



**Community Round Table Conversation Series ● Mental & Behavioral Health
Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force**

Thursday, January 21, 2021 ● 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Video Recording: https://richmond.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=38

Johann Fragd | City of Richmond, Community Services Department

- Introduction to the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force (RPSCTF)
- More information on RPSCTF, visit: <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4011/Reimagining-Public-Safety>

Kristin Kilian-Lobos & Deborah Small | RPSCTF Members, Co-Facilitators

- Introductions & Ground Rules

Sara Cantor & Shirley Leslie | Richmond Reimagining Public Safety Working Group (RRPSWG) Members

- Presentation
- More information on RRPSWG, visit: <https://www.instagram.com/reimaginerichmond/> or <https://www.facebook.com/Reimagine-Richmond-122256092952126>

Round Table Conversation

- **Ms Dandie | Non-profit, I'll Take You There | DandieBusiness@gmail.com**
Just because someone coming in [to provide services] is certified or has an MBA does not mean they know how to deal with it. Asking the police not to step in to certain situations and have other people handle them is a great thing. Sometimes situations do call for the police, but we do not need them every single time. We need them in schools. Really excited by the discussion. Has own nonprofit called I'll Take You There that helps people fill out forms and get essentials. Works with GRIP with mental health and homeless.
- **Ben Therriault | RPSCTF Member | Richmond resident | Police Officer, Richmond Police Department**
There are a lot of mental health calls that the police department does not want to be involved in. It is important to note that there is a Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) Officer that works with the [Contra Costa] County clinician, and they are on this call. Would be good to hear from them. Agrees with Kristin - the issue of money and funding that comes from the county is huge. There is a lack of how it gets shifted around to the west, specifically the largest city out here, which is our city. That is where a lot of our efforts to facilitate need to occur. That is one of the big things to overcome.
- **Darlene Scruggs | Case Manager**
Works in case management. Loves that this meeting is open for anyone to comment towards mental health in our community. Has lived experience with mental health with self and spouse. This platform gives awareness to be able to come and share experiences. This is a blessing for our community because a lot of people normally do not want to challenge their mental health. Stigma around mental health is that people think you are supposed to be crazy to have a mental health issue and that is not true. Have to let people know it is okay to talk about it. Really appreciate this.
- **Vy Vo | Campaign Manager, Healthy Richmond | Formerly worked in crisis services | Formerly worked for Seneca**
Used to work with crisis clinicians, and these clinicians also deal with issues of implicit bias. Pulling in experts is important, but it is important to remember that the root of these situations is violence,



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anti-blackness, and racism. Does not want to set up a system that is going to create the same issues all over again.

- **Shawn Dunning**

The presentation [from RRPSWG] was great. Emphasized importance of the responsiveness principle that discussed in the presentation. Observed a mental health intervention in real time. The nature of police intervention is such that officers, no matter how well trained, are constantly watching for a threat. Someone who is very agitated who might seem like a threat is going to bring about different behaviors from an officer, and that might not lead to a good place. It is important not to demonize the police, as it is not an accurate description of the average officer. [The police] are there because they want to serve, but they are not the best equipped to serve. The solution that is put forth must have the same level of rapid response [as the police], otherwise there will be no choice but for the police to show up.

- **Yvonne Marroquin | New mom | Educator for children and youth | Urban Tilth**

From experience, it has been difficult to connect with resources. Suggests investing more in coming up with a plan to support families, specifically those with newborns. It is traditional to support moms within the first six weeks or so, but after that, there is still a lot of learning that occurs. There is a lot of isolation, especially right now during the pandemic. Had to step away [from employment] because no safe childcare for newborn daughter. Isolation opens up opportunities for substance abuse, depression, anxiety. If we are starting with family first, [a plan to support families with newborns] will be really valuable to our community.

