

Howard County Council

Racial Equity Task Force



Meeting: Legislative Process Subgroup Meeting

Start Time: December 14, 2020 4:01pm

End Time: December 14, 2020 5:30pm

Task Force Members:

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

Council and Facilitator Attendees:

Karla Morrison-Brooks
Colette Gelwicks
Felix Facchine
Jeff Meyers

Approved Minutes:

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 Meet & Greet on November 23, 2020. Allyson Owens, Task Force member, seconded the approval of the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved by the subgroup members.

Ms. George reviewed meeting objectives and posed the opening check-in question to subgroup members and staff. After the check-in, Karla Morrison-Brooks, Groundwork Facilitator, repeated the task force goals as outlined in CR142-2020, the legislation that formed the Racial Equity Task Force. Members asked for some clarification regarding scope. Ms. Morrison-Brooks also asked members for feedback and outstanding questions from the Task Force Kickoff Meeting on November 19, 2020. There was discussion around the term “BIPOC”.

Ms. George led a discussion on proposed partnership agreements and asked members to provide feedback. Three additions were suggested and agreed to. Ms. George also led a discussion on internal roles within the subgroup, including asking members who might be willing to serve in different support

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roles. Allyson Owens volunteered to serve as Vice-Chair. Ms. George, Beth Hufnagel, and Laura Mettle volunteered to take the Open Meetings Act training on behalf of the subgroup.

Ms. George introduced the discussion on subgroup issues that the subgroup would like to explore. The subgroup members held a robust discussion on issues pertaining to the legislative process in Howard County. Dana Davenport, Task Force member, brought up the origin of the County and the history of the legislative process and volunteered to research this topic. Task Force members brainstormed where documents might be housed or available to provide some of the history regarding the legislative process in Howard County. Colette Gelwicks, Council staff, offered to ask for relevant documents with the Council office and Howard County's Office of Law.

Kathryn Valentine, Task Force member, was interested in understanding more about the current legislative process and what analyses are done on bills and resolutions before Council members vote. She was curious whether anyone in any County had looked at racial disparities in any legislative process. In discussing which documents or data may be relevant, Ms. Gelwicks recommended that the subgroup invite someone from the County Council office to speak to the group at the next subgroup meeting, a recommendation which was agreed to during the meeting. Bruce Nelson, Task Force member, asked about the guiding documents for the County Council and volunteered to research and review documents related to this topic.

Allyson Owens, Task Force member, raised the topics of the public engagement process, access related to transportation, and how community apathy can be measured. Ms. George added that the Council website could also be included as part of the process. Ms. Davenport raised that access should include both technical as well as physical. Laura Mettle, Task Force member, also brought up the issue of community education. Ms. Owens and Ms. George offered to take point on the initial research for this topic.

Beth Hufnagel, Task Force member, raised the issue of the Council budget and volunteered to research this issue. Ms. Mettle shared an interest in the historical patterns for spending categories of the Council budget and offered to research this topic.

Following the conversation on subgroup issues and pertinent data, the Task Force confirmed the upcoming meeting dates for their subgroup:

- January 11, 4-6pm
- February 8, 4-6pm
- March 15, 4-6pm

Task Force members agreed to share the results of their respective data inquiries and research assignments with Ms. George, Ms. Morrison-Brooks, and Council staff by Tuesday, January 5, 2021 in preparation for the next meeting.

Ms. George thanked members of the subgroup for participating and adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.