

# Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording (Passcode: &nUzz@U3):

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/qnZvelcduA3fvHgyPJux4M5ljUTUL7muokj9Wxm4Q6JhOymXJx5pafvAgZUPIIYx.yVJ14NF\\_RQv36UwU](https://zoom.us/rec/share/qnZvelcduA3fvHgyPJux4M5ljUTUL7muokj9Wxm4Q6JhOymXJx5pafvAgZUPIIYx.yVJ14NF_RQv36UwU)

## 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.

### \*\*A QUORUM WAS PRESENT\*\*

- **Present:** Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado; Marcus Coleman; South Fulton Mayor Khalid Kamau, Olivia Reneau
- **Absent:** JaNay Wilborn
- **Staff Present:** Fran Calhoun (External Affairs); Denval Stewart (County Attorney); John Wright (Fulton County Library System)

### Opening Comments

- **Fran Calhoun:** Library will not be able to host intern. However, Commissioner Marvin S. Arrington, Jr. agreed to host the intern in the District 5 office. Requested Olivia Reneau provide updated contact information for Duke University.
- **Denval Stewart:** Has questions regarding Duke University's internship program requirements for agreement with host. *Option 1:* Commissioner Arrington writes a letter to the University announcing his office is the host. *Option 2:* Commissioner Arrington sponsors a resolution that is approved by the full Board of Commissioners to enter a memorandum of understanding agreement with Duke University. The goal is to present the agenda item at the May 18, 2022 Board of Commissioners meeting.
  - **Olivia Reneau:** Confirmed fully funded fellowship will be July 2022-May 2023 with training on May 10, 2022. Currently unaware of requirement between Duke University and host but understands Denval Stewart needs to complete additional research before reaching out to Commissioner Arrington's office and will provide a copy of any relevant training documents.

### New Business

#### John Wright, Fulton County Library System

- Resources available in Special Collections include but not limited to: various types of maps; collection of local government documents dating back to reconstruction era; 1870s city sanitation document; collection of city directories; Census materials; collection of City Builder magazine; and additional microforms.
- Will help Reparations Taskforce pull together articles and more resources as necessary. Example of one research topic and materials found so far: convict labor camps including speculated medical research profit of unclaimed dead inmates.
- Currently keeping a list of people sent to Fulton County labor camps, this information will help build a comprehensive list. Innovative research techniques will be required due to lack of available records.

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- Local documents might not be in library catalog due to backlog but resources are still available.

### Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- Began looking at slavery with John Wright in city directories. Directories before Civil War included advertisements for slave brokers. Additional information from this resource included slave owners, several locations of slave auction houses, and connections between slavery, convict labor, city leaders, and city building.
- Special Collections resources available to taskforce include:
  - KKK reports which include testimony from people fighting for land.
  - Maps
- Discovered slave masters received monthly government compensation if slaves joined the military until war ended.
  - **Marcus Coleman**: Believes there is a common misconception that this country never paid reparations, but this discovery shows reparations were given to slave owners.
- Taskforce needs to begin thinking about how to use available resources to present recommendations to the Board of Commissioners which include some form of restitution to descendants of enslaved people who lived in Fulton County.
  - **John Wright**: Suggested saving taskforce research in one place to build on information over time instead of a one-time project.

### Marcus Coleman

- Who did the Heard family purchase rights for convict labor camp at Ansley Park from?
  - **John Wright**: State of Georgia's Prison Commission
- Expressed appreciation of sincerity in John Wright's presentation when discussing ducking and other slave scenarios. Goal is to close disconnect.
- What is included in the collection of genealogy?
  - **John Wright**: Includes material that covers immigration from Europe to the Americas; statewide history and slave sales; and county specific items. Genealogy is improving for black people but not as much information available when compared to white people.
- Requested expansion of slave sale documentation available to taskforce.
  - **John Wright**: Two volumes of slave bills of sales from 1986 project done in Atlanta. Confirmed Fulton County has access to copy of research; suggested taskforce reach out to organization for additional informational.
- Mentioned current lawsuit between attorney Benjamin Crump and Harvard University, would like to have a presentation on this matter later. Recommended taskforce contact political candidates during election season to gain more support and resources.

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- **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado**: Harvard University has set aside \$100 million to conduct study on reparations. Believes Fulton County should be able to do something similar with available talent in jurisdiction including political candidates. Empirical slavery data including compound interest will be a shock to most people but can be gathered by the taskforce if necessary, to ensure reparations are granted. Would like Fulton County to serve as a case study for restitution research that will lead to a useful blueprint for all counties to follow.

### **Mayor Khalid Kamau**

- Where was Chattahoochee Brick Camp located? Requested a map with markers of all camp locations, particularly in the City of South Fulton.
  - **John Wright**: Located in west Atlanta on river. The City of Atlanta recently bought the property and plan to build a park.
- Are any board meetings besides the Board of Commissioners on FGTV? Requested copies of previous meetings. Suggested reparations taskforce page on Fulton County website and meetings be made available digitally to the public to help recruit researchers and gain support from people of Fulton County. Taskforce should also allow records submission from the public to support recommendations. In the future, public comment should be included and meetings more interactive.
  - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado**: Must keep the restitution end goal of project in mind when conducting research and moving forward. Resources are located in several locations across the County and believes they should be housed together in one place.
  - **Marcus Coleman**: Watched most of the California State Reparations Taskforce meeting which included public comment and agrees meetings should be made public and include opportunities for input.
  - **Fran Calhoun**:
    - Confirmed other County meetings are available on FGTV but taskforce meetings are usually archived on the YouTube channel. Discussed public comment engagement available on YouTube.
    - Will send digital media request to leadership. Taskforce can determine format of meetings such as webinar or townhall that include public comment. Public meeting notices can also be sent out before meetings.
    - Informed members all reparations taskforce meetings are open to the public currently. Minutes taken at meetings are sent to the Clerk's office after each meeting; will resend meeting recordings to all members.

### **Next Steps**

- **Fran Calhoun**: South Fulton Human Services Coalition is interested in having a member of the Reparations Task Force to brief them on the work of the Task Force. Will send meeting information to taskforce members once received.

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### Adoption of April 14, 2022 Minutes

- **Marcus Coleman** made a motion to approve the April 14, 2022 Minutes. **Mayor Khalid Kamau** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.