- **Brian Lande | Police Officer, Richmond Police Department, assigned to MHET West | blande@richmondpd.net**

Works closely with James Lancaster, social worker and clinician. Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) focuses on reducing law enforcement contacts with people who are dealing with mental health related issues. After someone has been taken into psychiatric emergency service through contact with law enforcement, law enforcement provides referrals to MHET so that MHET can conduct follow up to identify underlying issues. While mobile crisis response - the immediate engagement with someone in a psychiatric, emotional, or personal crisis - is important, the flip side of that is what happens next when psychiatric emergency beds are unavailable, or when housing or lack of employment contributes to the mental health issue. MHET speaks across different systems and different agencies to try to mitigate some of the things that cause mental health issues to rise to a problem where the person comes into contact with law enforcement. MHET focuses on not criminalizing people and making sure police departments have a trained officer

The following message and resource was provided by Brian Lande after the Round Table:

I found a good overview of what is called the Sequential Intercept Model for identifying and coordinating responses to persons in mental health crisis.

[The Sequential Intercept Model - Policy Research Associates \(prainc.com\)](https://prainc.com)



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The model was developed via National Institute of Mental Health funding to help identifying gaps in service and coordinate care across a community.

This may be a tool the committee has already considered, but I think it offers a reasonable structure.

- **DeWanda | Richmond resident | Founder, YaNeema Healing Circle**

Appreciates conversation, but also some action needs to be taken sooner than later. Appreciates having service hubs in the community because the response time for mental health crises is over 30 minutes. We have people within our own communities who can respond in a quicker time. There is a lot of trauma in our communities and much of it is unaddressed as people continuously have contact with law enforcement. Even though the goal is not to criminalize, people are being criminalized. There is a revolving door system due to the limited services at the Contra Costa County emergency psych unit, and there is not a lot of advocacy inside the system once people are in [the system]. Had an encounter today where the mental health crisis unit was called but there was a 30-minute window to get from East County to West County. We are limited in services and there is an immediate need. We have been going through this for over 5-10 years in this part of the county. We are not getting any better. People with mental health [issues] are unhoused and sleeping on the street corners. Until we get a solid place to start implementing, we are doing an injustice to our community members. If we keep waiting on funding, we are going to lose a lot more lives.

- **Elsa Stevens**

Everyone who is on this call right now should be at the February 2 [Contra Costa County] Board of Supervisors meeting because there is \$90 million that will be discussed. Last time large sums were discussed, the greedy and very effective Sheriff hired lots of money to hire deputies instead of allowing the money to go to preventive things like this.

- **Robin | Richmond resident | Mental health advocate**

Agrees with the proposals [by the working group]. We should work on compartmentalizing how we are addressing mental health issues, specifically youth - addressing what young people in our community are dealing with right now. From personal experience and experiences of friends growing up in Richmond, youth are never afforded proper access [to mental health support]. We need to make sure we empower our local educators and school district to handle [mental health] conversations and know where to guide students for resources. Has done work regarding mental health. Working to get a community walk for suicide prevention to Richmond, through the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

- **Yenny Garcia | Board member for Latina Center**

Really thankful and appreciate this getting put together. Number of domestic violence cases coming through the Latina Center has increased with COVID. It is difficult for the undocumented community to



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call on police when they need them. Wants to be part of the solution. The Latina Center does not have enough funding for all of the cases that come through. Since there is this momentum, attending that [Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors] meeting is going to be super important so that we can ask some of that funding to come to the City of Richmond. We can make something happen with the community that we have. We need this conversation to happen in our community.

- **James Lancaster | Team Lead, MHET | 925-391-4097, james.lancaster@cchealth.org**

Agrees with the [RRPSWG] presentation; there needs to be some kind of community-based platform available during certain situations. There are also certain situations where someone in the community should not be responding. Has worked for 5 years as a clinician knocking on doors, working with all 26 agencies within Contra Costa County, building rapport with law enforcement, doing crisis intervention training. Worked with youth in City of Richmond, then served as mental health consultant with Richmond PD. A larger conversation needs to happen, and to execute that, take it to the City. There are meetings that are happening behind closed doors. Has observed the gaps in service to the City and is reporting them to the chiefs and directors. When someone is placed on psychiatric hold, a loved one can ask an officer to refer the case over to the MHET team, and MHET will follow up. There is follow up taking place, and there needs to be increased services available to the public and for the City of Richmond. There are gaps that need to be addressed immediately so that we can move forward. The money that is on the table and where it needs to be allocated for the City of Richmond - it is being heard.

