



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

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

6:00 PM

Via Teleconference

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Co-Chairs Council President 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, James Burch, Pat Kernighan, Gus Newport, John Jones III, Brenda Roberts, Carol Wyatt, Nikki Dinh, Ivan Garcia, and Losaline Moa.

Task Force members absent: Member Ginale Harris was absent at the time of roll call, Ms. Harris joined the meeting as a panelist during Item 5.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The draft meeting minutes of January 6, 2021 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, Brenda Roberts, Carol Wyatt, Nikki Dinh, Ivan Garcia, and Losaline Moa.

Absent: Member Ginale Harris was absent at the time of the approval of the meeting minutes, Ms. Harris joined the meeting as a panelist during Item 5.

3. Opening Statements

Co-Chairs Council President Bas and Councilmember Taylor, and Co-Facilitator David Muhammad with the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform provided opening statements and remarks.

4. Community Outreach Updates

Co-Facilitator Anand Subramanian with PolicyLink shared an update on the community outreach process. Two additional community listening sessions have been scheduled on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 6:00pm and Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 6:00pm. The last day to complete the community survey is Sunday, January 31.

5. Discussion of the Draft Recommendations

The Task Force members discussed the draft recommendations prepared by three of the Advisory Boards – the Youth Advisory Board, the Alternate Responses, Programs, and Investments Advisory Board, and the Legal and Policy Barriers and Opportunities Advisory Board. Co-Facilitator Anand Subramanian shared a summarizing document containing the draft recommendations developed by the three Advisory Boards.

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The Co-Facilitators asked Task Force members to share feedback on the recommendations such as what are the ideas that they have questions about, what other information should be considered, are there ideas or categories that they didn't like or didn't feel should be included, and what other ideas or categories should be included? The feedback would be shared with the Advisory Boards for further refinement of the recommendations in preparation for the February 12th deadline for the Advisory Boards to submit the draft recommendations to the Task Force.

The recommendation ideas were categorized into three main buckets: 1) increasing public safety through alternatives to policing, 2) preventing and addressing the root causes of harm and violence, and 3) safe, accountable, and transparent policing. It was noted that the document did not yet include draft recommendations from the OPD Organization and Culture Advisory Board or Budget Data and Analysis Advisory Board.

Member Losaline Moa shared that the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) recruited 15 youth members living or attending school in Oakland and representing eight youth community organizations. The YAB held a call to action project which included a youth survey that received over 400 responses, a youth advisory conference with over 50 attendees, and a youth advisory board workshop with over 12 attendees; the majority of participants and responses were from Black and Brown Oakland youth. Member Ivan Garcia shared that the YAB analyzed the data from the results of the survey, conference, workshop, and other YAB activities, as well as the individual experiences and recommendations of each YAB member to identify categories and common themes and develop the draft recommendations. These recommendations are still preliminary and being workshopped, but the three main categories are alternatives to policing, community and culture, and youth programs. The YAB is looking to continue to refine the recommendations and make them more specific, and hopes to collaborate with other Advisory Boards on this effort. The YAB plans to host a community listening session for young people, particularly those who took the survey or participated in the conference, to share the recommendations and more information.

Co-Facilitator David Muhammad invited the Task Force members to share and discuss any questions they have about the recommendations, any recommendations that they particularly support or do not support, and any requests for additional information related to a recommendation or a specific topic.

Member Reygan Cunningham asked about a recommendation from the Legal and Policy Barriers and Opportunities Advisory Board to “establish a public works street safety custodial stewardship team” – what would this team specifically do, would they clean and beautify neighborhoods, or would they have another purpose? Member Brooklyn Williams responded that the idea is that there is a relation between environment and violence prevention, and that these teams could serve as ambassadors and another set of eyes and ears that can help with communication and support the community in different capacities. Member Williams offered to follow-up to provide more information from the Advisory Board member who developed that recommendation.

