



**CITY OF OAKLAND  
REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE  
(SPECIAL MEETING)**

**Meeting Minutes (Draft)**

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

6:00 PM

Via Teleconference

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**1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum**

Co-Chairs Councilmember Bas and Councilmember Taylor.

The meeting began at 6:02pm.

**Task Force members present:** Anne Marks, David Kakishiba, Antoine Towers, Brooklyn Williams, Mariano Contreras, Keisha Henderson, Reygan Cunningham, Pat Kernighan, Gus Newport, John Jones III, Carol Wyatt, Ginale Harris, Nikki Dinh, Ivan Garcia, and Losaline Moa.

**Task Force members absent:** James Burch and Brenda Roberts.

*At the discretion of the Co-Chairs, the order of the agenda was modified. The agenda items were taken in the order listed below.*

**2. Opening Remarks**

Co-Chairs Councilmember Bas and Councilmember Taylor, and Co-Facilitator David Muhammad of the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform provided opening and framing remarks. Mr. Muhammad stated that the document containing the compiled responses of the Task Force members to Framework Questions #1-4 should not have been described as “recommendations” but rather as “concepts” or “ideas.” The Task Force will continue to discuss these concepts and provide guidance to help focus the work of the Advisory Boards as they continue to develop the recommendations.

**3. Public Comment**

There were ten (10) public speakers for this portion of public comment.

**4. Advisory Board Report Outs and Feedback**

**Co-Chair Report Backs**

**Question and Answer**

Task Force members who are also Co-Chairs to one of the Advisory Boards – Reygan Cunningham (OPD Organization & Culture), David Kakishiba (Budget Data and Analysis), Co-Facilitator Anand Subramanian, on behalf of James Burch (Alternate Responses, Programs and Investments), Nikki Dinh (Legal and Policy Barriers and Opportunities), and Ivan Garcia (Youth) – shared updates about the meetings and progress of their Advisory Boards to date.

Report from OPD Organization & Culture: The Working Groups continue to formulate recommendations and have started using the recommendations template provided by the Co-Facilitators. The Special Populations Working Group would like to connect with the

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Alternate Responses Advisory Board to discuss how different departments can respond to groups with special needs and are interested in learning more about the “stern” program.

Report from Budget Data & Analysis: Working Groups are diving into the Calls for Service data and City budget data. Some Working Group leads are developing a reporting template to identify the intersections between the ultimate recommendations that come from the various Working Groups and how they blend with and complement one another, and ensure that the Advisory Board provides a coherent set of recommendations that contain the elements of the proposed guiding principles.

Report from Legal Barriers & Opportunities: Advisory Board is divided into five Working Groups, submitting data requests and getting into greater specificity and recognizing that there are some conflicts between some of the recommendations that have been posed by the Task Force that was included in this meeting’s agenda packet.

Report from Alternate Responses: This Advisory Board is working to align with other Advisory Boards and Working Groups. In addition, the Advisory Board has expanded upon the recommendations matrix document to provide analysis of the fiscal, organizational, legal, operational and other impacts of their recommendations.

Report from Youth: There are fifteen youth from across the city on the Youth Advisory Board, membership is multiracial and includes formerly incarcerated members. Eight different youth organizations are represented on the Board. There are three Working Groups – Youth Survey, Youth Advisory Conference, and Social Media Campaign. The youth survey launched on 12/3 and has received over 900 responses to date, respondents receive a \$15 gift card for participating. Youth Advisory Conference is scheduled for December 14<sup>th</sup> and will include an interactive workshop, participants will receive a \$50 gift card. The social media campaign is underway and encourages youth to share on social media what community safety looks like to them; gift card incentives are promoted on social media.

**5. Update on Community Outreach and Engagement**

Co-Facilitator Anand Subramanian of PolicyLink shared a link to the City website which includes more information regarding how community members can engage in this process. He also announced that a Spanish-language version of the community survey is now available, and that information about ways that young people can get involved is also included on the website. The second community listening session was on December 8<sup>th</sup>, there was representation from the Task Force and community members. The input from the community is being compiled, and starting this month they will begin to identify specific ideas and perspectives that are aligned with some of the recommendation ideas that have been developed so far, and ideas and perspectives that could eventually form new recommendations – these ideas and perspectives will be provided to the Advisory Boards and Task Force members. A little less than 200 community survey responses have been received so far and the submission period continues until the end of January 2021,

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the responses will be reviewed and distilled into responses that can be provided to the Advisory Boards and Task Force to inform the recommendations. About 350-400 youth survey responses have been received to date. The goal is to obtain 1,000-2,000 community survey responses, the respondents' neighborhood of residence and whether they identify as directly impacted is being collected as part of the survey. PolicyLink is in the final stages of contracting with about 10-11 community-based organizations that will engage their constituents, networks and bases, potentially through this survey or other surveys as well.