- **Michelle Milam | Richmond resident | Crime Prevention Manager, Richmond Police Department**

Grew up in Richmond and has worked in crime prevention for over 13 years. Has personal experience with mental health in family. Need to figure out the resource gaps. Need to get people properly diagnosed. AOD (Alcohol and Other Drug Services) and mental health at the county level do not necessarily coincide; part of the issue is that people cannot access services because of the group they get lumped into. Is the staff liaison for the City's Homeless Task Force. There are a lot of people in the unhoused community who are dual diagnosed but have never gotten a proper diagnosis. There needs to be advocacy at the county level - there is training for first aid mental health responders to refer someone who is in a crisis to a services, but there has to be services to refer them to in the first place. Meetings involving mental health service funding need to be packed, and people who are affected by this need to get a chance to advocate.

- **Marisol Lara | Richmond resident | Former student at Richmond California College Preparatory Academy**

Went to Richmond California College Preparatory Academy in front of Hilltop Mall. Went to a charter school. Advisors were very beneficial to the youth because they took in the students for an hour and checked in on them academically and emotionally. Mental health in youth is very important. Need to provide tools and resources for kids now rather than later because the brain is fully developed at around 21 to 25 years old. It is important to focus on this now. Learned a lot of tools and got the help needed from advisors and counselors.



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- **Merrill Pierce | 4th/5th Grade Teacher, Verde Elementary School**

Verde Elementary School has worked with Seneca for the past 5 years, using the unconditional education model. There are a lot of connections between the working group's proposals and the unconditional education model. Through the unconditional education model, Verde has seen a huge improvement in positive culture and climate and decrease in office referrals. Thinking about what connections can be made between what's already happening and working at schools, and organizations within the City.

- **Randy Joseph | RPSCTF Member and RRPSWG Member**

Heard from Dallas police chief that we are counting on the police to do way too much. Police often say they are stressed and overworked. We have an opportunity to have community involvement in certain situations, and mental and behavioral health is one of those places. Some organizations are already doing the work on the ground, but need more funding. There is a lot of talk about the county, but what are we doing as a city to help our mental health? Wants to look at existing programs that are working to further help community members, especially black communities where mental health is not really diagnosed because there is a stigma. People need education [on mental health]. Need a citywide approach. Cannot look at the county because they will do what they need to protect their side and cities like Richmond get left out. We have so many people who are skilled here that the city can support and put money behind to get us to a place where people can feel comfortable, have conversations about mental health, and heal each other. It takes time and money and the city for far too long has not put those two basic things there. They [the city] pop up a program but then do not support the program.

- **Luis Chacon | Local High School Teacher | RPSCTF Member**

Mental health is a broad spectrum of issues. It is going to be important to offer as many options, alternatives, and tools for our community to address [mental health] issues. Advocates for more education for our community because it starts in the home, such as tools and resources for family members to de-escalate and be better equipped to support their own families, households, and neighbors.

- **Andres Soto | RPSCTF Member**

San Pablo is an island surrounded by Richmond, but the community is permeable, so solutions should be integrated with what is happening in San Pablo. Richmond does not have a health department of its own; services are administered through the county system, which creates bureaucratic and institutional challenges. Need to have a comprehensive plan that involves all of these players to come up with systems to deal with this. Also need to address income inequality and who gets services versus who does not get services. The county and community in general is not sufficient in dealing with language minority groups - not just Spanish speakers. A comprehensive plan is going to have to take into account the entire community.

- **Aminta Mickles | Professor, Contra Costa College**



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Appreciative of the conversation because it is very important to what we are facing in our own communities. Education is important. Recently had a parent who was in a difficult time because no one ever educated the family about what is happening with their child because there has been no training. Education would have helped the family significantly if someone had taken the time to explain the diagnosis. Believes in partnering with as many agencies as possible. We are sometimes in our own silos doing great work but that leads to people missing out on services. Advocates for services to come to Contra Costa County and not just San Francisco.

