to address these social concerns based on input from the community at large.

There are various resources that the City will benefit from over the next several years. First is the federal funding of \$20.8M over the next 2 years. Secondly, SOS!Richmond is slated to receive \$3M to implement programs to transition the houseless population into other programs and temporary housing. We have yet to determine how this funding will be distributed and the overall success once the programs have been implemented.

The 04/21/21 Budget Analysis presents a great deal of information; however, it also raises some questions:

- (1) Is the Richmond Police Department in agreement with the statistics that are quoted in this report, and the associated assumptions?
- (2) Per Capita Spending – The City of Richmond recruits its force from local cities; therefore, wages need to be competitive with those local cities. Why not include Oakland and Martinez in the comparison? According to Chief French, there is a turnover of personnel going to cities which pay higher wages.
- (3) 2019 RPD Arrests- 15.2% for violent crimes, the arrests for other crimes could be a result of good policing policies to prevent escalation to a violent act. Has this been studied?
- (4) Incidents Responded to by Community Crisis Response Program – include mental patient, welfare check and drunk in public, etc. What other cities have implemented this procedure? How successful are they? Whereas some of these incidents might require more of an administrative role (ie. missing person, missing juvenile) others could easily escalate to a situation requiring police support (ie. suspicious vehicle or unwanted person). Therefore, it would be imperative to examine what successful programs have been implemented in other similar cities.
- (5) Proposed investments of Funds – how were these budget increases determined? What are the specific programs that will be added? What studies at other cities support adding these programs to reduce crime rates? What are the criteria benchmarks for success? Have grants been investigated to provide financial support of additional programs?
- (6) Community Crisis Responses Program proposal – references programs in Oakland and Sacramento. What services do these programs provide? How long have the cities had these programs? How do they measure success?

This report delves into a great deal of recommendations. To ensure proper time to assess the success of programs, focus should be on establishing a few pilot programs and monitoring outcomes. Other similar cities' successful programs should be reviewed as to their applicability to Richmond, for example, adding a mental health professional to assist in mental health calls to determine if this intervention would decrease escalation.

Taking away 35 sworn officers is not the way to go. In fact, in Oakland they just funded their police department another \$10M since the murder rate tripled. Once it can be determined that the pilot program(s) is effective in reducing crime then a larger implementation can be considered and funding sources determined.

Overall, we urge you to hold public hearings and offer more information, education and ability for citizens to weigh in before you take such a radical approach that will affect the entire city.

Katrinka Ruk, Executive Director

Katrinka Ruk
Executive Director
Council of Business & Industries
510)260-4820 cell
www.councilofindustries.com

From: Lizeth Rodriguez <lizeth.rodriguez@sjsu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 2:51 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: Public comment-reimagine Richmond

Dear city council members,

I am a community member of Richmond, CA and I am asking that city council redistribute the funds from the police and invest in our youth and community. As a therapist, I believe that our youth have so much potential but when they are not given the appropriate resources to flourish they cannot grow to their fullest potential. Our youth are the future so why not create a variety of resources and programs in the community to serve them. When a system like the police is taking away the funds of the community, it is an issue since it is the same institute that is causing our youth to be harassed and incarcerated. I ask that city council take my statement into consideration for today's meeting. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Lizeth

From: senia alegrya <seniaaasunshine@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 2:57 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: public comments agenda item 5

i got siblings, friends who grew up in Richmond and were misguided as a youth. who struggled and resorted to stealing to dealing drugs.who have been incarcerated and have had that on their records for decades. who had to resort to these things because they were poor, because their schools neglected them. because the city of richmond neglected them. that all could have been prevented. these are good people who deserved a chance in life

i wish more than anything they had the types of opportunities and programs like YOUTHWORKS that we have now. i had a wonderful experience with YOUTHWORKS where i got my first job and was able to provide for my family. i believe taking care of our youth at a young age is what will prevent crime. not policing. im so happy that these programs exist, and that we have this opportunity to defund rpd and reinvest more money to **ONE THOUSAND YOUTH**. thank you all so much for considering us young folks in these proposals. we are always left out of the conversation, but its our future that we're working to improve.

best,

-senia :)

From: Luna Marie Keo <keolunamarie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 3:01 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: Public Comment

Reallocating funding from the Richmond Police Department is what our community needs! Thank you to the resilient task force people who have continued to push for progress for our community. It's wonderful to see that people still care about us!

It's also disheartening to see so much backlash from people such as Mayor Tom Butt, who once motioned to *defund* the Richmond Police Department in June of 2020. I ask that those who've come to this meeting to defend the police and talk about safety keep that same energy when it comes to investing in our youth and our communities. Thank you!

Luna K.M.

From: Sou PK <senhvpk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 3:03 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT

THE YOUTH OF RICHMOND FULLY SUPPORT REINVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES! REINVEST IN OUR FUTURES! THANK YOU

From: Patricia Tostenson <jptostenson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 4:48 PM
To: Recreation
Subject: Re AGENDA ITEM 5 ON APRIL 28 MEETING

I would like to state my opposition to reducing the Richmond Police force. I believe we need to have the current number or more officers to handle the needs of our community. Thank you, Patricia Tostenson, 1305 Sanderling Island, Richmond, CA 94801