

Incarceration Prevention & Reduction Task Force / Law & Justice Council
DRAFT Meeting Summary October 5, 2020

1. Call to Order

Task Force Co-Chairs Jack Hovenier & Stephen Gockley called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: Barry Buchanan, Anne Deacon, Heather Flaherty, Stephen Gockley, Daniel Hammill, Mike Hilley, Jack Hovenier, Raylene King, Scott Korthuis, Byron Manering, Moonwater, Dave Reynolds, Eric Richey, Tyler Schroeder, Maia Vanyo, Greg Winter

Absent: Travis Brockie, David Doll, Bill Elfo, Arlene Feld, Seth Fleetwood, Deborra Garrett, Deborah Hawley, Darlene Peterson, Eric Petersen, Kevin Turner, Bruce Van Glubt

2. Steering Committee Report

[Land acknowledgement statement \(motion\) \(0:02:08\)](#)

Hammill reported for the Steering Committee and moved to approve the statement. The motion was seconded.

The Task Force discussed and suggested changes to the language.

Hammill amended his motion and moved to approve the statement be read at the beginning of each full IPRTF meeting, with an amendment:

“Before we begin, we acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional and unceded territory of the Lummi, Nooksack, Samish and Semiahmoo People who have cared for and tended this land since time immemorial.

Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. We begin this effort to acknowledge what has been buried by honoring the truth. ~~We are gathered here today on the unceded ancestral lands of the Lummi, Nooksack, Samish and Semiahmoo People.~~ We pay respect to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.”

The motion carried 15-0-1, with Korthuis abstaining.

[Return to monthly meetings \(0:08:17\)](#)

Buchanan and Gockley reported for the Steering Committee and moved that the IPRTF return to a monthly meeting schedule beginning in 2021. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

[Recommendation of a racial equity toolkit \(motion\) \(0:16:09\)](#)

Mike Parker, Opportunity Council – Homeless Services Center, gave a presentation on the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Racial Equity Toolkit.

Hammill moved to approve the motion. The motion was seconded.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke in favor of the motion and reported that the upcoming biennial budget will include funding for a permanent racial equity commission.

Korthuis moved to table this item to the next Task Force meeting so he can present the toolkit to all the small city mayors and get their approval to vote for the motion.

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The Task Force members discussed holding this motion open to the next full IPRTF meeting on November 2 and how the toolkit would be implemented.

The motion to table the motion carried unanimously.

[Behavioral health and law enforcement co-responder programs \(0:46:33\)](#)

Buchanan reported on a Council priority to develop a better system for behavioral health crisis response.

Deacon reported that her recommendation is to develop a program through the existing Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) Program to take advantage of the current relationships among all the local crisis response systems. They will review the current programs and resources, and look into how to align with those programs. The goals are to reduce unnecessary law enforcement contact and to improve and expand the existing behavioral health system.

Hammill reported that the City of Bellingham plans to double funding for the GRACE Program, add three more behavioral health officers in the police department, and create a budget line item for a 911 co-responder model.

The Task Force members discussed the importance of and need for enhanced crisis response in the community, a co-responder program versus a behavioral health-only response program, keeping the IPRTF engaged in the planning process, the need to design a program to work locally, and using the racial equity toolkit and engaging community members with lived experience.

3. [INDEX Committee Report \(0:38:03\)](#)

Schroeder reported for the INDEX Committee and read from the committee summary. One next step would be to bring in a consultant to provide direction and guidance to the INDEX Committee.

Buchanan reported on the MacArthur Foundation grant peer learning project to study racial and ethnic data related to behavioral health in the criminal justice system, which will include the proposed racial equity commission.

4. [Legal & Justice Systems Committee Report \(1:00:32\)](#)

King reported for the committee and read from the committee summaries.

Deacon reported on the commitment of the managed care organizations (MCOs) to fund behavioral health reentry services. They must make sure the contractual arrangements with the MCOs are clear. They must also consider how to work with the Health Care Authority on their performance measures and metrics, to make sure they meet community needs. The Crisis Stabilization Center service providers are struggling to negotiate for operational funding with the MCOs. They will need to create a strategy and lobby to the Health Care Authority, Governor, and legislature.

5. [Behavioral Health Committee Report \(1:11:05\)](#)

Hammill reported for the committee and read from the committee summaries.

Parker reported on the committee's discussion of including a more diverse representation on the committee and full Task Force. One possibility is to host periodic round table discussions with a greater representation.

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6. [Crisis Stabilization Committee Report \(1:17:16\)](#)

Deacon reported for the committee and read from the committee summaries. A goal for the mental health unit is to include involuntary triage placement. The treatment providers are trying to get the MCOs to pay for that level of treatment in the facility. They will open to full capacity at the beginning of the year. She described the statutes governing involuntary treatment via a criminal code commitment.

7. **Other Business**

There was no other business.

8. [Public Comment \(1:23:20\)](#)

Moonwater stated the Dispute Resolution Center supports prevention efforts of the Behavioral Health Committee and would like her staff to be engaged in those conversations. The DRC may also be of assistance in other efforts in terms of training and creative problem solving.

9. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.