Chat Comments, Chronological - Typed questions, suggestions, or comments made during the conversation

- 00:30:17 Stephanie Ny: <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4011/Reimagining-Public-Safety>
- 00:40:15 Kristin Kilian Lobos: National Alliance on Mental Illness
- 00:40:34 Kristin Kilian Lobos: namicontracosta.org
- 00:42:37 Yaquelin Valencia: yes sorry I'm late, my other call went over . will try and stay as long as I can 🥰🥰 Thanks for all your work and invite
- 00:43:17 Yaquelin Valencia: Hi Kristin 🙌
- 00:43:45 Kristin Kilian Lobos: Hi
- 00:45:48 Yaquelin Valencia: aww thank you likewise ! I love the love we have for our community.
- 00:46:54 MsDandie: I'm here this is Ms Dandie
- 00:47:18 MsDandie: I'm also delivering box food to families
- 00:47:38 Joanna Pulido: Hi!! Yes, its been so long! Glad to see you !
- 00:47:57 Elsa Stevens: THIS IS NOT A PRIVATE SPACE. PARTICIPANTS MAY BE KIND, BUT THIS WILL BE POSTED VERY PUBLICLY!!!
- 00:50:31 Kristin Kilian Lobos: True Elisa, I did mention that when I first started out, I want people to know this is not private and it's being recorded. if anyone wants to share they have to feel open to be public with a personal issue. It's a personal choice
- 00:57:27 Yaquelin Valencia: question : does the contra Costa crisis mobile team call 911 ? wondering if when I called them last year if they called the police. I called for support and the police showed up .
- 01:03:04 Sara Cantor (she/her): hi yaquelin! my understanding is that there is a specific RPD officer who shows up to all the Richmond calls. So the police show up every time, even if 911 is not called
- 01:04:59 Yaquelin Valencia: Sara, oh ok I see thank you.
- 01:06:35 Brian Lande Richmond PD West-MHET: Good evenign Yaquelin. I am the Richmond Police Officer assigned to the county Mental Health Evaluation Team.
- 01:06:45 Yenny Garcia : I appreciate the effort being made for community to heal community. We know what we need and we can serve better when we know and



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- have lived these struggles. Empathy is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine yourself in their place. Essentially, it is putting yourself in someone else's position and feeling what they must be feeling.
- 01:08:05 Michelle Milam: Greeting everyone. Just wanted to put myself down as a resource. I am the Crime Prevention Manager for RPD and a Richmond resident. I have worked on community based mental health partnerships and I serve on the city's homeless taskforce. I helped advocate for mobile crisis. I think it would be good to share some resource mapping of current programs.
- 01:08:08 Brian Lande Richmond PD West-MHET: At this time we do not have a specialized officer to respond to all mental health calls. However, the county does have specialized officers working with behavioral health to conduct follow up in an interdisciplinary team setting consisting of clinicians and community workers from multiple disciplines.
- 01:09:22 Aristo 5: Hi everyone Denise Mills here from CCYCS glad to be apart of this meeting
- 01:09:46 Elsa Stevens: \$90,000,000 are coming to CCC NEW MONEY. We have to keep the greedy Sheriff from gobbling it all up.
- 01:10:17 Sara Cantor (she/her): social media info for Reimagine Richmond (the group that put together the presentation we delivered):
<https://www.instagram.com/reimaginerichmond/> and
<https://www.facebook.com/Reimagine-Richmond-122256092952126>
- 01:12:08 DeWanda : YaNEEMA Healing Circle
- 01:12:17 Yaquelin Valencia: thank you for your presentation. I would love for this program be implemented and financially funded. I have definitely encountered many situations where I've needed help for friends, family and my soccer kids . I am all for bringing programs and support for our families who endure mental health issues . there's a huge need in our community. Yaquelin Valencia - girls soccer at Kennedy High and Community organizer with Faith In action National
- 01:14:31 Guadalupe Morales: Please kindly lower your hand if you had a chance to speak to help us keep track of everyone who wishes to speak. Thank you!
- 01:15:27 DeWanda : YaNeema Healing Circle first responders to homicides, goal engage families in the community at onset of traumatic event, assist families with victim of crime. Support Grp
- 01:17:33 Ms. Johann Fragd: If you are calling in and want to speak press *9 to raise your hand



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01:18:29 Marisol Lara: 🙌🙌🙌

01:20:27 Doria Robinson: Really wanted to say that the presentation was excellent so thankful for your leadership and listening in on how to help make these solutions a reality

01:23:07 Angelica Delgado: agreed!!

