



Mayor's Task Force for Racial & Ethnic Equality

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 14, 2021
1:00pm
Zoom Meeting**

Call to Order & Attendance Quorum

Daniel Eisinger, subcommittee co-chair, called the meeting to order at 1:06 pm. Kayla Elson, of Justice & Sustainability Associates, took attendance of the participants for the meeting record. She then reviewed the meeting agenda.

June Meeting Minutes

The June meeting minutes were reviewed. No comments were made about the minutes, so they were unanimously approved as distributed.

Discussion: Policies and Operating Procedures in Review

Kayla Elson opened the discussion to explore or analyze the current policies from the police department. No comments were made at this time.

Process Update

Kayla Elson reviewed the timeline of the process of drafting and presenting policy recommendations to the Task Force, the Mayor, and the City Commission. It is expected that the Task Force will finalize their recommendations by September 2021.

Discussion: Priority One Recommended Ideas

Kayla Elson presented the ideas that received the most traction under priority one, which included establishing a civilian review board and encouraging strategies to hire and maintain a diverse team of police officers.

With respect to establishing a civilian review board, Alexcia Cox, subcommittee co-chair, clarified that members of the review board should be highly diverse, suggesting that the subcommittee detail about which zones and geographic areas from which the members of the review board live. Alexcia Cox also added that the review board be provided with data (e.g., on race, ethnicity, nativity, etc.) as it relates to community interactions with law enforcement and the criminal justice system on a regular basis.

Subcommittee members discussed some strategies that could be recommended to recruit and maintain a diverse team of police officers. Alexcia Cox highlighted the importance of ensuring that recruitment efforts include intentional strategies to increase diversity as well as the number of officers who are from West Palm Beach. Daniel Eisinger suggested that the city could hire a headhunter or an expert to create a recruitment package for the police department that highlights what it has to offer.



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Assistant Chief Tameca West, subcommittee member, shared information about the department's recruitment and engagement efforts at schools including the Police Explorers Program at Forest Hill Community High School. She also spoke to her recruitment at the college level and past efforts to collaborate with clergy to recruit local students.

Alexcia Cox highlighted the difficulties in establishing a direct pipeline program in high schools, since candidates must be at least twenty-one years of age to become a police officer. Tameca West said that there is a cadet program that follows the explorer students into college and allows them to work smaller jobs until they can be hired as full-time officers. Alexcia Cox suggested creating a mentoring program for West Palm Beach high school students that offers scholarships to pay for certifications and training in between high school graduation and turning twenty-one with the stipulation that they join the West Palm Beach police department.

Sergeant Deanna Rideau, a recruitment officer, spoke with the subcommittee about the police department's recruitment strategies. These efforts include attending career fairs at police academies and local colleges, posting advertisements online and hosting Explorer and Cadet programs locally. Justice Ira Raab, subcommittee member, asked SGT. Rideau what initiatives would improve their recruitment process. SGT Rideau stated a newer system for their online application that is compatible with all internet servers and a website for the police department would help. SGT. Rideau said that by making the application process and department information more accessible they can reach more diverse applicants. Alexcia Cox asked if there were any other strategies. SGT. Rideau suggested to increase diversity and she shared that educating the community more about police officers' work could increase positive engagement and convince community members to join the police force.

Discussion: Priority Two Recommended Ideas

The subcommittee members began discussion on the ideas under priority two which included expanding the field training program and exploring training for police officers to address mental health crises. Chief Tameca West shared that if the subcommittee wanted to recommend creating new long-term positions within the field training program, the city would have to work with the police union.

Public Comment

No public comments were made at this time.

Next Steps: Developing Draft Recommendations

At the next subcommittee meeting, the subcommittee members will discuss the details of the ideas under priority two. The subcommittee members also would like to explore the idea to recommend investment into mental health services and collaboration for the police department.

Justice Ira Raab asked Tameca West if there were more mental health related interactions with the police in minority communities. Tameca West shared that there does seem to be a need for mental health resources in minority communities based on the higher number of disturbance calls in minority



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communities. Justice Ira Raab suggested the subcommittee members research the link between race and mental health crises responses from law enforcement.

Adjourn

Alexcia Cox adjourned the meeting at 2:36 pm. The next meeting will be on August 14th, 2021, at 1:00 pm on Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Alexcia Cox, Subcommittee Co-Chair
Daniel Eisinger, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Bryce Graham, Subcommittee Member
Ruth Wanjiru Mageria, Subcommittee Member
Justice Ira Raab, Subcommittee Member
Tameca West, Subcommittee Member

Kayla Elson, Justice & Sustainability Associates
Milena Almetica, Justice & Sustainability Associates
Tiffany David, City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Office

Absent:

Alisha Singh, Subcommittee Member
Chauncey Alexander Graham, Subcommittee Member