

**City of Hyattsville
Race & Equity Task Force
May 25, 2021, 7:00 PM
Zoom
Minutes**

Present

Task Force Members:

- Chair Andrea Dargin
- Joanne Waszczak
- Malcolm Clarke
- LaToya Robinson
- Jennifer Gafford
- Rodrigo Blanco

Council:

- Councilmember Daniel Peabody

Staff:

- Staff Liaison Jan Guszynski

Guests:

- Councilmember Robert Croslin
- Adrienne Augustus
- Marshall Marshall

Members Absent:

- Monica Sharma

Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM by chair Dargin

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Roll Call by Secretary Clarke

- 6 members present, 1 absent

Acknowledgment of Meeting Guests by Liaison Guszynski

Review and Approval of Minutes from April 27 meeting

- Moved by RB, second by JW
- Approved unanimously

Welcome of new-member applicant Jennifer Gafford, a Ward 3 resident

2. Next Steps on Equity Plan

Creating synopsis on each section and generate a roadmap for equity officer to follow in order to create the plan

Completed sections

- Policing section

- Community engagement
- Housing

In progress sections

- Jobs and transportation (led by Joanne)
- Persons with disabilities (led by Rodrigo)

Because plan is intended to be in place for several years, rather than short term patch on issues. If it is feasible to do, aim to begin drafting for June meeting

- AD: Determine who reviewer for the transportation plan is
- JW: Could use existing transportation plan as a template for the RETF plan or use to material in it as a reference. Plan should focus on developing more extensive walking, biking, and transit networks to support individuals who seek to use these networks. In order to create safer transportation network, it is important to make sure that transportation plan is safer for non-vehicle transportation. May be more important to expand scope of consideration in the plan.
 - o DP: Safe streets efforts have been piecemeal and dependent on whether community is interested in pursuing traffic safety measures on their block or in their area. Is not aware of universally adopted transportation plan for the city. Equity officer is also part of budget for upcoming year and being explored by the city administrator. Person will be on city staff to explore recommendations that come out of this plan.
 - o JW: Transportation plan discussion referenced by RC
- JW: Housing plan and housing toolkit referenced by LaToya could be useful in developing jobs and transportation section of the plan. Would also want to refer to jobs support from the city during coronavirus pandemic.
 - o AD: For now, in June would discuss jobs and transportation, July would be for people with disabilities section. If plan is missing components that should be called out, such as race or disenfranchised peoples, we want to make sure that those areas are discussed in the sections. In August, will review the plan outline holistically and should have incumbent in the position or will have better view of where the process of onboarding the officer is for handoff of plan development, while remaining under our control.

3. Administrative Announcements/Debriefs

Mural Project

- JG: List of recommendations to Green Owl and presented to Council for Centennial Park portion of mural project. Looking to commemorate artisans:
 - o Debbie Allen
 - o Lucille Clifton
 - o Ta-Nehisi Coates
 - o Robert Wendell "Buck" Hill
 - o Toni Morrison
 - o Amy Sheralds
 - o Chadwick Boseman
- Additional names from Eileen Cave, a local arts academic

- Martin Lawrence
- S. Epatha Mirkerson (Law and Order)
- Taraji P. Henson
- Green Owl will come up with an overall design, but will allow each artist their own section. Task force members should email chair Dargin about any input on additional artisans.

Multicultural Activities/Events Update

Wanted to get update on process of coming up with multicultural programming

- JG: Worked with another advisory group on another initiative and was tasked with coming up with ideas for diversity programming. However, will likely not do in-person events in this city until the fall, so city will look to do virtual programming over the summer. Currently recruiting for community services and programs director.
- Juneteenth: Was recommended to incorporate a storytelling roundtable. Also suggested using Goose Chase app to do cultural scavenger hunt. May be museum walking tour of the NMAAHC, as well as PBS event.
- Parks and Planning for the county usually does a big event, which is not happening this year.
- Making appeal to speak on interesting topic for Juneteenth or anything interesting going on in July or August. Resources would be useful in finding a speaker. Cheri Everhart is working on developing Juneteenth event.
- Keep ideas coming and because Jan will serve as staff liaison at Health, Wellness, and Recreation Committee's next meeting, she'll share the same update with them.
 - JW: Sage (former resident of Hyattsville) planned essentially a Black Lives Matter rally for families which was very close to a Juneteenth event in Hyattsville. Was good to see so many individuals showing solidarity and support. Will reach out to her to get information on how to plan the event.
 - LR: Asked Jan to elaborate on reference to NMAAHC. Volunteers as part of public events group and wanted to understand what she intended before helping with a contact.
 - JG: As part of Juneteenth virtual celebration, Cheri is talking to the museum about a walking tour, either of a wing or of the whole museum. Will reach out to LaToya as part of identifying resources for virtual Juneteenth event.

Request further information or ideas on programming be emailed to Chair Dargin or Liaison Guszynski

Equity Officer Position

JG: City Administrator has been collecting job descriptions from other municipalities in the DMV area, and Jan is tasked with developing first job description for the post. City allocated funds for the position, which become available July 1. Once opening is posted, City Administrator will likely reach out to this group to have one or two members to serve on the interview team. This will likely be a shared contractor position with the City of Takoma Park.

Internship coordinator at UMD reached out to the city with a UMD grad student interested in getting local government experience, and Jan suggested that they serve as a bridge in supporting RETF work until equity officer is hired. Resume is not yet available.

- JW: Move to make sure that internships are paid. In thinking of councilmember ward budget, is there something similar available citywide that city council or mayor could use to support projects or initiatives like this, such as a stipend?
 - o JG: Will ask at staff meeting on Wednesday to get answer on this.

4. Open Discussion/Community Comments

Marshall: City should not use taxpayer money to fund students to intern for this purpose [of supporting RETF work until equity officer is onboarded].

5. Adjourn Meeting

Review agenda for next meeting

- Will discuss jobs and transportation section of the RETF Plan
- Will get updates on equity officer position
- Discuss updates on how Juneteenth event transpired

Adjourned at 8:00PM