01:23:25 paola casillas: Facts!

01:23:30 Edith: yup

01:24:14 Doria Robinson: yes

01:24:22 Doria Robinson: yes

01:24:24 Edith: AMEN!

01:24:37 Diana Leal: !!!

01:24:41 Merrill Pierce: yes!

01:24:46 Najari Smith: I concur

01:24:59 Najari Smith: I concur

01:25:05 Sara Cantor (she/her): YES dewanda! a few of us are working on getting ourselves skilled up right now to get moving on this. so grateful for your insight.

01:25:23 Najari Smith: well said Dewanda!

01:25:24 Shirley Leslie (she/her): Yes indeed! ^

01:25:32 Shirley Leslie (she/her): Already working on it, Dewanda :)

01:25:49 Michelle Milam: I agree that we can implement some community based mental health now.

01:27:11 Yaquelin Valencia: send the meeting info please. for BOS meeting

01:31:10 Edith: The agenda for BOS mtg has not been posted yet, will follow up as soon as it is available.

01:31:51 Tania Pulido: Thank you! I agree, we need to get more involved at the county level.

01:32:11 Robin (He/Him): We can support youth directly without reinventing the wheel by directing funds and supports to folks like Urban Tilth, Groundwork Richmond, Rich City Rides, RYSE, among others. These orgs are already about that action, and providing support and programming that benefits mental health of youth.

01:32:36 Sara Cantor (she/her): ^^^^ yes robin!!

01:32:56 Merrill Pierce: Yes!

01:33:04 DeWanda : my background is dual diagnosis. domestic violence, trauma informed care - over 20 yrs experience in direct community outreach and providing services...YaNEEMA began in 2015 out of the growing need for immediate trauma care to families impacted by homicide/gun violence. This organization began with no money, no grants, nothing



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- because the need to bring healing space to Richmond/West County was and is necessary and needed to take place
- 01:35:55 DeWanda : can we share info in the notes so we who are in the field now can have these resources available. that's an issue also no one knows anyone
- 01:36:01 Doria Robinson: i disagree there are painfully few services working on the Greenway it's difficult to get Core support esp in a crisis if anyone comes it's police abs too often that has ended badly a few times violently towards those in a mental health crisis
- 01:38:20 Robin (He/Him): I didn't want to list my CV when doing intro (LOL) but I'm also working on my PHD at UC Berkeley in Environmental Science, Policy, & Management. One of my best future goals is to establish non-profit to serve Richmond youth to directly interface with the outdoors and nature in meaningful ways, guided by folx who represent our community. I'll forever advocate the importance of connecting with nature/outdoors as a critical component of supporting one's mental health. Until that happens, the aforementioned orgs are already in the trenches doing it (ie Rich City Rides was leading camping trips). Transformative experiences that build up our health and one way to prevent folx for having to grow up with unchecked mental health issues that result in compromising police interactions.
- 01:39:01 James Lancaster: James Lancaster, MHET- Team Lead 925 391 4097, James.lancaster@cchealth.org
- 01:39:07 Yenny Garcia : Agree 100% with you Michelle.
- 01:39:34 Brian Lande Richmond PD West-MHET: Brian Lande, MHET West - Officer, blande@richmondpd.net
- 01:40:14 Krystal Fortner: thank you, Michelle, well said.
- 01:41:09 Tania Pulido: Yes! Better communication amongst us moving forward so we can show up to important meetings in large numbers.
- 01:41:40 Michelle Milam: Thank you. it's painful to see the disparity for African Americans who never get access to services that others receive.
- 01:43:00 Robin (He/Him): local program to model when it concerns addressing mental health of youth in academic setting is Metas (at Contra Costa College). They have a cool family retreat program too. our community is already doing the work. can't emphasize that enough. And we need to invest in them, like what Marisol is advocating for. 100
- 01:43:47 Luis Angel G (he/him): Marisol
- 01:43:51 Luis Angel G (he/him): oops sorry



