



City of Portland Racial Equity Steering Committee

November 19, 2020 at 5:00 PM

1. Zoom Information

- a. The Racial Equity Steering Committee will hold a meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2020 at 5:00 PM. This meeting will take place remotely using Zoom. Virtual meetings are allowed using emergency legislation approved by LD 2167; 1 M.R.S. §403-A, that authorizes cities and towns to conduct meetings online.

Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live, a recording will be uploaded to portlandmaine.gov/livestream the next day.

For public comment, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be un-muted by the host when it is time for public comment.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/95423661909?pwd=OEtuQnJ0djE5YVgyS0NDb25Bcm42dz09>

Passcode: 627970

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +13017158592,,95423661909# or +13126266799,,95423661909#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 9128

Webinar ID: 954 2366 1909

International numbers available: <https://zoom.us/u/aBNPERx8f>

2. Approval of Minutes & Agenda Review

- a. Minutes from November 5, 2020 Meeting

3. Discuss and vote on proposals for Resolution #1

- a. Proposals for Consideration

4. Logistics (public comment)

5. Adjourn

Date: November 5, 2020

Attending: Ali Abdul, Niki Amaris, Suheir Alaskari, Jerome Bennett, Deb Ibonwa, Kate Knox, Lado Ladoka, Merita McKenzie, Peter O'Donnell, Louis Pickens, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Pious Ali (Co Chair), Lelia DeAndrade (Co-Chair); Samaa Abdurraqib (Facilitator),

Absent:

Meeting began at 5:00

Review of Agenda and minutes from 10/29/2020 approved.

Meeting Goals:

1. Review of the second charge
2. Update on research with Dr. Medford
- 3.

Updates:

- Update that Dr. Medford will be providing initial research in time for the next meeting on 11/19.
- Abdurraqib shared 2018 Police Annual report
- Councilman Ali will get additional documents related to the police
- Follow-up to questions from last week
 - Translation/interpretation services: PPD uses a language line that can provide support to callers and police responding to situations
 - Other public health resources: These are provided in nonemergency situations. In response to emergencies, officers are immediately dispatched and may provide resources on the scene as part of their response.
 - Follow up questions:
 - What kind of training and resources are available to the police to respond to noncriminal incidents? For example, do police officers receive training in de-escalation?

Review of Charge #2

The committee's charge will include how the city interacts with area agencies and organizations in the name of public safety and how these partnerships can best work to enhance public safety in the city.

Discussion:

- Abdurraqib noted that committee members may offer solutions or recommendations.
- Recommendation: Establish a standing commission to investigate and manage this charge.
 - Councilman Ali clarified that standing committees are part of the city council's work. Commissions include community members that apply and are appointed to the commission. We could make a recommendation to the council to create this commission
- Recommendation: Develop a permanent position in the city (in Public Health or Public Safety) to monitor available resources (beds, treatment programs, etc.), and provide that information in real time to police officers to help address challenges they encounter as they are responding to incidents. This could be a position in the City Manager's office.
- Recommendation: Create a permanent position within the city manager's office, Director or Commissioner of Racial Equity. This position would reflect the committee's view that this issue deserves ongoing, more in-depth review and analysis.
- The topics of challenges with housing and general assistance were raised and how they contribute to public safety, but it was agreed that these are complicated issues beyond the charge of the committee. The

committee recognizes that emergency needs are important and pressing, but we should be focused on the structural issues that bring about these emergency needs.

- Committee members agreed that they need a clear definition of public safety and a better understanding of what is meant by “the way the City interacts...” in the resolve
- Committee members would like more information about what programs or organizations are helping people related to public safety, what resources are available to them, and demographic information about the people who are seeking help. They would also like to know what resources are needed and how they might be reallocated to support black and brown people.
- The committee may want to examine how Community Development Block grants are distributed and whether these grants address racial equity intentionally
- Committee members expressed frustration with the amount of time available to address these issues, and the lack of time to really delve into substantive conversation.

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RESC Proposals for charge #2:

- I. Establish a commission to investigate the ways in which the City interacts with area agencies, organizations, and non-profits in the name of public safety. This commission will make recommendations for how these partnerships can best work to enhance public safety in racially equitable ways.
- II. Create and establish a Director or Commissioner of Racial Equity as a permanent position within the City Manager's office
- III. Create and establish a permanent position within the City's Health and Human Services department or the City Manager's office to regularly and daily monitor available resources (beds, treatment options, etc) to provide updates to service providers who are working within communities in need.