

Minutes
Meeting of the Task Force on Race and Culture
Deborah Beggs Moncrief Garden Center, Oak Hall
3220 Botanic Garden Boulevard, Fort Worth, Texas 76107
August 28, 2017 - 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Rosa Navejar, Presiding Chair of the Race and Culture Task Force, called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

In attendance:

Task Force Members	City Staff
Biggins, Lillie – Co Chair	Brown, Laetitia – Senior Assistant City Attorney
Bloom, Rabbi Andrew – Co Chair	Costa, Fernando – Assistant City Manager
Boswell, Charles	Gutt, Michelle – Communications and Public Engagement Director
Dansby, Walter	Rush, Angela – Human Relations Administrator
Fernandez, Robert I.	
Frias, Miriam	
Goldberg, Bob	
Harper, Yolanda	
Kirkland, Bishop Mark	
Malek, Nima	
Mao, Ratana	
Martinez, Arturo	
Martinez, Roxanne	
McDonald, Judy	
Mossige, Dr. Terri	
Navajer, Rosa –Presiding Co Chair	
Sanders, Bob Ray – Co Chair	
Session, Cory	
Sherrod, Katie	
Stimpson, Ty	
Trevino, Jennifer	
Vasquez, Monica	
Woody, Rev. Tim	

OPENING REMARKS

Rabbi Andrew Bloom asked that the Task Force members and the community at large keep those impacted by Hurricane Harvey in their thoughts and prayers. He continued by thanking the Task Force members for helping the City reach their goals. Ms. Navejar introduced special guests that were in attendance: Councilmembers Ann Zadeh, Jungus Jordan, Dennis Shingleton, and Brian Byrd.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the August 4, 2017, Task Force meeting were approved. 20 Ayes/1 Abstention (2 Task Force Members arrived late)

AGENDA ITEMS

Selection of Host Organizations for Community Conversations

Estrus Tucker provided a summary on the selection of the host organizations and described what their responsibilities will be as hosts during the community conversations. Mr. Tucker stated that currently twenty-five (25) organizations have expressed an interest in hosting, and that those organizations have been preliminarily partnered into groups. Mr. Tucker reminded the Task Force members that we are looking for host organizations that are broad based, civic oriented, and have traditionally engaged diverse citizens in a voluntary manner. The target is 20-30 diverse participants in each of the conversations. The host organizations must commit to the Task Force's agenda, structured questions and guidelines. Each host organizations will volunteer for three (3), two (2) hour facilitated discussions. Organizations may choose to host the discussions all in one-day or a have series of three conversations – preferably in a thirty (30) day window.

Mr. Tucker stressed that the content of these conversations will be inadequate unless we engage low-income communities of color throughout Fort Worth. He explained that this is not because their voice is singularly more important than anyone else, but rather because their voice is often missing. Thus, the host organizations are being charged with bringing the low-income communities of color to the table for the community conversations. Also, Mr. Tucker noted that the plan is to have two (2) town hall meetings. One town hall meeting will be prior to the community conversations and one will be after the last community conversation. Mr. Tucker emphasized the intent of the town hall meetings is to reach a significant number of population that is under-reached or under-represented. The process will be refined as conversations progress.

Rosa Navejar introduced Leon Andrews from the National League of Cities (NLC). Mr. Andrews noted that the work of the Task Force is a priority for NLC and that they are looking forward to working with Mr. Tucker and the Task Force members.

Mr. Tucker then noted the mission and vision of the Task Force:

- Mission: "Listen, learn, build and bridge in order to create an inclusive Fort Worth for all residents."
- Vision: "Fort worth will become a city that is inclusive, equitable, respectful, communal, and compassionate."

Mr. Tucker further noted that there is intent for the host organizations to continue conversations beyond the timeline of the Task Force in order to continue the advancement of respectful engagement and civil dialogue.

The floor was opened up to questions:

- Question - How will the Task Force ensure that the host organizations are logistically hosting the conversations during reasonable times and locations to ensure opportunities for diverse citizens to attend?
Answer – The Task Force will be looking to identify gaps and will look to ensure that the conversations are held logistically throughout the entire city. The Task Force will also be monitoring and evaluating participation in the community conversations. If there is a need – the Task Force will go back to the drawing board to identify ways to increase broad based participation.
- Question - Will there be devices to assist with language barriers (translation) and/or interpreters for individuals with disabilities?
Answer – Host organizations will have the responsibility to provide translation and/or interpreters during the community conversations. It is expected that the host organizations have relationships with those they invite to the community conversations, and as such will have staff and volunteers that are familiar with working with those diverse communities, including any language needs. It is not assumed that each host organizations will have community conversations just in English. Care will also be taken to have diverse facilitators during the conversations.

At the invitation of Ms. Navejar, Fernando Costa briefed the Task Force on the August 24, 2017 host organization meeting.

(Mayor Price arrived during the explanation of the host organization meeting August 24, 2017 and provided a brief welcome.)

Mr. Tucker resumed explaining that an informational meeting was held with approximately twenty eight (28) potential host organizations. The response from those organizations was overwhelmingly positive. Mr. Costa then discussed the list of potential host organizations with the Task Force. He explained that the list of organizations were chosen by the Co-Chairs based on their diversity and experience with bringing people together for honest conversations on race and culture, and their ability to reach out to different populations. Mr. Costa asked the Task Force to consider whether or not these potential hosts capture the diversity of the different Fort Worth communities and if the list is truly inclusive.

