

Fulton County Reparations Task Force
Thursday, November 4, 2021
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

- The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. and recorded via Zoom.

****A QUORUM WAS NOT PRESENT****

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

Opening Comments

Fran Calhoun, Intergovernmental & Interagency Affairs Division Manager

- Due to lack of a quorum, no action items can be taken up during the meeting but the taskforce can proceed to the discussion items.

Adoption of October 7, 2021 Minutes

- No action taken on item.

Approval of November 4, 2021 Agenda

- No action taken on item.

Introductions of New Taskforce Members & Staff

- Steven Rosenberg from the County Attorney’s Office is available to help the taskforce with establishing bylaws and can be reached at Steven.Rosenberg@fultoncountyga.gov.

Taskforce Organizational Structure Tasks

Bylaws Discussion & Adoption

Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado, Chair

- Since we do not have seven members (or an odd number), how will that impact voting to provide checks and balances when considering action items during tie voting results?
 - Fran Calhoun: This taskforce can move forward with four members unless the remaining Commissioners decide at a later date to appoint members. Passage of items will require a majority of members (three at this time).
 - Steven Rosenberg: The Board of Commissioners does not allow items without the majority vote to pass but the item can be brought back for reconsideration at a

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later meeting. This taskforce can include a similar provision in the bylaws to address this concern.

- Are the bylaws able to be amended if more members join the taskforce?
 - Steven Rosenberg: These are the bylaws of the taskforce so they can be amended in later meetings if necessary.
- Requested clarification on the term limits of the members.
 - Jasmine Campbell: The resolution states the term limit for current members is December 31, 2023.
 - Fran Calhoun:
 - The taskforce sunset date is 2025 but the term limits end in 2023. In 2023, new taskforce members can be appointed or current members can be reappointed by the Board of Commissioners.
 - Commissioner Arrington stated at the last meeting that if the taskforce creates recommendations before the 2025 sunset date he would be willing to end the taskforce early.
- Wanted to confirm the County Commissioners that made appointments will not be voted out of office before sunset date since the resolution states members must serve on the taskforce along with their appointing commissioner while in office.
 - Fran Calhoun: Commissioners are elected on a staggered basis and serve four year terms. Chairman Pitts might be the only Commissioner who has made appointments to the taskforce that will have an election before the sunset date. If necessary, taskforce members can request the new commissioner in office to reappoint them.
 - Tonya Grier: Confirmed Commissioner Arrington will be up for re-election in 2024 and Chairman Pitts is up for re-election in 2022.
- Bylaws requests include:
 - Allow the chair to be a voting member.
 - Items must be passed by a majority of members. If there is a tie, the item will not be passed but can be brought up again in two following meetings before it fails.
 - Set the meeting quorum as three out of four members and keep the current attendance policy section in place.

Jasmine Campbell, Legislative Assistant

- Will the County Attorney's Office create the bylaws or the taskforce?
 - Steven Rosenberg: The law department will be willing to review any bylaws submitted by County staff or the taskforce members.

Fran Calhoun, Intergovernmental & Interagency Affairs Division Manager

- Will the legal department provide a final answer if the taskforce must follow the Georgia Open Meetings Laws?
 - Steven Rosenberg: Will research and follow up.

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- Requested Jasmine Campbell track bylaws change requests and provide them to the law department.

Marcus Coleman, Vice-Chair

- In the bylaws template it states the chair does not have the power to vote unless there is a tie so technically there are only three voting members.
 - Fran Calhoun: The taskforce can decide who to allow to vote in their adopted bylaws, including the chair, if that is best for the group.
- If the other Commissioners do appoint members at a later time then the taskforce will make any necessary changes to the bylaws. Currently there is no set number of members so we do not know what to anticipate.
- Would like to find out if Khalid Kamau will be more involved in the taskforce and offered to contact him in the immediate future.
 - Fran Calhoun: Jasmine Campbell has reached out to him several times with no response. The status of his availability will be better known following the November 30, 2021 runoff election. Attendance can be addressed in the bylaws as to when or if a new member appointment should be recommended to a Commissioner.

Preparation for Determining Annual Objectives

Fran Calhoun, Intergovernmental & Interagency Affairs Division Manager

- Recommends the taskforce create annual objectives.

Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado, Chair

- Requested more details on the resources that will be provided to the taskforce. There is a need to look at information, such as land ownership, that belongs to the County and access can be limited.
 - Fran Calhoun:
 - The resolution did not authorize any County resources so there would need to be an additional resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners for that purpose.
 - Commissioner Arrington wanted this taskforce to lay the groundwork to provide future redress and a possible feasibility study including findings and recommendations that the full Board of Commissioners would need to approve.
- While at the Magistrate Court on Monday doing research, she was told by an employee that the agriculture records were destroyed in Fulton County which included relevant information on slaves. This information is no longer accessible and there is a threat that government records have been destroyed or are on the way to be destroyed soon at the

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library. This makes it very difficult to make the case for reparations if there are no strong facts and records to provide with recommendations.

- Fran Calhoun:
 - Will find out record retention schedule for the official records of Fulton County which are held in the Superior Court, not the library, and will provide it to the taskforce.
 - Suggested land ownership changes be reviewed using Census data. Many poor families do not have the deeds to land and that is one way they have lost land over the years. Records are not always available for original sources so the taskforce might have to seek information from other resources.
 - University of Richmond (American Panorama) is a resource that can provide helpful data for the taskforce:
<https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/>
- Steven Rosenberg: Fulton County follows the State Open Records requirement and all can be found in Georgia Archives. How long official records are kept varies on several factors.
- Tonya Grier: The Board of Commissioners meetings are kept for a long time. Currently Fulton County has meeting records dating back to the 1800s that can be found online. Data is currently being transferred from the old system to the new system so if there is any trouble she will be happy to help find it.
- Will County employees and staff be able to help the taskforce as a resource?
 - Fran Calhoun: This will be determined by what the request is and if there is a certain department with the information. However, research staff from the County is not provided so the taskforce members will need to conduct their own inquiries.
 - The Clerk to the Commission, Tonya Grier, can provide assistance when searching meeting records online; please remember they are organized by dates.
- Expects a recommendation for a feasibility study of reparations funded by Fulton County Government from the taskforce.

Marcus Coleman, Vice-Chair

- Across the nation there have been studies in cities and counties for reparations. Example provided: LA County, California.
- Will make a suggestion that all land owned by the County be reviewed to determine if it was obtained legally.

Next Steps

Fran Calhoun, Intergovernmental & Interagency Affairs Division Manager

- Please determine what the best approach for the taskforce will be and inform the Fulton County staff if any subcommittees meetings are held.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.