

Howard County Council

Racial Equity Task Force



Meeting: Legislative Process Subgroup Meeting

Start Time: February 8, 2021, 4:04 p.m.

End Time: February 8, 2021 6:00 p.m.

Task Force Members:

Rashida George
Kathryn Valentine
Lucas de Melo
Allyson Owens
Dana Davenport
Beth Hufnagel
Laura Mettle
David Koralov
Bruce Nelson (absent)

Presenters, Council, and Facilitator Attendees:

Dr. Elaine Bonner-Thompkins, Montgomery County
Dr. Theo Holt, Montgomery County
Karla Morrison-Brooks, Groundwork Partners
Colette Gelwicks, County Council
Jeff Meyers, County Council
Theo Wimberly, County Council
Sanjay Srivastava

Materials:

[Agenda](#)

[Srivastava Bio](#)

Approved Minutes:

Ms. Rashida George, Subgroup Chairperson, opened the meeting with a roll call and confirmed that a quorum of subgroup members was present. Ms. George moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Legislative Process Subgroup Meeting on January 11, 2021. Ms. Kathryn Valentine, Task Force member, seconded the approval of the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved by the subgroup members. Ms. George mentioned that there would be a discussion and vote at the end of the meeting to consider the membership of Mr. Sanjay Srivastava. Mr. Lucas de Melo, subgroup member, raised a question regarding the process and Karla Morrison-Brooks, facilitator, asked to table the discussion until the appropriate agenda item.

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Racial-Equity-Task-Force](https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/About-Us/Commissions-Task-Forces-and-Special-Reports/Racial-Equity-Task-Force)

After a brief check-in, Dr. Elaine Bonner-Thompkins, Senior Legislative Analyst from the Office of Legislative Oversight with Montgomery County, and Dr. Theo Holt, Racial Equity and Social Justice Performance Management Data Analyst with Montgomery County, were given an opportunity to present information. The first part of the presentation included a general overview, including outlining terminology, discussing measures to advance racial equity and social justice, the history of government and race, the difference between implicit and explicit bias, as well as details on what is meant by structural racial inequity. In the second part of the presentation, Dr. Holt spoke about the work Montgomery County is doing to combat systemic racial inequities. He provided detailed information about the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act (Bill 27-19) and its requirements, in addition to recent changes. Then, he went into detail about the Racial Equity Social Justice tool and its process. Finally, Dr. Holt discussed the equity analyses that are written for legislation, sharing information regarding the development process, the prompts that are part of the review, the components, and data reviewed. Dr. Holt also discussed the community engagement process and discussed some challenges.

During the discussion period following the presentation from Dr. Bonner-Thompkins and Dr. Holt, subgroup members asked several questions in response to many topics, including community engagement, examples in other jurisdictions, staffing needs, and whether language is considered as part of the analysis.

Ms. George provided an update to subgroup members around the research she has been conducting regarding public engagement. She is specifically interested in looking into the testimony process and education for community members. Lucas de Melo, Task Force member, has been looking into how other jurisdictions are engaging residents whose primary language is not English. Allyson Owens, Task Force member, is continuing to investigate transportation access.

Dana Davenport, Task Force member, provided an update on her research and identified four areas of interest: the legislative process from the Council's view; the role of the Charter Review Commission; the processes behind appointments to commissions and boards, such as the Charter Review Commission; and finally to have a better understanding of what is within the Council's purview and what would need to be changed at the State level.

Ms. Morrison-Brooks provided subgroup members with Task Force updates regarding upcoming events like the public hearing and the Council's March Monthly Meeting, testimony, and next steps for the subgroups.

Ms. George introduced the topic of subgroup membership and explained that Mr. Sanjay Srivastava had asked to be considered for membership on the Legislative Process subgroup. Mr. Srivastava introduced himself to subgroup members. After the introduction, Mr. de Melo raised the question about whether the subgroup can add members or whether this needs to go before the County Council. Ms. Kathryn Valentine, Task Force member, echoed the concerns and asked for clarification regarding the process. Ms. Colette Gelwicks, Council staff, shared that the legislation creating the Task Force (CR142-2020) included a provision which allows subgroups to add members. She also clarified that membership requests go to the subgroup Chair, who decides whether to put the request on the agenda for the subgroup to decide. Ms. George added that she wanted the subgroup to consider this request. Ms. Beth Hufnagel, Task Force member, asked why Mr. Srivastava did not ask to join earlier. Mr. Srivastava clarified that he did put his request in early on and was allowing the process to unfold. Mr. Theo Wimberly confirmed the process but also added that subgroup members could decide not to vote today. Ms. Hufnagel raised whether this item was on the agenda, and Ms. Morrison-Brooks clarified which

agenda item Mr. Srivastava's request falls under. Ms. George made a motion to approve Mr. Sanjay Srivastava's request for membership on the Racial Equity Task Force, and specifically on the Legislative Process subgroup. Ms. Laura Mettle seconded the motion. The subgroup voted in favor of adding Mr. Srivastava to the subgroup, with Ms. Hufnagel and Ms. Valentine abstaining from the vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.