

**City of Richmond – Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force**  
Meeting held in Person: Bermuda Room, Richmond Memorial Auditorium  
403 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804

**Minutes\***  
**Wednesday, April 24, 2024, 5:30 P.M.**

*\*video recording and meeting transcript available*

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Deborah Small called the regular meeting to order at 5:41 P.M.

**B. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: H. Burks\*, M. Gliksohn, D. Gosney, A. Lee, J. Pursell, B. Therriault, T. Walker,  
L. Whitmore and Chair D. Small

\*Arrived after Roll Call

EXCUSED: L. Murray, K. Kilian-Lobos, M. Njissang and B.K. Williams

ABSENT: R. Joseph and J. Schlemmer

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager-Community Services Director (Staff Liaison to the Task Force) LaShonda White; Assistant Administrative Analyst Guadalupe Morales; Associate Administrative Analyst Stephanie Ny; YouthWORKS Program Manager Bouakhay Phongboupha and City Attorney Alison Flowers

**C. AGENDA REVIEW AND ADOPTION**

Taskforce Member Whitmore recommended that the discussion of early sunseting with respect to Item 4 on the agenda be moved up earlier in the meeting to consider where to stop before adding on new proposals and new programs that would require more involvement and more commitment, potentially beyond what the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force wanted to do.

Chair Small noted that the Task Force was set to sunset on June 30, 2024. The Task Force moved Item 4 up on the agenda as Item 2, as requested.

**D. MEETING PROCEDURES**

Assistant Administrative Analyst Guadalupe Morales, staff to the Task Force, identified the meeting procedures and the public's ability to speak during the meeting. She announced that anyone may make an oral comment even if a written comment had previously been submitted; however, each speaker may raise their hand only once to make one oral public comment per each agenda item. She added that an announcement would identify the time to make public comment for each item.

**E. MINUTES APPROVAL**

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## 1. APPROVE the Minutes of the March 27, 2024 Meeting of the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force

Motion by Taskforce Member Gliksohn, seconded by Taskforce Member Whitmore to adopt the minutes of the March 27, 2024 meeting, as submitted, carried by the following Roll Call vote:

AYES: M. Gliksohn, D. Gosney, A. Lee, J. Pursell, B. Therriault, T. Walker,  
L. Whitmore and Chair D. Small  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: H. Burks, R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, L. Murray, M. Njissang, J. Schlemmer  
and B.K. Williams

## F. CITY STAFF REPORTS

Deputy City Manager-Community Services Director LaShonda White, Staff Liaison to the Task Force, reported on a number of upcoming events. She announced that the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) would hold a meeting on April 25 at 6:00 P.M. at Richmond High School, 1250 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, to share information and get input on the modernization of Kennedy High and Richmond High schools. There would be a Job Fair at the Oakland Coliseum on April 25; a City of Richmond Small Business Fair on April 28; National Small Business Week would be celebrated from April 28 to May 3; and Park Prescription Day at Nicholl Park on April 27. The Cinco de Mayo Parade would be held on May 4 starting at the Civic Center in Richmond to St. Paul Church in San Pablo from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., and on May 5, the Cinco de Mayo Festival would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. She added that every week the City Manager sent out a Weekly Report of the various activities happening in the community.

Associate Administrative Analyst Stephanie Ny expanded on Park Prescription Day at Nicholl Park from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. on April 27, with free Zumba classes, make your own sugar scrub in partnership with White Rabbit Remedies and Yes, Nature to Neighborhoods Community Garden, and a new park mural would be painted. In addition, those interested would be able to learn hands only CPR in collaboration with the American Red Cross. Free lunch would also be served.

Deputy City Manager White added that a survey for the Richmond Fund for Children and Youth was currently out. She explained that years ago, through Measures E and K, the City had to allocate up to 3 percent of the General Fund to support services provided to young people (up to 24 years old) and their families through a non-profit or government organization. The survey, a community needs assessment, was intended to learn the needs of young people and their families. She encouraged everyone to participate in the survey given that would determine the priority areas to be funded. She added that through April 29, residents could vote for the Best of Richmond, a collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Richmond.