During the discussion, several questions were asked:

- Question: Will it be possible to not just have educators involved with community conversations, but also engage students to participate in community conversations?
Response: Task Force members offered suggestions on ways to engage students.
- Question: Can staff reach out again to those potential hosts that were unable to make the meeting on August 24, 2017 and invite to another potential host organization meeting?
Answer: Yes.
- Question: What is the process for recording, documenting and sharing the community conversations?
Answer: The process is still being refined. However, the community conversations will not be recorded via audio or video in order to respect the dynamics and safety of the space. There will be notes taken, in some simple way such as scribes, to capture feedback from the conversations.

Additional groups identified by the Task Force members as potential host organizations, included: United Educators Association, Fairness Fort Worth, Nation of Islam, LULAC, All Saints Catholic Church, Great Commission Baptist Church, Potter's House of Fort Worth, National Hispanic Institute, Casa Del Inmigrante Fort Worth, Federacion Zacatecana de Fort Worth, and Faith Community Leaders United.

Rosa Navejar asked that any additional potential host organizations be provided to staff by Monday, September 4, 2017.

A motion was made by Katie Sherrod and seconded by Bob Goldberg to approve the list of potential host organizations as presented, to contact the additional organizations brought to the table, and fill in organizational gaps as needed. Motion passed. 23 Ayes.

Discuss Scheduling of Future Meetings

Mr. Costa discussed the schedule of future meetings, and noted that:

- The community conversations will be scheduled to start in mid to late September extending into the Fall.
- The Co-Chairs recommend that the full Task Force have regularly scheduled meetings on the 3rd Monday of the month at 5 p.m. beginning on October 16th.
- The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for September 25th, as an all-day work session retreat from 9a – 4p.
- Dates proposed for the first town hall are either October 2nd or October 3rd at 6:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church.

Fernando Costa further explained that the second potential host meeting will be held sometime in the next two weeks and the second town hall will be held sometime in December 2017 or January 2018.

Jennifer Trevino motioned , and Arturo Martinez seconded, to accept the 3rd Monday of each month as a regular meeting date starting Monday, October 16th at 5 p.m. in the Botanic Garden Center (if available) and setting Monday, October 2nd as the date for the first town hall meeting at the First Presbyterian Church starting at 6:30 p.m. Motion passed. 23 Ayes.

Presentation on Public Engagement Tools, Website Address, and Branding

Michelle Gutt presented information on communications tools that will be used for public engagement that includes:

- Sample invites and RSVPs will be provided for the community conversations.
- The first town hall is scheduled for October 2nd and will be live streamed so that people can watch via the website or by cable. Individuals will be able to email their comments in during the broadcast. The broadcast will be close captioned. Translators will be in attendance and there will also be translation headsets available. Meeting notices will include information on requesting special accommodations.

- The Task Force website (www.onefortworth.org) will go live on Thursday, August 30th and will include updates, minutes, and videos.
- The Task Force does have a presence on social media: Facebook (One Fort Worth) and twitter (@onefortworth).
- Updates and information regarding the Task Force can be distributed via Next Door. Messages can be targeted to specific neighborhoods or all neighborhoods.
- The media will be kept up-to-date on Task Force events and meetings.
- Task Force information and updates will also be distributed via City News, through a subscriber list comprised of neighborhood, church and community leaders, and with flyers to share with community groups,

During the discussion, it was observed that consideration needs to be given to how we plan on connecting with residents that do not have access to computers/email or attend community meetings.

Ms. Gutt explained that handouts will be available at community centers and libraries, and made available for any faith based organization or community group that requests information. There will also be an insert in the Fort Worth Star Telegram, La Estrella, and La Vida.

Additional suggestions from the Task Force included the Fort Worth Black News and the water bill insert. Task Force members also requested copies of the handouts so that they may distribute.

Ms. Gutt noted that the December water bill has been reserved for the Task Force.

Small-Group Discussion about a Reflective Question

Mr. Tucker asked Task Force to gather in small groups and asked the each group to reflect on the question – “Given your experience with people of a different race in Fort Worth, Texas what is a promising idea you have of advancing race relations.” Mr. Tucker then asked Task Force members to provide one word to describe their small group discussions. Words provided by task force members included: engagement, hopeful, caring, transparency, revelatory, listen, confirmation, inclusive, empowerment, relating and sometimes-uncomfortable.

Discuss Agenda for September 25 All-Day Work Session

Mr. Tucker explained that the agenda for the full day retreat will include engagement pieces around: particular relevant questions related to the Task Force’s charge, sufficient information to begin framing recommendations related to training outcomes, and discuss how community conversation feedback will also be utilized to frame recommendations.

Mr. Tucker was asked about the expectations for attendance by Task Force members at community conversations. He explained that he hopes that each member would attend at least one community conversation. He further stressed that their attendance would be as a participant and not as an observer.

Responding to Task Force member's comments regarding attendance, Ms. Navejar noted that she understand that many Task Force members have busy schedules and may not be able to attend more than one community conversation. However, if a Member wished to attend more than one community conversation that was also fine.

Closing Remarks

Lillie Biggins – Ms. Biggins noted that she was encouraged by the Task Force, and apologized for her late arrival.

Bob Ray Sanders – Mr. Sanders apologized for his late arrival, and noted that he was encouraged by the level of engagement he sees being exemplified by the Task Force members.

Rabbi Bloom – Rabbi Bloom noted that the time is coming for the Jewish High Holy Days, which is a time for reflection. Rabbi Bloom shared a quote from Martin Luther King Jr.– “An individual has not begun living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.” He believes that all of the Task Force members are looking at the broader concerns of all humanity and thanked the Task Force for their work.

Rosa Navejar – Ms. Navejar share that this is our Fort Worth. The Task Force can be part of the solution and part of the recommendations for making Fort Worth better - not only for our generation but the next generations of Fort Worth residents.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.