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Member David Kakishiba stated the Alternate Responses Advisory Board is still grappling with the draft recommendations, and also noted that there is overlap between some of the recommendations from other Advisory Boards and that these recommendations could be consolidated. He also stated that if the Advisory Board is inclined to do so, it would be helpful if the recommendations can be categorized based on priority, their potential impact on public safety, and/or the timing of their implementation.

Member Brenda Roberts observed that the list was thorough and long, and stated that over 100 recommendations would be difficult for the City Council to review and act upon. She asked if there will be an effort to collate and condense the recommendations and put them in a format that will be usable to the City Council. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad responded that the Advisory Boards will continue to merge and prioritize the recommendations, but that the Task Force would be responsible for assisting with this as well.

Member Gus Newport questioned how some recommendations would be integrated in a way that creates a stronger comprehensive system, particularly around mental health. Regarding the recommendation to create a public works stewardship team, he asked for clarification around what agencies, organizations, etc. would be available for the stewardship team to contact for assistance in responding to different issues – the overall system needs to be considered.

Member James Burch offered himself as a resource for any Task Force member who has questions about any recommendation from the Alternate Responses Advisory Board. He also shared that he is working with a research team at the Goldman School of Public Policy and the African American Studies Department at the University of California, Berkeley, and those researchers are willing to look into recommendations or explore data or other information.

Member Ginale Harris asked how the guiding principles were incorporated into the existing recommendations, if at all.

Member Pat Kernighan asked if a cost analysis of the recommendations from the Alternate Responses Advisory Board would be done by that Advisory Board, or by the Budget Data and Analysis Advisory Board, or if the proposers of the recommendation are expected to conduct that analysis. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad responded that the recommendations template is designed in a manner that allows the Budget Data and Analysis Advisory Board to review and analyze the recommendations from other Advisory Boards. In addition, the Budget Data and Analysis Advisory Board is drafting fewer recommendations to ensure they have sufficient time to analyze recommendations from the other Advisory Boards. Member Kernighan observed that many of the recommendations relate to mental health and providing a different kind of mental health response, she suggested that those recommendations be consolidated. In addition, some of the recommendations support a more community-based response by trained individuals who are not necessarily psychiatrists, psychologists, or social workers, and

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other recommendations discuss connecting with the County and its mental health clinicians – she supports both types of recommendations and believes both should be included. Lastly, Member Kernighan stated that the prioritization would be difficult both in terms of time and looking at the cost of some of the recommendations, she suggested that perhaps recommendations could be organized or prioritized based upon cost, and that it may be valuable to create some additional guiding principles to assist the Task Force in determining what should be submitted to the City Council.

Member Antoine Towers stated that some of the recommendations seem to be contradictory, and suggested that Task Force members should be more closely involved in the process of developing recommendations. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad responded that Task Force members will have an opportunity to further refine the recommendations through the process, additionally, Task Force members can participate at the Advisory Board-level to contribute more to the development of recommendations.

Member Brenda Roberts stated that this is a multi-dimensional document and should be collated, and recommendations should be costed by the Budget Data and Analysis Advisory Board. In addition, she stated that each recommendation should include an expected time period, as not all recommendations can be adopted on July 1, 2021. Member Roberts stated that the Task Force should be cognizant of which recommendations can be adopted in the near-term, mid-term, mid/long-term, or long-term to fulfill the requirement for the 50% reduction in the Police Department budget so that the implementation timeframe is realistic. In addition, Member Roberts stated that recommendations need to be set into a broader viewpoint, and when the recommendations are put to the Council and then directed to the City Administrator and Police Dept, it's up to them to devise and put together the plans to comply with the recommendations, as they are at the operational level. The Task Force should understand the granular detail in order to provide informed recommendations, but doesn't need to include all the steps for implementation – that is up to those Departments, and the Council will need to hold them accountable for implementation.