## G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Taskforce Member Whitmore also identified upcoming events and reported there would be a parade and festival at Nicholl Park on June 22 for Juneteenth; the League of Women Voters would have their annual meeting and luncheon at Hana Gardens in El Cerrito on April 27 from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.; and 100 Black Men of the Bay Area would hold their Expo at Laney College on May 18 from 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., with a long line of businesses to talk to candidates and offer information about what was happening in the Bay Area.

Taskforce Member Burks announced that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School would hold a Career Day on May 23, and through a grant from the City of Richmond a mural of Dr. King would be installed on the side of the school. A member of the King family was expected to be present for the dedication, which would coincide with the Sixth Grade Promotion on June 3.

Taskforce Member Pursell announced that Richmond Rainbow Pride would be having its Pride event on June 2 in the Civic Center at noon, with entertainment and booths. Any organization that wanted to represent themselves at the Pride were encouraged to do so.

**H. PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND ACTION ITEMS**

**1. RECEIVE a Presentation on Current Aquatics Programs and DISCUSS Proposal to Create Every Kid to Swim Program for Richmond**

Paula Cooper-Tipton, Aquatics Coordinator for the City of Richmond, overseeing the two swimming pools for the City, spoke to the Municipal Natatorium called the Richmond Plunge in Point Richmond built in 1926, which had been closed in the 1990s and after fundraising and repair had reopened in 2010. That pool had nine deep lanes and five shallow lanes for lap swimming, and an extended shallow area. The Richmond Swim Center, also called the Kennedy Pool, was situated on the Kennedy High School Campus, and had also been remodeled in 2015. It had six deep lanes and two shallow lanes. The primary use was for lap swimming and individual water walking and exercise, with classes offered for water fitness four mornings a week two days at each of the pools.

Ms. Cooper-Tipton described the various programs offered by the City including the “little splashes,” swim lessons for children and adults with varying schedules essentially year-round; and others such as “water comfort,” a specialized program for adults who had a fear of water; recreation swim; camps that had their own sessions four days a week during the summer; Tots Splash, Junior Lap Swim, individual water walking and individual water exercise and Aqua Zumba. a high energy, musical session. Long-term rentals accommodated such programs as Richmond Swims, which had been instrumental in raising money to improve the Plunge, a Master team, a youth swim team, and a kayak rental that offered kayak safety classes. Special events were also offered such as the floating pumpkin patch and an inaugural floating egg hunt this year.

Ms. Cooper-Tipton explained that Aquatics Staff was comprised of lifeguards, aquatic instructors, office/clerk cashiers, senior lifeguards and instructors who taught lessons and were also lifeguards. She described the constant practicing and training required for lifeguards to maintain their skills.

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Ms. Cooper-Tipton identified some of the challenges for the aquatics department as staffing availability since there were young staff, many working for the first time who needed to be matched with the more experienced and tested lifeguards. Safety was a critical concern and there were closures at times when there was inadequate staffing available to keep the pools open. She added that for community needs, swimming lessons were critical and classes filled within 5 to 10 minutes of opening registration, a year-round concern. A lifeguard boot camp class had been started for those who were interested in being lifeguards but could not pass the prerequisite skills just to enter the lifeguard class, and who would be trained to be able to pass the test. This was being done in collaboration with the Employment and Training Department and the lifeguards could be paid as youth workers. There was also the lifeguard course itself.

Taskforce Member Gosney offered some background to the original Kennedy Pool, which was an outdoor pool, and the newer pool with the retractable roof.

Taskforce Member Lee reported that he had asked for the item to be on the agenda. As a member of the Richmond Plunge Masters, he emphasized the need to encourage every kid to learn how to swim, particularly Black children. He encouraged the Every Kid To Swim program to allow every kid to learn how to swim. He added that prior to the 1930s, Black children were not allowed to use the Richmond Plunge. He supported a robust aquatic program for every kid, asked what that might look like, and offered to help in any way he could.

