



City of Portland

Remote Racial Equity Steering Committee
March 11, 2021
5:00 PM

I. ZOOM Information

The Racial Equity Steering Committee will hold a meeting on Thursday March 11, 2021 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. §403A, 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 unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83062619858?pwd=Qk1jemhUbnlwNEtUWFhQT0dxZ3ZlQT09>

Passcode: 193527

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +13126266799,,83062619858#,,, *193527# or +19292056099,,83062619858#,,, *193527#

Or Telephone:

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

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 830 6261 9858

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International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83062619858?pwd=Qk1jemhUbnlwNEtUWFhQT0dxZ3ZlQT09>

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes and agenda

- a. March 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

III. Update on proposals

- a. CTO

- b. Anti-bias Assessment and Training
- IV. Discussion of proposals
 - a. Charge 1 Proposal
- V. Planning future meetings
- VI. Adjourn

Date: **March 4**

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

Absent:

Public Comment: 5:00- 5:30. See additional notes for details.

Discussion:

- The committee reviewed and discussed the proposal submitted by O'Donnell and Sahrbeck.
- This proposal is separate from the proposal submitted by Ibonwa
- The committee discussed which parties should be reviewing CTO's as recommended in the proposal, with concern about potential conflict of interest, providing advocacy/support for those charged with CTO's and engagement of community members. Other parties that may be involved include Homeless Voices for Justice, and whatever organization is used to respond to noncriminal calls for service (i.e. the organization implementing the CAHOOT's model)
- Request that we focus on this issue for the next two meetings so that it can be recommended to the City Council for quick action
- We need information from the city to find out if people are denied services by other providers if they receive a CTO.
- Abdurraqib will reach out to Pine Tree Legal for additional information
- The committee discussed that CTO's are one small issue related to people who are unhoused, and discussions of decriminalizing homelessness are actually about the criminal charges that are disproportionately impacting people who are unhoused.
- The committee discussed including a bold conceptual statement about the centrality of housing insecurity in racial disparities and in public safety. The committee agreed to include a bold statement regardless of whether there is political will on the part of the city to engage in this discussion. They agreed that it is the committee's responsibility to highlight problems and propose solutions regardless of political will. Included in the "bold statement" will be recommendations for other smaller steps that the city can take, such as:
 - reviewing CTO's
 - using city owned property to generate income that will be directed to helping unhoused people in a variety of ways.
 - Identifying other issues that contribute to homelessness.
- Lodoka will work Know and Ibonwa to develop a statement about the centrality of housing insecurity in issues of public safety. They will investigate potential assistance from Homeless Voices for Justice, MeCEP and MeJEP
- The next meeting will include review of a proposal submitted by Ali and Alaskari
- The committee adjourned at 6:35

A Proposal to Review all current outstanding CTOs and the policies surrounding the issuance of CTOs

- 1. Review and publish publicly the analyses and results of such reviews of all Current Outstanding Criminal Trespass Orders** from shelters, public places and private property for:
 - a. disparate impact on historically marginalized communities
 - b. those struggling with substance use or mental health diagnoses. [\[LD1\]](#)
- 2. Review and publish publicly the analyses and results of such reviews of all the Policies Surrounding the Issuance of CTOs, withdraw CTOs and offer social services and shelter instead**

The City of Portland Racial Equity Committee is concerned about the perceived inequalities that are created for those who are homeless and who experience mental health disorders as it pertains to the use of Community Trespass Orders (CTO's). We believe that these CTO's are an inhibitory factor in meeting basic health, safety and shelter needs of those affected by the CTO.

The length of time for CTOs would be 3 months for public property and for property that provides services open to the public (i.e. Preble Street, General Assistance, Portland Health Services), and 6 months for private property.

We urge the Portland City Council to develop a policy that would allow for the review of CTO placed on public properties or properties providing services (i.e. Preble Street, General Assistance, Portland Health Services) a 30 day period from the day that the CTO is imposed on anyone who is homeless, or is experiencing a mental health crisis. Once a period of 30 days has lapsed there will be an automatic review by the City's Corporation Councils office with input from the service providers at the location. Upon this review the CTO's will be rescinded unless a member of the City of Portland's Police Department, corporation council's office, or the service provider requests a continuation for an additional 30 day period. Furthermore, we request that all CTO's be reviewed after a 30 day period for anyone that has been issued a CTO.