Member Carol Wyatt stated that she was appointed to the Task Force by the Community Policing Advisory Board (CPAB), a body that works with Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils, Neighborhood Block Associations and Resident Councils, many of whom live in violent communities. Member Wyatt expressed that as the CPAB appointee, she is responsible for taking the recommendations back to the CPAB so that they can then share the recommendations with the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils and other groups to hear from them about how crime and violence prevention in their community equates to their vision of what public safety is. She emphasized that hearing from those residents is really important, and that goal shouldn't be lost.

Member John Jones III expressed thanks to those who developed the recommendations and stated that he looks forward to continued discussion.

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Member Anne Marks stated that she agrees with the recommendation that Measure Z needs to be revised. In addition, she observed that there are many recommendations that are about alternate responses and decriminalization around the issues of poverty, homelessness, substance abuse and mental health, and she agrees with this decriminalization approach and providing alternate responses to these issues that do not involve armed personnel. Member Marks also stated that she is supportive of the restorative justice-related recommendations and has a question about the Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board recommendation and would like to hear more about this program. On the topic of decriminalization, Member Marks stated that she's heard from various individuals in the Police Department that many things are already decriminalized because the police do not prosecute or respond to those complaints, she would like to know how true that is in reality and whether it's possible for the City to not expend resources on something that should be decriminalized. Member Marks also asked about the recommendation to move the Police Department's Forensics Unit out of the Criminalistics Division and into an independent center, she would like to know if the vision is that the Forensics Unit would become regionalized and/or integrated with the County, and the reasoning for this recommendation. Lastly, regarding the recommendation to civilianize the Internal Affairs Division, Member Marks stated that she is interested in the idea of civilianizing Internal Affairs and/or moving Internal Affairs and investigations about police misconduct out of the Police Department, and is curious if there are other places that have done this.

Member Mariano Contreras responded that the Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board is a youth diversion program that allows youth charged with offenses to remain in the community and connects them with services and supports, as an alternative to incarceration. The program is already in place in Oakland and is supported by the City Council, but there is no City/public funding, only private funding, and the program has served 20-25 youth since the beginning of 2020. Member Contreras stated that the recommendation would ultimately include a dollar figure and request that the City Council allocate \$750,000 annually for two years to enable the program to scale. Member Contreras also shared that he believes that most of the recommendations align with the proposed guiding principles. He expressed that the model used by the Youth Advisory Board to develop their recommendations was a successful process that involved community input through the surveys, workshops, and other efforts.

Member Keisha Henderson asked for clarification regarding decriminalization, particularly recommendations to decriminalize drug use, drug sales, and sex trafficking – what exactly is proposed to be decriminalized? Member James Burch offered to connect Member Henderson with the individuals who developed those requests to provide more information.

Member Nikki Dinh encouraged Task Force members to review the additional research and information that is linked within the recommendations document. She also expressed that this first review and discussion of the recommendations provides a good eagle-eye view and temperature check of the recommendations, and requested if Task Force

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member can be more closely involved in the refinement and finalization of the recommendations at the Advisory Board and Work Group levels.

Member Ginale Harris acknowledged and asked that the Task Force members keep in mind the six homicides that have occurred in Oakland since January 1st, as well as the two individuals currently in the hospital.

Member Ivan Garcia stated that there is much more work to be done to refine the recommendations, including to identify recommendations that are similar or overlap and seek to consolidate those where possible.

Member Losaline Moa agreed that this is an ongoing process and acknowledged concerns about the large number of recommendations, but suggested that through collaborative work they can continue to align the recommendations and shorten the workload.

Member Brooklyn Williams stated that she observed alignment across the Advisory Boards on different topics and recommendations, and also commented that the Youth Advisory Board created a very strong and effective process to develop their recommendations. Member Williams also commented that there is alignment across the recommendations developed by the Advisory Boards and other policy changes being contemplated by other City bodies, such as the Police Commission.