Ms. Cooper-Tilton suggested that would involve partnering with Richmond Swims and she encouraged all Richmond Swims Masters to commit to a certain number of hours per month and use one of the sessions for training. To encourage volunteers, she suggested a stipend might be useful to make it more enticing. She suggested that people could be recruited in the knowledge that it might take more time for some to learn to swim than others.

Taskforce Member Whitmore urged that the information just presented be given to all the schools, to neighborhoods and to churches to advise of what was being offered at the swim centers. She asked if both centers were offering the same programs and whether both sites were fully staffed.

Ms. Cooper-Tilton stated that beyond including the information in the Activity Guide that was mailed out to residents and emailed to participants, the information did not go out directly to schools or churches. She stated that aquatics staff worked back and forth at both sites, both pools were open, but the schedules were not exactly the same. The Plunge had more usable lanes that could serve more people. Most programs offered were offered at both pools.

Taskforce Member Gliksohn urged a greater collaboration with swimming and the Community Services Division to make the opportunity to learn to swim available to more members of the community.

Taskforce Member Burks, the former Assistant Principal of Kennedy High School from 2017 to 2022, explained why Kennedy High School could not use the pool.

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Taskforce Member Burks explained that WCCUSD aquatics staff could not staff the pool since the pool was a City of Richmond pool. She commented that certification for physical education (PE) teachers did not require how to instruct swimming, and she noted that most of the students at the school did not know how to swim. She suggested that having lessons at the Kennedy Pool would be a massive jump start. She added that many families did not have access to Wi-Fi or technology at home to be able to sign up for swim classes. She recommended using the hubs that already existed to have those connections, such as at schools. She added that each summer parents were given information for how to sign up for programs but she had been unaware of the aquatic's programs at Kennedy, or at the Plunge. She recommended that copies of Activity Guides be made available at the front offices at the schools that could be handed to students.

Taskforce Member Gliksohn acknowledged that drowning was a common situation. He had been unaware of the Richmond Swim Center until recently. He recognized that the inability to swim was a serious public safety concern and he asked if there were ways for citizens to become teachers or swim instructors without having to be certified.

Ms. Cooper-Tilton noted there were financial barriers to being able to pay for swim lessons in that there was no financial assistance for swimming lessons, the cost of a swim suit and towels could be prohibitive to some, and while the Richmond pools were flexible, there were other pools that were very strict with respect to the type of swim attire allowed. She emphasized that Richmond did not have the staff to teach the kids and adults who wanted to come in. She clarified that a teaching credential was not required but a certification was required to be a water-safety instructor or a certified lifeguard. She suggested there were also union issues where someone could not come in and teach a class that would replace a union job. For a program that was not an ongoing thing she wanted to explore the option of a potential collaboration with Richmond Swims where the City would offer space and assistance with training.

Taskforce Member Gosney commented that the City should provide towels if there was a City program. He also offered more background to the Kennedy Pool.

Deputy City Manager White noted her understanding that to collaborate with the WCCUSD there had to be electronic flyers through ParentSquare and she sought input on how to proceed if there was a better way. She stated the City of Richmond wanted to share more information about all its services and suggested a way to do that would be to get in front of parents and teachers. She noted, for instance that the City had been invited to the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Parents as Partners Conference where the City's great resources could be shared with the community.

Taskforce Member Walker referred to the Master Fee Schedule and noted that while most programs were not free, she asked if they were affordable and whether there was a fee waiver in place based on income. She sought some solutions to the challenges related to staff, communications and fees.

Ms. Cooper-Tilton identified a 25 percent difference in fees for residents versus non-residents, stated that drop-in fees had been increased post-COVID where drop-ins had gone from \$5 to \$7, although fees for those 55 and older had not been increased.

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Deputy City Manager White advised that the Master Fee Schedule was to be updated every year, generally by Consumer Price Index (CPI) across the board. She explained that currently there was a Master Fee Schedule update just for recreation fees where the cost to provide the service would be updated and the City Council would then determine how much of a subsidy it wanted to include. She noted there was a fee waiver for facilities but she did not know if there was a fee waiver for programs.

