

**Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Steering Committee**

DRAFT Meeting Summary for September 24, 2020

1. Call To Order

Committee Chair Barry Buchanan called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. The meeting was a remote-only virtual Zoom webinar.

Members Present: Barry Buchanan, Anne Deacon, Caleb Erickson, Arlene Feld, Stephen Gockley, Dan Hammill, Jack Hovenier, Raylene King, Mike Parker

Members Absent: Tyler Schroeder

2. Update on Crisis Response Efforts: Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) & Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS)

Buchanan updated the committee on different co-responder programs may work:

- Recent emergency management services (EMS) Oversight Board meeting on how a CAHOOTS program would work
- A program will likely be a CAHOOTS/GRACE hybrid
- They are still working on it

The committee members discussed:

- The expected goal of a co-responder program, including getting law enforcement out of the business of dealing with people with behavioral health issues and the homeless, who need case workers, not law enforcement; cost benefits, community benefits, and diversion of up to 20 percent to behavioral health responders instead of law enforcement
- Shoreline, Washington's Response Awareness, De-escalation And Referral (RADAR) Program
- Both front-end and back-end behavioral health services
- The need for balance within the system and a making sure there are enough service providers for a robust response system
- The community's lack of trust in law enforcement
- Ensuring staff are thoroughly trained in racial and ethnic bias
- Engaging and educating the IPR Task Force on the CAHOOTS program

3. Update on IPRTF membership

Committee members reviewed a draft ordinance that would:

- Add language about the Council making appointments so that the task force membership as a whole reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the county's population, and
- Reinstating a permanent position for the director of the North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (NSBH-ASO)

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Steering Committee***

DRAFT Meeting Summary for September 24, 2020

The committee discussed:

- Whether and how to include the NSBH-ASO on the IPR Task Force due to their role as the behavioral health crisis response administrator for the public sector
- Whether to include a representative from the Bellingham School District
- Whether to limit or expand the size of the IPR Task Force
- Past efforts to be inclusive and diverse
- Expanding the membership of the committees
- The possibility of creating an ad hoc committee on racial equity within the function and focus of the IPR Task Force

5. Promoting Racial Equity

Parker gave a presentation on and the committee discussed the need for and benefits of using a racial equity toolkit and how the IPR Task Force would use the toolkit.

Hammill moved for the Steering Committee to recommend to the full Task Force that it use the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) tool kit in the recommendations and work of the IPRTF to the County Council and in the recommendations and work of the IPRTF subcommittees. The intent is to promote racial equity in all the work of the task force.

The committee discussed how they would implement the toolkit, the need for data, operationalizing a framework to ensure all the work of the IPR Task Force are analyzed to optimize racial equity in the system.

The motion carried unanimously, with Erickson absent.

Hovenier moved to amend the approved motion to: recommend to the full Task Force that it use the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) tool kit in the work of the IPRTF, and their recommendations to the County Council, and in the recommendations and work of the IPRTF subcommittees. The intent is to promote racial equity in all the work of the Task Force. The motion to amend carried by unanimous consent.

4. Task Force Communications Planning

Hammill reported on the discussion at the Behavioral Health Committee about communications and transparency to get the work of the IPR Task Force out to the public.

Jed Holmes, County Executive's Office, spoke about the possibilities for successful communications from the IPR Task Force:

- Communications is more productive when it's goal-oriented, and something has happened, rather than meeting announcements
- Process isn't that interesting to the public

**Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Steering Committee**

DRAFT Meeting Summary for September 24, 2020

- Create periodic reporting with measurable goals
- Changes have occurred, but hasn't been attributed to the IPR Task Force
- Identify who can speak on behalf of the IPR Task Force to the public and media

The Committee members and discussed:

- The use of social media in communications
- The need for a hook to catch peoples' attention
- Using existing social media that people are already following
- Defining:
 - Content: outcomes and action items instead of process
 - Distribution methods: Social media, designated spokespersons for the Task Force
 - Audience: low-income communities, tribes, and folks with lived experience in the criminal justice system
- Developing a communications campaign

6. Items for the October full IPRTF meeting

Items for the October agenda include:

- Land acknowledgment statement
- Return to monthly full IPR Task Force meetings
- Committee reports
- Mike Parker's presentation on the racial equity tool kit
- Deacon to inform the Task Force that work is underway on developing a co-responder process, including a LEAD-facilitated process and standard program planning
- Hammill and Buchanan to update the IPRTF on council actions on developing a co-responder process

7. Other Business

This item was not discussed.

8. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information: Next Meeting, October 22

This item was not discussed.

8. Public Comment

No one spoke.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.