Task Force member Mariano Contreras attended the community listening session on December 8<sup>th</sup> and shared that four listening sessions and an online survey was not enough to ensure effective community engagement. He shared a proposal to launch a robust community engagement plan, which included 1) while respecting Centers for Disease Control (CDC) COVID safety guidelines, the Task Force can launch 3-4 hour pop-ups in key neighborhoods and locations to conduct hand written surveys on Saturdays for one month, 2) Work with churches and places of worship to conduct outreach to their membership, 3) Collaborate with Oakland Parks and Recreation Department to conduct outreach to their networks with neighborhood families, 4) Contact Oakland Unified School District Department of Equity and Family Engagement to propose a collaborative engagement effort, 5) Consider inclusion of the merchant community, different neighborhood chamber of commerce groups, and 6) Consider inclusion of the labor community and unions in engagement efforts.

**6. Task Force Review of Draft, Preliminary Recommendations**

The Task Force members discussed the draft concepts, which were compiled by the Co-Facilitators from the Task Force's responses to Framework Questions #1-4. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad asked the Task Force to share which ideas and concepts are or are not resonating with them and if anything should be added, the goal being to understand better what the Task Force thinks about these concepts and ideas, to inform the development of recommendations.

Task Force member John Jones III emphasized the importance of centering people in this process. In addition, he stated that as the Task Force works toward its objective the members should consider the following: 1) will the alternative improve safety, or will it reduce it? 2) Conduct more engagement, taking the time to talk to the most heavily impacted communities, educate them and meet them where they are.

Task Force member Ginale Harris underscored that the principles developed by Task Force members is based on thoughtful, personal experience. She stated that each group needs to work collectively to make sure that the safety of others is not jeopardized, that "defund the police" likely has different meanings to different people, and that achieving equity must be a central goal.

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Task Force member Carol Wyatt stated that the Advisory Boards need to consider this list and look at the disciplinary platform of policing.

Task Force member Reygan Cunningham stated that she felt she didn't have enough information to comment on some of the concepts (e.g. response to domestic violence incidents), and hopes that experts in the field will have the chance to weigh-in. She also requested more information regarding the desired goal of the concept that "Oakland Police Department should no longer engage in parole and probation searches." Lastly, in response to the idea that the Oakland Police Department "should no longer use the Community Resource Officers for projects/investigations in his/her community or beat" she expressed that Community Resource Officers should continue to do projects in their community, particularly if they can have the bandwidth and time to do so.

Task Force member Ginale Harris agreed with the concept that parole and probation searches should be conducted without the assistance of the Oakland Police Department. She also expressed that the concepts list should have included proposed solutions or alternatives to the proposals – e.g., if police officers should no longer respond to reports of abandoned automobiles, who should respond instead? She would also like to see an alternative proposed to the concept that the Oakland Police Department "should no longer respond to noise complaint calls."

Task Force member Pat Kernighan expressed that she agrees that many traffic control functions could be handled by civilian staff, but has questions about how drunk drivers and speeding would be handled – would like an Advisory Board to research the nuances of traffic control and what could safely be done by a civilian. She supports the idea from some Advisory Boards that perhaps civilians could take on much of the work that has been done by Community Resource Officers, maybe Neighborhood Services Coordinators could do this instead and coordinate with the Police Department when needed. Additionally, Ms. Kernighan stated that the concept of moving the 911 Call Center out of the Police Department and potentially consolidate with the 311 Call Center would be very difficult and requires more research.

Task Force member Keisha Henderson stated that she does not support the idea that the Police Department should "stop responding to Level 2 calls, don't need sworn officers responding two hours after an incident is over," as she has personally experienced disparities in the way that a call is categorized and responded to. Similarly, she does not agree that the Police Department should not respond to blocked driveways. Lastly, Ms. Henderson stated that Community Resource Officers not engaging in community events contributes to a lack of trust, and that positive interactions between the police and the community should be supported.

