

Howard County Council Racial Equity Task Force



Meeting: Kick-off Meeting with Subgroup Chairs and Council Staff

Start Time: Nov. 9th, 2020 4:40pm

End Time: Nov. 9th, 2020 5:45pm

Attendees: Christiana Rigby
Opel Jones
Yvonne Commodore-Mensah
Jessica Coates
Karen Randall
Rashida George
Allison Sayers
Candace Dodson-Reed
Karla Morrison-Brooks
Lauren Marra
Diane Jones
Theo Wimberly
Charity Respass
Ashley Alston
Michael Harris
Colette Gelwicks

Approved Minutes:

Lauren Marra, Groundwork facilitator, welcomed Task Force members, Council members, and Council staff to the meeting and provided overview of the objectives for the meeting. Karla Morrison-Brooks, Groundwork facilitator, began discussing the goals of the task force, based on the information in the legislation. Words of gratitude for the Task Force Chairs were expressed by Council members Jones and Rigby. A round of introduction for all meeting attendees followed.

Ms. Marra walked through the timeline and the four phases of the work the task force will be undertaking, describing the goals and processes of each in some more detail. She described the main parts that will make up the final report. A question was asked regarding when meetings would be scheduled, and Ms. Marra described the monthly cadence planned for meetings and how Groundwork would be involved.

Ms. Morrison-Brooks reviewed the responsibilities of Groundwork, including their work to facilitate and prepare for meetings, report writing, coordination with other entities, and more. She also described the role of the Chairs and the expectations for preparing and facilitating meetings, leading the research,

data collection and the analysis, and participation in the report creation and presentation. The role of the subgroup members was also discussed, specifically attending meetings, conducting research and analysis, and sharing recommendation ideas. Finally, the role of the Council staff was explained, including support of the subgroup's work, scheduling meetings, and data collection from departments and other entities.

Ms. Marra and Ms. Morrison-Brooks solicited feedback on the information shared in the meeting. Concerns expressed included staff and facilitator flexibility in time, general availability, and being able to contact the right entities and obtain current data. Another concern included whether conversations would happen within the subgroups about how to make incremental change as well as long-term recommendations. A concern was expressed that the subgroup topics are so broad and can feel overwhelming. One participant wondered how the subgroups could build on work that has already been done recently in Howard County.

Ms. Marra and Ms. Morrison-Brooks ended the meeting with attendees sharing two words to describe how they were feeling.