

Champaign County
Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF)
Organizational Meeting
Thursday February 11, 2016
6:30 pm

I. Call to Order

County Board Chair Pattsy Petrie called the meeting was called to order at approximately 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Pattsy Petrie called the roll and three members were absent.

III. Approval of Agenda

Esther Patt motioned to amend the agenda to move public participation from item 9 to item 5 on the agenda. Francena Turner seconded the motion. Motion carried and Public Participation was moved to item 5.

IV. Welcome and Introductions

Present members introduced themselves.

V. Public Participation (numbered in speaking order)

1. *Bobbi Trist* asked that the body speak louder as the public could not hear what they were saying. She also asked why there were no microphones. She expressed appreciation to the body. She stated that the body needs financial and technological support, needs to be empowered to select their own chair and meeting times, and needs to center dealing with racial imbalances in resources and within the justice system in Champaign County.
2. *Pius Weibel* of the Champaign County Board stated that he wants to make sure that the body gets microphones. He urged them to focus on resolution lines 4 & 5 in whichever way they decide, but suggested that they start simple. Reiterated that there has to be a recorder at all meetings whether they are subcommittee or whole body. He wished the body luck.
3. *James Kilgore* of Build Programs Not Jails (BPNJ) spoke of the 2.5 years of work that his group put into getting the RJTF established. He stated that he is hopeful that the RJTF will make meaningful contributions in dealing with racism and inequality in the community. He had concerns that: (1) this body establish legitimacy in the Black community by centering their experiences as they are the most impacted by racial disparities; (2) this body not let the introduction of jobs and housing into its committees pull focus away from criminal justice issues; and (3) that this body not be forced to exist on zero funding. He closed by stating the BPNJ is ready to support, participate, and help legitimize the RJTF.
4. *Evelyn Reynolds* of BPNJ and Black Lives Matter-CU (BLMCU) thanked the body for moving public participation up on the agenda and suggested it be remain there permanently. She stated that the focus should be on racial disparities.
5. *Kadeem Fuller* of BLMCU urged the body not to get sidetracked by bureaucracy. He closed by stating that BLMCU will always be here to support and critique this process.
6. *Tom Moore* urged the body to remember the historical context in which it exists.

7. *Sam Shore* of the Champaign County Board charged the body to design its own mission, and committee structure.
8. *James Quisenberry* of the Champaign County Board (District 10) indicated that he will help get the body microphones for its meetings and that the body should let the Board know if it needs staff and/or technological support to videotape the meetings. He closed by stating that the Board wants to see the body succeed.

Public participation closed at 7:16 p.m.

VI. Discussion

A. Agenda and Materials

Pattsi Petrie and the body discussed the printed materials which include the agenda, a copy of Resolution NO. 9405, a list of suggestions, a suggested mission statement, a suggested task force structure, and references.

B. Elections

Francena Turner volunteered to serve as secretary. Esther Pratt motioned to select her as secretary. _____ seconded. Motion carried.

Artice James moved that Samuel Byndom serve as facilitator and Esther Pratt seconded the nomination. Maryam Ar-Raheem moved that Alex Evans serve as facilitator and Kevin Schneider seconded the nomination. Evans deferred to Byndom. Motion carried.

C. Time-Table

The body discussed its time table as several months of the 18 month timeframe were lost as the resolution was in October and the first meeting of the body was tonight. The consensus was that members of the body would go the next county board meeting on February 18, 2016 @ 6:30 and request that the full 18 months be reinstated.

D. Structural Concerns

The body discussed items to be placed on the next meeting agenda such as RJTF focus, subcommittee structure, mission statement, the usage of our final reports and recommendations, the importance of centering public participation, forming a central location to share documents, community communication, and the ways in which having no staff or financial support shows the County Board's lack of commitment. The consensus was that the body would start from scratch by adding these items to the agenda for the next meeting.

E. Determination of Meeting Days, Time, and Location

After some discussion, Kevin Schneider moved that the next meeting date be set for February 25, 2016 @ 6:30 p.m. in the Divet Room. Francena Turner seconded the motion. The motion carried.

F. Ryan Hughes clarified that Pattsi Petrie would not be the body chair or a member of the body. Pattsi Petrie indicated that she was just at this one organizational meeting.

G. Pattsi Petrie reminded the body to complete FOIA (Open meeting) training and turn in the certificate of completion.

VII. Adjournment

Pattsi Petrie adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.