Task Force member Antoine Towers emphasized the importance of collaboration between the Task Force and Advisory Boards, and that all concepts and ideas suggested as part of the process need to consider how resources can be shifted to address the needs of the community.

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Task Force member John Jones III shared the following feedback and questions regarding the concepts and ideas: 1) For replacement personnel, anyone who will perform these services should be adequately compensated, 2) As it relates to domestic disturbances, isn't there a State law that requires an officer to respond to these calls? This needs to be vetted, 3) Regarding the issue of traffic control, these calls have the potential to be very dangerous, so it's critical that we consider possible unintended consequences and ensure that both motorists and civilians conducting traffic control are safe, 4) The Task Force needs to consider the unintended consequences of all proposals and recommendations.

Task Force member Brooklyn Williams shared that she sees the question as trying to narrow the focus of the police so that there can be better response times, as officers are currently responding to scenarios that they were not trained or prepared to respond to. She emphasized that the goal of defunding the police does not mean that there should be a longer response time or no response time, the goal is to narrow the focus and allow officers to respond to the types of calls for which they are trained, such as violent crimes or property crimes.

Task Force member David Kakishiba expressed support of the goal of identifying alternatives to certain activities and functions currently held by the Police Department, and that the Advisory Boards need to examine different models and alternative responses and explore unintended consequences. He shared that he has concerns about some items in Appendix A, but supports forwarding the concepts and ideas to the Advisory Boards to do further research, and simultaneously continue the community engagement efforts.

Task Force member Mariano Contreras wished to add to the idea that the Police Department "should not respond to non-criminal calls or low-level issues such as parole and probation stops" – he would like to include that the general sentiment is that non-sworn officers should respond to those types of incidents, because the possibilities for escalation are always present when an armed officer responds to a non-criminal or low-level call.

Task Force member Anne Marks stated that all the ideas and concepts suggested so far have been tried in other jurisdictions, she hopes that the Co-Facilitators and Advisory Boards will continue to research the work that's been tried elsewhere to inform Oakland's recommendations. Ms. Marks supports the goal of using the least enforcement possible to address issues, and that it's critical to be thoughtful about the recommendations and avoid using the most impacted neighborhoods as test subjects when implementing these new ideas.

Task Force member Carol Wyatt emphasized that as the recommendations are implemented, we must recognize how different neighborhoods will respond to any changes.

Task Force member Gus Newport stated that in the absence of a master plan it will be hard to reorganize the Police Department or any part of the City. Additionally, Mr. Newport stated that many historical and present-day issues related to the Police Department and other issues such as gentrification have led to the current violence and

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other problems being experienced in parts of the city. He asked by when the recommendations would need to be submitted, and what reactions they can expect from the Mayor and City Council in adjusting the budget, as well as what the Task Force can realistically expect to accomplish in the short term versus in the future or on an ongoing basis.

Task Force member Nikki Dinh stated that as the process reaches the recommendations stage, the Advisory Board members should be involved in order to best express the nuances of each recommendation. Ms. Dinh would like to ensure this is a helpful conversation for the Advisory Boards and ensure there's a way to integrate them into the process.

Task Force member Reygan Cunningham shared that the Oakland Police Department has not hired an African American female in four years, and therefore does not support a hiring freeze in the Department.

Task Force member Losaline Moa stated that she agrees with Task Force member Brooklyn Williams in that the main goal is to make the community safer, and to do that we have to magnify on the root causes. The city's emergency calls (911) are often known as the "dumping ground," no matter the size of the emergency or if you don't know what to do, folks call the police – the Task Force and Advisory Boards need to investigate this. Is the Police Department rightfully equipped to handle these calls? If not, we should look to alternative responses with proven effectiveness.

**7. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The draft meeting minutes of November 23, 2020 were approved by: Anne Marks, David Kakishiba, Antoine Towers, Brooklyn Williams, Mariano Contreras, Keisha Henderson, Reygan Cunningham, James Burch, Pat Kernighan, Gus Newport, John Jones III, Carol Wyatt, Ginale Harris, Nikki Dinh, Ivan Garcia, and Losaline Moa.

**Absent:** James Burch and Brenda Roberts.

**8. Public Comment (resumed)**

There were nine (9) public speakers for this portion of public comment.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.