



PUBLIC SAFETY

MULTNOMAH COUNTY COORDINATING COUNCIL

Racial Over-representation in the Criminal Justice System (ROCS)

Task Force Meeting Notes May 24, 2001

NOTICE: THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND ALL ROCS TASK FORCE MEETINGS

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 28, 7-9 p.m., Bethel AME Church at 5828 NE 8th

Task Force Members Attending (18): Woodrow Broadnax, Elyse Clawson, John Connors, Serena Cruz, Jim Ellis, Bill Feyerherm, Bernie Giusto, Art Hendricks, Y'Beth Iglesias, Roy Jay, Vera Katz, Mark Kroeker, Ray Mathis, Dan Noelle, Ronita Sutton, Michael Ware, Ronald Williams, Preston Wong.

Task Force Members Absent (11): Daniel Binns, Tiffany Brandreth, Felton Campbell, Hongsa Chanthavong, Kris Olson, Tawna Sanchez, Mike Schrunk, Donna Sheidun, Pedro Sosa, Oscar Sweeten-Lopez, Kay Toran.

Others Attending Who Signed In (20): Amalia Alarcon-Gaddie, Fran Ayaribil, David Bennett, Clariner Boston, Kevin Bowers, Stephanie Clay, Juanita Crawford, Marie Dahlstrom, Doris Evans, Chori Folkman, Sylvia Foresee, Verena Hathaway, Joe Hertzberg, Leslie Kay, Benjie Pittman, Heather Scott, Reginald Thompson, Virginia Rush, Dena Wilson, Darryl Winchester.

Support Persons Attending: Christine Kirk, Lyman Louis, Peter Ozanne, Suzanne Riles.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introductions and Co-Chair Reports

All attending introduced themselves. Peter Ozanne reviewed the purpose and history of the Racial Over-Representation Task Force, and invited members of the public to participate in working groups. Co-Chair Ron Williams conveyed the regrets of Co-Chair Mike Schrunk, who was in Washington, D.C., pursuing funding for Multnomah County programs. The next meeting of the Task Force is June 28, same time and place.

National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Grant Application

Amalia Alarcon-Gaddie, Director of the Metropolitan Human Rights Center, reported that she and Suzanne Riles have applied for funding from the National Institute of Justice for a program called “Building Bridges Between Law Enforcement and the Community.” This grant would be a collaboration between the Human Rights Center, the Public Safety Coordinating Council, Portland and Gresham Police, and other agencies. Amalia distributed a handout summarizing the grant proposal. Grant funds would fund about \$130,000 for 18 months of activity to increase cultural competence among police officers by developing training interventions led by command staff. Initially, officers would log onto the public web site www.yale.edu/implicit to learn about their unconscious preferences for different racial or ethnic groups by taking the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The test sensitizes test-takers to their sub-conscious biases toward people of color.

The grant would fund brief officer overtime after shifts, for command-led training sessions to emphasize the command commitment to fair treatment for all, and peer-led dialogues aimed at problem-solving on the job without racial profiling. The grant would also fund separate focus groups for community members and for police officers, data analysis and evaluation, and a leadership forum at the end of the grant to publicize policy changes and recommendations. The North and Northeast Precincts of the Portland Police Bureau, and the Gresham Police Department would participate. No test results or data analyses of any kind would identify individual officers. All data would be presented in aggregate form only, in order to encourage constructive change rather than disciplinary action. Amalia emphasized that the NIJ grant officers to whom she has spoken are very impressed that the local police organizations are willing to have their officers take the IAT, and participate in the grant.

Offer of Free Technical Assistance from the Sentencing Project

Co-Chair Ron Williams reported that he met with Marc Mauer of the Sentencing Project during his trip last week to Washington, D.C. (Task Force member Roy Jay congratulated Rev. Williams on receiving a National Faith-Based Service Award). The Sentencing Project has a long history of studying racial and ethnic over-representation in the justice system. They have approached us to offer technical assistance (TA) based on their Manual for Practitioners and Policymakers on Reducing Racial Disparity in the Criminal Justice System. Their TA to us would be funded by a grant they have received from the NIJ. A copy of the Manual was provided to every task force member in January, following the Jan. 22 meeting of the Task Force. (*Please contact Suzanne Riles if you would like a copy.*) At their meeting last week in Washington, Marc Mauer told Ron that the Sentencing Project staff would like to provide TA to 6 sites nationwide, but are only able to find 4 sites doing work to reduce racial over-representation.

Discussion Ray Mathis cautioned that we should avoid finding ourselves subject to specific expectations or agenda by the Sentencing Project. Bill Feyerherm said that we need to be careful to follow our own focus and to continue to be sensitive to the local politics. Also, he has concerns about completing a survey for the Sentencing Project on whether we have implemented any of the recommendations they make in their Manual. Serena Cruz voiced appreciation for the idea of getting advice for free, since we don’t have to follow it if it is not to our liking. Ron Williams observed that we will in fact decide what directions we go in Portland. This technical

assistance would just give more information for us to use in choosing directions. Dan Noelle moved that we proceed carefully, following a preliminary meeting between the Sentencing Project and our two co-chairs as well as Bill Feyerherm. Task Force members voiced assent.

II. Work Group Status Reports (abbreviated to leave presentation time)

Arrest Work Group Chair Bernie Giusto announced that his group meets again on May 29, Tuesday, at 2:30, at the Dept. of Community Justice Peninsula office at 7220 N. Lombard.

Corrections Work Group Chair Bill Feyerherm announced that his group meets again on June 6, Wednesday, at 12 noon at the Multnomah Building, room 635, at 501 SE Hawthorne.