Member Anne Marks reiterated her question about the recommendations regarding the Internal Affairs Division and Forensics Unit, Member Ginale Harris responded that the Oakland Police Commission has voted to recommend moving the Internal Affairs Division out of the Oakland Police Department and into the City's Community Police Review Agency, and that Camden, New Jersey may have civilianized their internal affairs unit. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad commented that the Denver Colorado Sheriff's Department civilianized their internal affairs unit, as a separate unit in the department that is comprised of unsworn staff.

Member Brooklyn Williams requested that Member Ginale Harris share feedback on the Youth Advisory Board's recommendation related to civilianization of certain positions in the Police Department; Member Harris responded that she is in support of the recommendations of the Youth Advisory Board.

6. Public Comment

This Item was taken concurrently with Item #8, Open Forum.

7. Discussion of Guiding Principles of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force

a) Presentation of the Polling Results

b) Discussion

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c) Vote

Co-Facilitator David Muhammad shared the results of the guiding principles poll, which included a total of ten responses from ten Task Force members.

Co-Chair Councilmember Taylor suggested that guiding principles which have received support from a majority of Task Force members who either “somewhat support” or “strongly support” that principle could be considered for a vote of approval by the Task Force.

Member Nikki Dinh expressed thanks to the five Task Force member who initiated the discussion of the guiding principles, and to those Task Force members who have since contributed and participated in developing the guiding principles.

Member John Jones III stated that the poll results should not be anonymous.

Member Brooklyn Williams expressed that a vote should not occur until all Task Force members are able to complete the poll.

Member James Burch shared that he would be interested in hearing other’s thoughts, comments, concerns, and criticisms about the guiding principles and why they voted in a particular way in the guiding principles poll. In addition, he stated that he would prefer to have time to digest the results of the poll before voting on the guiding principles.

Member Antoine Towers stated that it’s important to solidify the guiding principles so that they can inform the recommendations. He also stated that the principles should be adopted at the next meeting if not this meeting, and that the Task Force members need to be involved and have a say in what principles and recommendations move forward.

Member Carol Wyatt expressed concerns about the subjectivity of one of the proposed guiding principles, and suggested that the principles needed to be reviewed and discussed further before the Task Force votes.

Member Keisha Henderson shared concerns that the poll’s questions were repetitive and unclear, and the current version of the poll could result in Task Force members misunderstanding the questions. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad clarified that the different versions of the questions each include different edits proposed by Task Force members.

Member Ginale Harris agreed with Member Henderson that the poll was unclear and the language of the some of the guiding principles had been changed without permission. Co-Facilitator David Muhammad clarified that the poll included all proposed guiding principles and edits to guiding principles that were submitted by Task Force members.

Co-Facilitator David Muhammad stated that the next version of the poll can clarify the alternative versions of guiding principles.

Co-Chair Councilmember Taylor commented that there are several reasons not to take a vote at this meeting, including that some members had not yet had a chance to review and

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take the poll, and that providing clearer aggregation of the poll results will be helpful to the Task Force members before they take a vote on the guiding principles. Additionally, Councilmember Taylor suggested revising the poll itself to clarify each of the proposed guiding principles.

Member Mariano Contreras stated that the conflict seems to be due to the large number of different versions of the guiding principles and confusion around the edits and changes that have been proposed. He recommended that the Task Force first vote only on the original set of guiding principles that were proposed by the group of five Task Force members. Then after that vote, other Task Force members could propose other guiding principles if they so choose.

Member Brooklyn Williams commented that if revisions will be made to the poll and the poll will be re-sent, a comment section should be added to each principle so that Task Force members can provide a written explanation about their vote or thought process. In addition, Member Williams expressed that guiding principle #7 as currently written would require a level of work that is not feasible to expect of Task Force and Advisory Board members who are volunteers and likely have full-time jobs, and that this level of analysis could likely be done at the direction of City Council by City staff.

Co-Facilitator David Muhammad concluded that a vote would not be taken at this meeting, the poll will be revised to add an explanation about the three principles that have proposed alternative language, and to add a comment section for every principle.

8. Public Comment / Open Forum

There were nine (9) public speakers for Public Comment/Open Forum.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.