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- 01:44:35 Doria Robinson: I am also interested in long term solutions for those with mental illness especially but not exclusively the unhoused we interact on a daily basis with all ages of people all races make abs female with obvious mental illness on the Greenway and there is a pronounced vacuum of resources, programs and humane solutions for what they are facing
- 01:45:20 ARTO RINTEELA: It took four years for professionals to diagnose my neighbor. He was court ordered to take monthly injections of Thorazine. He was very violent and was arrested at least a dozen times for violence. He was tased on one occasion and it took 4 Officers to subdue him and put him in an ambulance. How would that senecio be handled in the future?
- 01:45:51 Michelle Milam: James.Lancaster@hsd.cccounty.us
- 01:47:26 Sara Cantor (she/her): I just remembered a great resource I have access to, the sick and disabled queers group on fb
- 01:47:37 Eddie Morris: Thank you for this opportunity to participate I work for NAMI and Telecare and in the field for 30 plus years! I do crisis calls and Mental Health training please keep me in formed and connected in the future sessions
- 01:47:56 Sara Cantor (she/her): oops, sorry everyone! that was meant to be a PM
- 01:48:10 Michelle Milam: It would be great to have family support that is culturally competent after the incident to avoid contact with LE
- 01:48:11 Elsa Stevens: CCC Board of Supv. is covered by CCTV. They meet Tues Feb 2nd at 9AM
- 01:48:30 Michelle Milam: We have groups working to do this.
- 01:49:08 ARTO RINTEELA: Brian , Officer Souza knows the issue. I feel RPD and the County dropped the ball on this gentlemen.
- 01:49:20 Luis Angel G (he/him): I really liked Marisol's comment; a lot of people have mentioned the negative stigma towards mental health and I feel like a good opportunity to address that is among the youth. We should emphasize mental health education, with the goal to normalize discussion around mental health.
- 01:51:19 ARTO RINTEELA: Thank you Brian
- 01:51:42 Carole Yu-Johnson: I agree with Randy. So we need to encourage the new City Council ppl to do all they can go help.
- 01:52:56 Catalin: Thank you so much to everyone working on this. The presentation was thoughtful and clear.



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- 01:52:57 Randy Joseph: If anyone has ideas that weren't said tonight, please email me at rjoseph.cprc@gmail.com
- 01:53:17 MsDandie: DandieBusiness@gmail.com
- 01:53:31 Angelica Delgado: reminder: it's our tax dollars, we have a say on how they are spent and allocated
- 01:53:37 Krystal Fortner: yes"
- 01:53:37 Denise Mills: Denise Mills from CCYCS I struggled with Tech all through the meeting so I hope that you keep me posted with this program
- 01:54:24 Guadalupe Morales: If you would like to share your stories, experiences, ideas, suggestions, etc. please free to email staff at <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4011/Reimagining-Public-Safety> and let us know! We would like to compile all of this information.
- 01:56:38 isabellazizi: just wanted to uplift Native American Health Center as a resource ♥
- 01:56:50 Robin (He/Him): not looking for answer at this very moment, more so a question to consider: Is their active qualitative and quantitative research happening, aside from just compiling info? there are many great ideas, and have ability to make impact. But we need critical data to make informed and intentional decisions.
- 01:56:53 James Lancaster: without an overall approach of what is needed implementation of the programs will not be longterm
- 01:56:59 Robin (He/Him): *there
- 01:57:23 MsDandie: we need a Richmond Clinic here in Richmond
- 01:57:42 Ernesto Marin: Thank You everyone for all the information.
- 01:58:22 Yenny Garcia: thank you all for your work and allowing the community to support your work.
- 01:58:25 Marco: thanks everybody who helped make this happen