

**City of Hyattsville, Race & Equity Task Force Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 29th, 2020; Time: 7:00pm-9:00pm**  
Via Zoom

Members:

- Andrea Dargin (P)
- Stacie Whitesides (P)
- LaToya Robinson (P)
- Joanne Waszczak (P)
- Malcolm Clarke (P)
- Monica Sharma (A)
- Ashleigh Brown-Grier (A)
- Rodrigo Blanco (A)

Public attendees:

- Gabriel Lewis
- Shivani Pervais
- Jennifer Gafard
- Sophie Gorman Orian
- Marshall

City Officials

- Councilmember Daniel Peabody
- Project Liaison Jan Guszynski
- City Administrator Tracey Douglas
- Chief Amal Awad
- Cindy Zork, Communications Manager, Public Information Officer

Co-Chair Dargin called meeting to order at 7:07PM

**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

MC – Work in Government Consulting, and in Ward 3. Came to the RETF due to the national social unrest over the summer.

**2. Community Response and Policing**

TD: Thanked the RETF members for their work for the community. Update about the Police and Public Safety Committee – they now have 10 members and will be meeting in the October timeframe. Once they get up and running RETF will be able to have a joint meeting with them.

Chief: Internally sent a directive to the officers regarding use of force, similar to the “8 Can’t Wait” campaign. Prohibiting the use of a chokehold, unless there is eminent danger to the officer or to another person. Bans shooting at moving vehicles or from a moving vehicle. The officers will have an in-service training. This will supplement the ICAT training that the officers have been receiving for a number of years. Providing equivalent to mental health intervention training. One officer per squad to be certified in the 40-hour program for crisis management. Hired a Mental Health and Media Relations Director. The criminal investigation concluded regarding the officer-involved shooting of Mr. Leonard Shan, and now Chief has requested that the administrative investigation begin. Limited to how much can be said at this juncture.

TD: Police reform initiatives have been undertaken on our own, to show that we are not just sitting and are intentional about making changes. The State’s attorney is responsible for the criminal case, and it has been decided that there will be no criminal indictment.

Chief: There was no need to have officers testify in the criminal case. In administrative investigation, the officers are compelled to make a statement. There are 24 Municipal police chiefs and other state and local police chiefs, and the conversation has already come up regarding training and retraining, and that the recommendation has been made that this be implemented across PG County, so that we are all operating from the same knowledge base.

JW: Can you remind us of the program that is similar to the “8 Can’t Wait”?

Chief: Maryland Police Training Commission issued directive

SW: Are there any hot topics/focal points for us to address with the Police & Public Safety Advisory Committee.

Chief: Given the status of the investigation, she will not provide any advice. However, there needs to be a community discussion around where we are.

TD: She will check in with the Advisory Committee and see if they have any suggestions. However, RETF will take part in the renaming of Magruder Park, which is an important step in shaping how residents interact with public spaces.

### **3. Committee Administrative Items**

#### ***Tabled the Election of a new Secretary***

JG: The status of the COVID Relief Funds is that the applications have closed. The applications under review are for businesses, Community Artisans, and Daycares. Did anyone have involvement in this?

JW: I did not participate in any review. We received the selections afterward.

SW: Jo and myself wanted to be a part of that, is there any option now?

JG: Lillian is responsible for that project.

SW: Asked Lillian to join our meeting however she

JW: Lillian suggesting that we need to work with Stewart Eisenberg, who is working with Hyattsville CDC. Could possibly collaborate with the CDC.

DP: Council had asked that we get the data from Mr. Eisenberg, to be reviewed for equitable distribution.

#### ***Equity plan consultant RFP***

AD: Co-Chair Whitesides and I will work on this RFP.

JW: Can we get examples RFPs from other committees that have successfully gotten a consultant?

JG: Yes

#### **4. Magruder Park Renaming Campaign**

CZ: The deed to the land for Magruder park included racial covenants which restricted access to the park for only White people. The City Attorney is working on getting this language removed. Name suggestion mailers, physical boxes, phone and online are in the works. Collections begin this Thursday. RETF to review the initial suggestions with the Health & Recreation Advisory Committee.

DP: The Council is interested in getting name suggestions that are welcoming others and represents present-day Hyattsville. Magruder park is unique because it was deed in trust to the City for specific use.

Marshall: Happy to get rid of the name but opposed to non-residents contributing to the renaming.

#### **5. Community Policing & Community Engagement Updates**

AD: Overview of the Policing section, and how residents interact with more than just HPD and how the Mutual Aid Agreement that is in place impacts residents. We are in a position where we did not get a pulse or input from the residents prior to the officer-involved shooting. This means that we don't have a baseline to make assertions about public perceptions, that aren't changed by this incident. Proposed interviews and anonymous surveys and a comprehensive crime dashboard similar to that of Baltimore County.

SW: Requested that committee members provide feedback by the 16<sup>th</sup> of October on the Community Engagement section.

#### **6. Adjourn Meeting**

AD: Bring back the Housing Section and send it to the Co-Chairs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56pm