Court Processes Work Group Chair Michael Ware announced that his group meets again on June 20, Wednesday, at 12 noon at the County Courthouse, room 610, at 1021 SW 4th.

Community Outreach Work Group Chair Art Hendricks announced that his group meets again on June 5, Tuesday, at the Multnomah Building, room 305, at 501 SE Hawthorne.

Co-Chair Ron Williams asked the working group chairs if they had considered meeting in the evening to allow more community members to attend. They indicated that they had discussed this and wanted to wait for a while longer at this time, until their groups had some specific proposals to discuss with the public. Art Hendricks noted that about half of his meetings had taken place in the evening already. Lyman Louis suggested that the co-chairs and work group chairs meet regularly to coordinate activities.

III. Report on the Police Stops Data Collection for Jan.-March 2001

(Chief Mark Kroeker, Portland Police Bureau and Task Force Member)

Chief Kroeker outlined a seven-step process that the Police Bureau and other local law enforcement agencies are engaged in to end racial profiling. We are somewhere between steps 2 and 3.

1. Commitment to collect data
2. Implement data collection process
3. Data sharing and community dialog
4. Detailed analysis of data
5. Policy discussion
6. System changes
7. Long-term monitoring

Data reported today were collected between January 1 and March 31, 2001, by officers with mobile data terminals (MDT's). Officers on foot, horseback, or motorcycle did not report data because they do not have MDT's. These officers account for about 40% of traffic contacts, so until that data is accounted for, the picture of Portland Police stops is incomplete.

Traffic enforcement activity has increased in Portland from 2000 to 2001, because citizens complain about traffic problems more than anything else when asked about what kinds of enforcement activity they would like to see increased.

Officers collected 6 pieces of information on persons they contacted:

1. Race (Officer’s perception)
2. Gender (Officer’s perception)
3. Age (Officer’s perception)
4. Reason for the stop, broken into 5 categories:
 - Violation of criminal code
 - Violation of municipal code
 - Violation of vehicle code
 - Vehicle inspection
 - Requests to be on the lookout for certain individuals
5. Whether a search was conducted, and result of search
6. Disposition of the stop: arrest, warning, etc.

Chief Kroeker distributed seven tables of data displaying:

Number of contacts

Reasons for stop (same numbers, with percentages calculated both ways)

By racial/ethnic group

By reason

Disposition of the stop (same numbers, with percentages calculated both ways)

By racial/ethnic group

By disposition

Search results (same numbers, with percentages calculated both ways)

By racial/ethnic group

By search results

Portland Police collected data on about 30,000 stops in the three-month period. The data show the most discrepancy between percentages in the population vs. stopped for African Americans.

<u>Race</u>	<u>% in Population</u>	<u>% of Those Stopped</u>
White	78 %	67%
African Am.	7	16
Asian	7	4
Hispanic	7	7
Native Am.	1	1
Other	4	5

Tables of data similarly formatted were distributed by Bernie Giusto for the Gresham Police, and by Dan Noelle for the law enforcement division of the Sheriff’s Office.

Discussion

Ray Mathis asked Chief Kroeker where the motorcycle officers are deployed, whose missing data comprises 40% of the total. Answer: throughout Portland.

Preston Wong asked what about red light cameras. Answer: these will soon be installed in Portland.

Woody Broadnax observed that red light cameras may reduce our freedom. Answer: these only catch people who run red lights.

Serena Cruz thanked the local law enforcement agencies for collecting this data, and expressed concern that the definition of racial profiling in the Blue Ribbon Panel's report might be too restrictive. (*This definition is "the use of race as the sole basis for justifying traffic stops or other police action."*)

Peter Ozanne suggested that the police look at reducing the incidence of searches subsequent to stops.

IV. Public Comment

Sylvia Foresee asked what precincts data had been collected in. Answer: all five. The data presented today has not been broken down by precinct.

Darryl Winchester suggested that the Police Bureau take steps to educate officers in cultural competence. The data should be analyzed by times of day or night. Advises that we wait to learn more about the Sentencing Project before committing to their technical assistance.

Fran Ayaribil Believes that the Police Bureau's operational definition of racial profiling is too restrictive. When stopped by the police, she is never treated like her two sons are. Gender and style of dress affect the behavior of police too. Bias may rarely be exercised *solely* on the basis of race. The NIJ grant studying bias in officers would be very useful. We aren't talking about evil intentions so much as hidden biases in our belief systems. We must begin to deal with bias more openly.

Co-Chair Ron Williams When can people attend meetings of the Blue Ribbon Panel? Answer: Call your local precinct offices for meeting times.

Mayor Vera Katz Supports looking at other factors that affect stops besides race, such as age of the suspect, time of day, etc.

Sylvia Foresee Can we find out the ethnicity of the officers collecting the data? Answer: Mostly Caucasian, unfortunately. We want to focus for now on the aggregate rather than on individual officers.

Doris Evans Why are contacts higher for African Americans both in Portland and for the entire Multnomah County? Answer: That is what we are trying to figure out.

Stephanie Clay It is important to address personal biases. Not sure it will be helpful to deal only in the aggregate. We need to challenge people on their individual biases.

Bill Feyerherm Supports the Mayor's and Fran's questions about age of suspect. We must look at all the demographics- age and gender as well as race. This is a complex issue.

Fran Ayaribil It is young, minority men who are getting targeted.

Verena Hathaway Need to look at the type of vehicle stopped. Flashy cars may get stopped more often. Chief Kroeker: Some cars are more often stolen, and may get stopped more, to make sure that the person driving is the person to whom the car is registered. That could also lead to a search or investigation.

Co-Chair Ron Williams We are blessed in Portland to be having these discussions. They aren't happening elsewhere. It is good that we are moving ahead.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 p.m.