



**THE DANE COUNTY
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION
TASK FORCE ON RACIAL DISPARITIES IN THE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Full Task Force Meeting:

July 28, 2009

Present:

Mlatawou, Jackson, Vedder, Butler, Blanchard, Schmidt, Gaber, Oliver, Heffernan,
Hassel, Hoskins, Dillard, Ketcham, Dorl

Staff:

Knox, Clark

Facilitator:

Gladis Benavides

As in the July 15th meeting, Gladis Benavides explained the process of reviewing the comments/feedback of each group recommendations. Colleen Clark would walk the TF through the spreadsheet summary with TF members elaborating on their comments or Clark reading from written comments of those who are not present. Benavides would facilitate and document any relevant agreements.

Group 3.

--Scott's Discretion Policy

Blanchard has concerns the "discretion policy" is not included in document. Writing team confirms it will be included in the appendix of final report.

--Racial Impact Statements

Should be included in the report (with "best practice" examples).

--Complaint Process for all Law Enforcement

Discussion ensues around accountability, consistent procedures, conflict resolution process, and using restorative justice models. Group told to be mindful of all DC Law Enforcement, not solely looking at MPD practices. A model should be provided of best practices—this might include for all of the criminal justice system. Additional discussion around: identify the issues; explore creating "guidelines"; two way communications/conflict-resolution process. Model must contain best practices. Letters to complaint should be specific in nature.

While original recommendation called for investigating the implementation an independent criminal justice auditor/ombudsman office to handle complaints county-wide from citizens regarding all law enforcement agencies and also DA, PD, DOC and the Court.

Decision was arrived at to develop countywide guidelines for a complaint best process that would include all Dane County LE and crim. Justice agencies, using the same form, Also decided to keep the Auditor idea as an example of a best practice gaining strength across the country and to ask the County Board to appoint a group to study the issue in more depth. The recommendation will focus on opening up the complaint process and dialogue btw crim. Justice agencies and the public to be able to work out problems in an alternative dispute resolution-style manner, and open up 2-way communication between agencies and the public that provides real feedback to complainants, to increase the confidence the public has that if they file a complaint, it will actually be handled with in a way aimed at satisfying the complainant that their concern has been heard and addressed in some manner.

Group #4:

Funding Diversion Programs

Agreement, remove list of organizations

Restorative Justice

Discussion around wording-i.e. Not “pilot”. Creation of a formal process to ensure equity. Change wording to targeted areas versus “neighborhoods” to be inclusive of the entire county.

Community Based Corrections

Resolved – see the draft report.

Data Collection

Resolved – see the draft report.

Mentoring Program

Resources/funding issues

Establish a referral to DA’s Office.

Fold recom 6 into 4.

Effort to increase people of color in...

All CJ Staff, cultural competency

Group 5

2-400 Police Discretion

Blanchard will send Gaber his reaction: missing key area

The writing team, Mlatawou, Oliver and Jackson, briefly review the draft report. All sections are not in the delivered report – final will include executive summary, co-chair letter, oral and written testimony, appendices.

Requests the group look for any bias or inflammatory language, but not to wordsmith. The co-chairs request the group looks at concepts. Formatting and graphics will be added at a later point.

Benavides notes the time of 6:30 and reviews next steps.

Next Steps:

1. The full task force will review the draft report and send any comments/feedback to Colleen Clark. The writing team requests this is done as soon as possible, but the formal deadline is August 3rd at 5 pm.
2. Next Task Force meeting is: Wednesday, August 5th; 4:30-6:30 at DRL.

Co-Chairs request that the report remain confidential, and not shared with any interested parties until it is released to the public. Thus, no electronic copies of the draft will be sent out at this time. Revisions may be received by email, and when those revisions are made to the draft, a final draft will be distributed to task force members as a hard copy – hopefully by the Aug. 5 meeting date.

Meeting concludes at 6:45 pm.