Chair Small commented that being from New York City, most kids did not learn how to swim and while there were public pools they were not necessarily safe spaces for girls, and learning to swim was not an available opportunity and was not considered a regular part of PE. Coming to California, she had been surprised to find that swimming was a regular part of PE. Neither she nor her son had learned how to swim but she had taken her grandson to classes when he was young. She agreed with the need to reimagine reshaping a culture in which children of color believed that swimming and water activities were also for them and not just for others, in that due to climate change being able to swim was not just something that might be good to know, it actually could be life and death for the majority of people. As such, she wanted to have a conversation from the space of public health and public safety that swimming was essential in the same way of teaching CPR, and how the City could support envisioning that for the future.

Chair Small supported the creation of an ongoing Every Kid to Swim Program for Richmond, where every child who attended a Richmond public school would have the opportunity to learn how to swim and that adequate resources should be provided for that which may include the construction of a new outdoor swim facility. It was her hope that the Task Force would make a recommendation to the City Council to develop the Every Kid to Swim Program for Richmond.

Chair Small asked about the demographics of those using the swim centers in the City of Richmond and urged that the Task Force be considered individually and collectively as a resource to create a service that would be reflective of the City as a whole. She referred to a recent film by Ava DuVernay (*Origin*) as an example of recognizing the inequities related to swimming and people of color and the need for equity and inclusion. She supported swim classes in both school and recreation locations.

Taskforce Member Whitmore recommended a schoolsite council (SSC) that involved teachers, parents, and students that could be used to distribute information about Richmond's swim programs.

Taskforce Member Walker clarified that attempts were being made to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Richmond and the WCCUSD. She urged that the staff notes of the discussion include the suggestions for stipends for volunteers to offer swim lessons and the need to communicate across all departments to identify what was available.

Deputy City Manager White clarified the scope of the MOU and explained that with the City's reorganization Recreation, Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS), Library, and Employment and Training divisions were under the umbrella of Community Services, and information sharing had become much easier as a result.

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Chair Small supported a survey to identify how many Richmond families had their children enrolled in swim classes in other cities and paid the difference in prices, which could offer a gauge of the level of demand and what Richmond might be able to learn from other cities. It would also be helpful to know what elements made those programs successful, especially in terms of their swim programs, particularly related to El Cerrito and Berkeley, which she understood offered scholarships for low-income families at progressive levels.

Taskforce Member Whitmore commented that she had to pass a basic swim test to be able to graduate from high school.

Ms. Cooper-Tilton left business cards and swim schedules for Task Force Members.

No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

The next item was taken out of agenda order.

**4. DISCUSS the Early Sunsetting of the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force and APPROVE Recommendations and Report to City Council**

Taskforce Member Whitmore, who had requested that the item be moved up on the agenda, explained that she had been unaware that the designated sunset for the Task Force was June 30, 2024.

Chair Small stated the only way the Task Force would not sunset on June 30, 2024 would be if there was a formal request to extend that deadline. The Task Force meetings had originated in October 2020. She noted the main reason for the last extension was to be able to implement a proposal.

Taskforce Member Walker did not know how the Task Force had measured its success so far and she was not fully aware of what recommendations had been fully implemented and funded, and how committed initially enthusiastic Task Force members were to the implementation of its recommendations based on the community that had advocated for them. She suggested if the Task Force had a full review and was confident that the implementation moving forward could be carried out by the City, there would be no need for an extension, but if there were some concerns that still needed to be addressed, she supported a request for an extension with the understanding that it had been difficult getting all Task Force members to attend meetings.

Chair Small explained that the January 2024 meeting was when the Task Force had requested reports from all the major proposal areas to allow a sense of where things stood with respect to implementation, which was why the budgets had been presented and discussed. Her sense at the end of that meeting was that members of the Task Force had felt pretty good about what had been accomplished to that point. The biggest question mark was the Community Crisis Response Program (CCRP), which might or might not be implemented within the timeline of the Task Force. She agreed that attendance had been a concern, which was why the size of the Task Force had been reduced to ensure a quorum.

