

## **Anti-Racism Task Force**

August 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 Minutes

Call to Order 6:18 pm

End: 7:42 pm

Public Comment-No comment

New Business:

Community Building

### **Black Lives Matter Cross Walk.**

Cross Walk Update-Co Chair Ford.

Work has started at the Cross Walk. Enox is working with “Rise Up”. Rise Up is working with the City.

Rise up is working with the City. Co-Chair Ford encouraged members to meet with Enox, have a conversation with him as he is an aspiring young man.

Co-Chair Crockett said she received positive feedback, despite the slippery complaint received due to the rain. Member Precious will continue to meet to discuss safety options.

Bobbye mentioned the article that was written by the Middletown Press. Bobbye said there was a failure of the paint and that is what caused the slippery sidewalk. A meeting was held and it was decided to stop the work for now. Sand was put down on the pavement to help stop the slipperiness and then the sand was removed once the rain stopped.

Bobbye said there is a commitment to move forward with the Art project.

### **Community Building:**

Co-Chair Crockett was invited to the June NAACP meeting. The meeting was positive. Co-Chair Crockett said she connected with other collaborators that are doing the same Anti-Racism Work.

She received positive feedback. The NAACP asked how the Anti-Racism Task Force is connecting with the community. Co-Chair Crockett was not able to answer that question. Suggestions were made by the NAACP. A Suggested strategic plan is on the agenda.

Co-Chair Crockett said she felt that the NAACP did not understand that the phase that the Anti-Racism Task Force was in which is still the learning phase. Learning about the municipality and the system that are within.

Task members discussed getting a consultant for the Task Force that does strategic planning Co Chair Crockett asked the Task members to make suggestions. Co-Chair Crockett said the NAACP

may feel that the Anti-Racism Task Force may be all over the place, not able to meet quorum, not meeting in person. Member Anderson said she thought the strategic plan was an excellent idea. She will submit a name of an agency to Co-Chair Crockett. Co. Chair Ford said it was great to have such a diverse Board. He said the Task Force is not just a recommendation Board to the mayor. He said the Task Force can have projects as well.

### Criminal Justice

There are improvements in the racial profiling report. The numbers are improving, less people of color are being pulled over for low level infractions.

Co-Chair Crockett said speeding kills people not a faulty brake light.

Co-Chair Crockett said during the community meeting member Hart asked the Chief of Police why he attended the meeting wearing his gun at a community meeting.

Co. Chair Ford asked the members if it will be helpful going forward to ask the Chief of police for data. He asked if there is data that shows the city policing the community differently.

Member Anderson asked if the Task Force has been involved in outside discussion on the Civilian Review Board. There are conferences, community conversations regarding the Civilian review board. She said it would be great if some of the Task Force members would be involved in some of the national conversations & to use those opportunities to learn from others and other parts of the country.

Member Daniels said it is important to educate the police & community. He would like to see the police out in the community. He said if the police met the community, they would handle the community differently. He said the Middletown Police is coming from different towns so they do not know the community very well. He said there is a fear when you are pulled over. He said educating the driver is also important. Member Daniels said the officers need to be aware of the conversations black parents are having with their children.

Task Member Price said we have to be careful bringing folks around black people who are harmful without doing healing first. It will look like we are throwing the police in people's faces. She asked why there is a push back on community policing. She said she feels there is stuff that hinders the work that the Taskforce is doing. Member Hart agrees with Price. Member Daniels agrees with Price, and said there is a sense of denial with in the city as a whole.

Member Anderson asked if there are priorities. Is there an order of priorities, the top priorities that the Taskforces is working on? Co. Chair Crockett mentioned the themes.

Member Price asked if there was an update on the Citizen Review Board. Co. Chair Ford said there are no updates. Co. Chair Crockett said there will be an update for the next meeting.

### Workshop

MRJC Work Shop. Co. Chair Ford said there are taking recommendation regarding agencies for the Work Shop.

Member Anderson asked what was the Work Shop on? Co. Chair Ford and Co. Chair Crockett said it was about the ARTF and how to be grounded as a person of color. Co. Chair Crockett said not everyone needs to take the Work Shop.

Member Daniels asked how diverse are the workshops? Are we reaching out to folks that do not look like us? Co. Chair Crockett said the Training was for the Taskforce members only. She said the agency chosen maybe anyone, black or BIPOC. Member Daniels said he misunderstood what the workshop was for. He thought it was for everyone. Co. Chair Ford said the Taskforce is not there yet. He said the Task Force is just understanding what Anti-Racism is and how to move forward in making recommendations. Creating a platform and talk about the work and what you can bring to the table. The Task Force is trying to see how we can work with the experience of everyone in the room, what it means as collective. Get the Task Force to understand what it means to be on the Task Force. Member Price said when the Task Force started it was new there was not a template to work from. She said there was group that was working on what was happening in terms of the racial climate.

Anderson said on the state level there is an ARTF, it may be good at some point to see what they are doing- the \$200,000 that was given to the Task force to do the work and to form the Task Force. It does not mean to make Racism a public Health crisis. What are some of the Action steps that are going to be taken to address some of the issues?

### **Quarterly Reports**

The time has passed. Co. Chair Ford said they will gather all the information and do a quarterly report. He will get hat to the Taskforce and present it to the Council.

### **Hybrid or In Person**

You may want to consider other venues to meet instead of meeting at City Hall room 208.

Co. Chair Ford said he is in person and he is in room 208.

Co. Chair Crockett said there are not a lot of people who back the Task Force. She said the Task force cannot meet other races that are in Middletown and she said if there are other spaces outside of City Hall to meet then please let them know. She said there is flexibility as to where they can hold the meetings. Task member Cotton said Shiloh is open to the members to host meetings. Co. Chairs said that was a great suggestion.

### **Ideas and Research**

Co. Chair Ford said there is a lot of work happening in Middletown, but it seems like what is happening is hidden.

## Events –Dates-Calendars

Events Calendar. Co. Chair Ford said getting away from status quo. What events can the Task Force recommend and what can the Task Force be a part of. Co. Chair Ford will send out the calendar.

Co. Chair Crockett said recommendations, as a group the Task Force gets to recommend directly to the major. She said one of the recommendation is to hire an employee who focus on diversity hiring for the city. She said there was an employee, but it did not work out.

She said she needs more ideas, and need the Task Force to attend the meetings to meet quorum. At this point the Task Force has \$185,000 left. She said please come with the ideas. It is a call to action. She said the Task Force the needs to coordinate. The Task Force is an advisory board and the Task Force is directly work with the major's office.

Co. Chair Ford motion to adjourn.

Co. Chair Crockett second.