

Fulton County Reparations Task Force
Thursday, January 13, 2022
6 pm (Zoom)

POST AGENDA MINUTES – RATIFIED

This document has been ratified or approved by the Fulton County Reparations Task Force and is not binding on the County or any officer.

Call to Order & Roll Call

- The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

****A QUORUM WAS PRESENT****

- **Present:** Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado, Marcus Coleman, JaNay Wilborn, Khalid Kamau
- **Staff Present:** Fran Calhoun (External Affairs), Jasmine Campbell (External Affairs), Steven Rosenberg (County Attorney’s Office)

Opening Comments

- **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** welcomed all members to the meeting and congratulated Mayor Khalid Kamau for recently being elected as Mayor of the City of South Fulton.

Adoption of January 13, 2022 Agenda

- **Mayor Khalid Kamau** made a motion to approve the January 13, 2022 Agenda. **JaNay Wilborn** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: October 7, 2021 and November 4, 2021

- All members agreed to approve the October 7, 2021 and November 4, 2021 meeting minutes.

Correspondence

- **Fran Calhoun** informed members that Mr. Larry Riley of Atlanta requested information on the task force composition and informed her he would like to submit his resume and recommendations. Fran explained that any new appointments would have to be nominated and approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Unfinished Business: Taskforce Organizational Structure Tasks

Bylaws Discussion & Adoption

- **Jasmine Campbell** confirmed the correct version of the Bylaws for review.
- **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** explained the newest version of the Bylaws made the following changes from the original:
 - Allows all members to vote, including the chair.
 - After two failed votes, a motion will be removed for consideration and not return.
- **Marcus Coleman** and **JaNay Wilborn** expressed support for the above changes.
- **Steven Rosenberg** confirmed the procedure request from the task force for failed motions was added to the Bylaws and is located under Article 5, Section 2: Quorum and Voting.

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- **Mayor Khalid Kamau** requested confirmation of the number of current appointments and if an odd number of members is expected.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** and **Marcus Coleman** explained there is currently an even number of members (four) due to a lack of appointments by all Board of Commissioners but the remaining appointments are not expected.
- **Marcus Coleman** made a motion to approve the Bylaws. **JaNav Wilborn** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Preparation for Determining Annual Objectives

Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- Requested feedback from all members on the vision of the taskforce.
- Discussed numerous systemic and economic disadvantages in education and overall quality of life for African Americans over the years. An allocation of resources for African Americans should be considered by the task force when making recommendations and trying to correct wrongs. The task force should plan to give reparations, financially not symbolically, at some point to Fulton County citizens to correct multiple wrongs to generations. Examples of wrongs: Jim Crow, Pre-1865, and the 13th Amendment's reference to incarceration as slavery.
- There will be several avenues to reach established task force goals over time. One of the first approaches by the task force should be looking at Fulton County property ownership.
- Discussed ideas regarding bringing a reparations study proposal to the Board of Commissioners for approval to help determine financial responsibility of the County and inform future task force timelines and recommendations.
 - **Mayor Khalid Kamau** would like the task force to research one item themselves first (example: sewers) and then bring the financial amount to the Board of Commissioners to help show the need for a larger study.
 - **Fran Calhoun** recommended the task force start initial research to demonstrate historical issues in a tangible manner before making funding requests to the Board of Commissioners. This should be seen as Phase 1. She also mentioned examples of disparity studies requested by former Commissioner Emma Darnell and will ask the Clerk's Office for this information.
- Will share low hanging fruit ideas at a later meeting between potential City of Atlanta and Fulton County Government partnerships.
- Requested information on when the Fulton County budget will be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
 - **Fran Calhoun** stated this will take place on January 19, 2022. Mentioned the mid-year budget review process, she will find out when this submission deadline is for members.

Marcus Coleman

- Recently spoke with Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr. and they discussed the need for County funding for task force initiatives including research study requests for assistance. He suggested a budget proposal by the task force be presented to the Board of Commissioners.