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Taskforce Member Walker commented that she had been approached by someone who had been concerned that even with the presentations about implementation, the Task Force had not asked the appropriate questions. Specifically, she referred to the youth jobs program funded to give young people access to job entry opportunities and workforce development. One of the concerns raised had been around retention and she asked how many jobs had been retained by young people, kept by young people and committed to young people to be able to enter into that field with an official commitment for a job. She asked if those questions had been asked and answered and whether there was data to show whether or not the jobs were temporary or actual pathways to an actual job.

Deputy City Manager White stated that the Task Force had put forward four recommendations to ask for funding from the City Council, which had been approved, to implement programs. Those programs were to expand YouthWORKS, to expand the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS), outreach in support of the unhoused community, and to start a CCRP program, and all those things were happening. She explained that every year City staff, not the City Council, understood those were programs that needed to continue and City staff put the funds in the budget every year for City Council approval. Staff understood it was up to them to implement and continue the programs and asked the City Council for what it needed to continue the programs, all of which took various amounts of effort. Staff was allocating what was needed to do the work. She could get the statistics to respond to the question related to jobs.

Taskforce Member Walker commented that she had raised clear implementation and outcome questions that needed to be asked and clarified prior to the sunset of the Task Force.

It was requested that the next two meetings focus on sharing how staff was continuing some of the proposals as well as a clear statement as to how people could plug into any of those efforts, and there was a need for helpers to continue to move the work forward outside of the Task Force.

Chair Small noted that two other items on the agenda were things directed by the City Council for consideration in terms of the Social Host Ordinance and the traffic safety issue, which issues should be addressed.

Deputy City Manager White recommended that those two items be returned to the next meeting in addition to an item to ask the City Council for an extension of some duration to clear the issues and report out.

Motion by Taskforce Member Walker, seconded by Taskforce Member Burks to extend the Task Force meeting for five minutes, carried by the following Roll Call vote:

AYES:	H. Burks, M. Gliksohn, D. Gosney, A. Lee, J. Pursell, B. Therriault, T. Walker, L. Whitmore and Chair D. Small
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	R. Joseph, K. Kilian-Lobos, L. Murray, M. Njissang, J. Schlemmer and B.K. Williams

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Taskforce Member Walker asked staff to bring back a potential extension request in addition to the items not addressed at this time. She supported an extension given her desire for a report back.

Taskforce Member Whitmore did not see the need for an extension to review the four major asks for the City and noted the Task Force wanted a statement in writing to identify the status and continuation of those four items. The two items mentioned by the City Council for the Task Force to look at would not require an extension to discuss them.

Taskforce Member Pursell agreed with the need for a sunset report with answers to the questions in the sunset report to close out the status of the Task Force’s recommendations.

Alison Flowers from the City Attorney’s Office recommended for the next meeting a staff presentation on the four items and a discussion of an extension at that time.

Chair Small noted that traditionally a task force would write its own report when concluding its work. She stated information could be taken from staff at the next meeting and it would be up to the Task Force to generate a report as to what it had accomplished, which may also include the request for an extension of a smaller group, to be discussed at the next meeting.

Deputy City Manager White asked if there were very specific questions from Task Force Members those questions should be provided to staff to allow a preparation of that information for the next meeting.

The following items were continued to the next meeting.

2. **DISCUSS the Social Host Ordinance and APPROVE Recommendations to City Council**
3. **DISCUSS Non-Police Parking Enforcement and Related Traffic Safety Concerns Raised by Richmond City Councilmembers Gayle McLaughlin and Claudia Jimenez**
5. **DISCUSS Possible Alternative Names for the Community Crises Response Program and APPROVE Recommendations to City Council**
6. **DISCUSS Additional Budgetary Allocations for Task Force Proposals, Specifically YouthWORKS and the Community Crisis Response Program**

**I. ACTION ITEM RECAP**

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 P.M. to a regular meeting on Wednesday, May 22, 2024 in the Bermuda Room, Richmond Memorial Auditorium, 403 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA 94804.