

June 26, 2024

City & County Racial Equity Commission

Commission Attendees

Dr. Brent Lewis
Michelle Augustine
Sharon Williams
Nisha Williams
Delvin Davis
Ernest Smith
David Williams
Ramya Krishna
Elena Snavely
Tiffany Foster

Excused Absence(s)

Atrayus Goode
Jadda Richardson

Absent

Krista Kenney
Kedrick Lowery
Del Ruff
Sheila Mullen

Elected Officials- Not present

DeDreana Freeman
Brenda Howerton

Dr. Lewis called to order at 6:48 p.m.

- No public comments

Nisha Williams called for approval of minute

- Ernest Smith – requested an excused absence as the meeting had been changed
 - o Dr. Lewis to update Ernest Smith as an “excused absence”
- Ernest motioned accept the minutes as written with the additional edit to having an excused absence
- Tiffany seconded
- I’s have it

Debrief on subcommittee conversation

- Dr. Lewis emailed the committee each subcommittee’s presentation that has taken place of the last few months
- Presentations have been from both committee members and employees of both the city and county

- Nisha Williams
 - Learned a lot
 - Still digesting the information because it was so much back-to-back
 - Great to see the work across systems and see what has and can be done
 - Looking forward to figuring out how to package all of the information and give to leaders in government
- Delvin Davis
 - How do we present all of this information to the city/county government? Want to distill all of this down into one presentation
 - Nisha
 - Ideally, have a long narrative which would lay out the recommendations that have been found, updating the recommendations that have been addressed, and naming certain recommendations that need more information or more work to be done around certain recommendations
 - Ideally, we would meet during their joint session and condense the narrative into a PowerPoint presentation to show all the highlights of the task force
 - Currently as a 3rd yr law student working with Nisha and she is ready and willing to assist in creating the narrative and creating the PowerPoint – here until the end of July
 - Will plan on meeting with Dr. Lewis and Sharon to go over the taskforce spreadsheet
 - Is that something everyone would be ok with doing?
 - Sharon Williams provided context of the presentations and spreadsheets to Michelle due to her being new on the task force
 - Michelle to receive the taskforce report and all of the presentations
 - Elena Snavelly wondered about the timeline of everything
 - Nisha asked Dr. Lewis for the dates for the joint meetings. The commission is looking to take July off. Given that, the recommendation would be to not meet in July, meet in August to review all of the information that was able to be gathered by the intern and others, and have an in person working meeting in August.
 - Ernest
 - Joint city/county are the even months and the 1st week – Aug. 7 and October 2nd
 - Agree with the proposal of doing it at a joint meeting and giving us time to hopefully present in October
 - Would like to suggest having intern meet with subcommittee groups during the month of July so that she can get information directly from us

- Dr. Lewis and Sharon in agreement of recommendation. The intern could meet with one person; after the meeting, updates could be made to the spreadsheet.
- There will be one person from each group given access to the PowerPoint
- Sharon Williams shared her screen to show the public facing table
 - Once everything has been updated, a public facing form will be available and continuously updated so residents know what has been done and what has not been done
- Elena Snaveley
 - One of the themes that came up during the presentations was that we did not know where to go for further information.
 - Sharon Williams – the commission’s job is to look at what has or has not been done and call that out. In the upcoming presentation an outline will be prepared and will help show what has or has not happened and what you can and cannot find along with recommendations.
 - The commission exist to look at the task force report and to figure out what is and isn’t happening in Durham; Starting point is what was said in the task force
 - How valid will our recommendations be with the data they are basing it on is all over the place?
 - Nisha Williams – we cannot presume since 2020 that in 4 years Durham has done anything to address the gaps
 - Need to be mindful of realistic understanding of how slow change is. It is also important for us to name where there are issues in the data and where there are issues in transparency
 - Like having a public facing documents and would like to recommend more transparent data on the areas that we focused on

Dr. Lewis – To summarize:

- Someone from each subgroup will meet with Nisha’s intern in July
- You need to let Sharon know who will have access to the spreadsheet
- Nisha’s intern will work with you in that meeting on what needs to be in the narrative from your group
- Pair down what was in the narrative into the presentation
- August will be a working session to prepare and plan on what was done in July and what will be presented in the October meeting
- Nisha Williams
 - Touch base with your group to see who the point person will be so that she can let Mia know who the touchpoint is
 - Ideally, let Nisha know by Friday

Closing thoughts/Questions

- Sharon Williams
 - o Reminder that the starting point for this commission is the task force recommendations. You can't move away from that and just start with your recommendations.
 - o Need to state that this is a recommendation. It was a valid and actionable recommendation; yet nothing was done, or something was done. But what was done was inadequate. Here's what we're thinking needs to happen next...
- Elena Snavelly -- How long are we commissioners for?
 - o Depends on your appointment letter but it typically lasts about 2 years
- Nisha Williams – Is everyone ok with meeting in person in August?
 - o Same time we normally meet – 3rd Wednesday of the month; August 21
- Sharon Williams
 - o August is the change over month so communication will now come from the City instead of the Conty for the next 6 months
 - o Please note, if there is an in-person meeting citizens are to be awarded the option to attend in person or online – there will be a live recording
 - Retreats are not required to have an option for residents to join

Closing

- Nisha thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and talking through the fall plans
 - o There will be a lot of communication over July via email
- Nisha Williams closed the meeting