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- **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** agreed that a research study is necessary and members should reach out to the Board of Commissioners to request budget funding.
- Provided examples of other city accomplishments across the country such as scholarships. He would like to create a Reparations Coalition to share ideas with other Counties that have had successful programs.
 - Suggested Mayor Khalid Kamau review information he will share regarding the National Mayors Coalition for Reparations.
- Requested each task force member submit their Top 3-5 areas of interest individually. After review and discussion, the task force will combine the list and decide on the Top 2 items to bring to the Board of Commissioners.
- Believes research is critical and there are numerous opportunities available for the task force to pursue. Does not want to create diversity through his approach or ideas and will remain professional during this process. Believes as a team the task force can be successful when working together to gain support from the Board of Commissioners.
 - **JaNay Wilborn** explained her experience working with the Fulton County Budget daily and the Board of Commissioners will help guide success and ensure that the task force follow the correct procedures when making funding requests.

JaNay Wilborn

- Suggested the task force seek to use Fulton County Vendor Rodney Strong as a consultant to conduct the proposed research study.
 - **Fran Calhoun** responded that Rodney Strong has the professional ability to conduct disparity and related studies. She suggested the task force consider such action under a “Phase 2” to utilize outside research support after initial research findings are determined; a “Phase 2” could conceivably include specific budget requests to work with a higher education institution or specific researcher.
- Provided examples of the best objective approaches to request funding and support from the Board of Commissioners.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** agreed that the task force will need to be strategic when making funding requests from the Board of Commissioners.
- Education is an area she would like the task force to focus on. She does not believe a physical check will be available immediately, but the County can partner with municipalities and nonprofits first to offer scholarships to students. Next private and public donations could also be obtained through partnerships with the County.
 - **Marcus Coleman** requested clarification on what education scholarships might become available. **JaNay** suggested the task force could pay for vocational opportunities for students as well as create a reparations version of the HOPE Scholarship. She believes these types of scholarships would likely receive support from the full Board of Commissioners.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** liked the education examples provided for students but would also like the task force to distribute funding to Seniors in any education efforts.

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Mayor Khalid Kamau

- Headed to MLK Day event during the meeting and shared famous quote. He would like the task force to be honest about harm done over the years. He does not want the task force to tailor requests to the Board of Commissioners on what they believe they can get approved from sitting elected officials but what is deserved. Believes the task force should remain an independent body. Suggested the task force bring a full list of recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and ask where they would like to start.
- One of the first goals of the task force should be to quantify the harm that the Fulton County Commission has done over the years. Examples included African American neighborhoods not receiving funding or adequate infrastructure improvements. This lack of investment can be seen in the sewer line quality and quantity differences between North Fulton and South Fulton.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** agreed that review of Fulton County records will show if these types of budget inequalities were intentional to keep the African American quality of life and available resources low.
- Proven neglect by the County can be used to persuade increased funding which is why the task force needs to establish the financial amount of a reparations bill and submit it to the Board of the Commissioners.
- Requested information on how the task force is affiliated with the Remembrance Project.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** is aware of a group (EJI) in Fulton County that has placed memorial markers of lynchings around the City of Atlanta. However, they are separate from the task force.
 - **Fran Calhoun** sent members a flyer for an upcoming event for the Fulton County Remembrance Committee during the meeting and suggested members sign up for their mailing list. Commissioner Natalie Hall provided funding a few years ago to this organization to assist their research efforts regarding memorials.

New Business: Organization Composition

Strategy to Secure New Members

- **Fran Calhoun** addressed ongoing quorum concerns by sharing a recommendation to members that Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr. amend his enabling resolution to allow up to two appointees by each Commissioner to this task force to increase membership and help resolve quorum issues.
 - **Marcus Coleman** made a motion to approve this recommendation. **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado** seconded the recommendation. The motion passed with the following vote of members still in the meeting at the time:
 - Yes: 3 (Marcus Coleman, JaNay Wilborn, Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado)

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.