Review and publish publicly the analyses and results of such reviews of all Current Outstanding Criminal Trespass Orders from shelters, public places and private property for:

- a. disparate impact on historically marginalized communities
- b. those struggling with substance use or mental health diagnoses. [LD11](#)

February 4, 2021

Portland Racial Equity Steering Committee

Proposal DRAFT: Racial Equity Assessment and Training for PPD, City employees, and City Council

We propose that all Portland Police Department Employees (and all City Employees) undergo extensive Racial Equity Training provided by qualified prestigious consultants such as the Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium out of Bethesda, MD.

Through the equity training, participants will better understand bias, racism, microaggressions, systemic racism, structural racism, institutional racism, race and power, and race and injustice, and more. This training shall be on-going work, where participants receive training throughout each year of employment.

As a result of this training, looking at data, there will be a reduction in cases of aggression, micro aggression, and racial injustices.

[INCLUDE ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ABOUT GARE RACIAL EQUITY ASSESSMENT]

Ali/Suheir Proposals

BIPOC - Black, Indiginous, Asain, Hispanic, Native

Marginalized - BIPOC, LGBTQ, Immigrants, & anyone of religious belief (Muslims)

Tracking systems on Police Conduct and Behavior.

- CLEAR accountability for police conduct, just as one would be held accountable as a civilian, a police badge does not constitute power above the law when harm is caused
- Little to no police officers have been convicted of crimes done to Brown and Black communities all over the U.S., which caused a national and international uprising against the police, ie: Black Lives Matter. Create a zero tolerance policy for this.
- Investigate complaints especially for officers who received many of them and use urban design and district culture to allocate police officers.
- Understand the trauma caused over generations that may push marginalized individuals to react or act against being compliant with safety measures of following the police instructions and provide more comprehensive tools for the police officers
- Police complaints handled by a separate agency, outside of the police department to reduce conflict of personal interest and fair investigation.
- Repercussions made for Police Officers who commit crimes. The higher the position, the more responsibility.
- Removing immunity from police officers, they are citizens with a job description, just like everyone else.

Minimize the responsibilities of the Portland Police Force.

- Clearly identify what the difference between Police and Public Safety is by promoting more information about the difference using Portland city different venues
- As we created the culture of calling the police first for every inquiry and incident which added extra burden on the police as they have to respond, Portland City could be the leading city in reversing this culture by providing other clar options for example, Cahoot model, Drug & Alcohol responses.
- In order to fund the Cahoot model without adding extra economic burden on the city, we need reallocated resources specifically from the police budget to minimize their responsibilities. That means cutting down on equipment, gas, hiring costs, police officers, vehicles, jails, and court etc.

Eliminate bail, and court fines for individuals ~~from in~~ marginalized communities:

- Invite BIPOC individuals who have fines and bails to join diversion and restorative justice programs in order to get waived from the fines and the bails.

- Suggested a limit for who should pay for bails and court fines depending on individual income level and by prioritizing BIPOC candidates.

Stop demonizing criminal records

- Facts:
 - 25% of Americans have a criminal record
 - Mistakes in America are criminalized and cause disadvantages to Housing, Jobs, and Education
- Proposal:
 - Remove the check the box on job applications (University of Maine Systems recently approved of this, we believe the city should follow its role to produce equitable outcomes for the common public)
 - Have the City of Portland to create an incentive for employers who hire people with criminal records **Add the 10 year economic / taxes exception**

Screen Police Officers for personal prejudice, racism, White Supremacy, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia and any other type of discriminative behavior.

- Compliance policy and procedure is more accessible for individuals harmed
- Using hate crimes adequately when harm is committed to BIPOC individuals
 - Example: “The announcement of the removals came as the Pentagon was intensifying efforts to identify and combat white supremacy and other far-right extremism in its ranks, and as federal investigators sought to determine how many military personnel and veterans joined the violent assault on the Capitol on Jan. 6. The effort seems intended to remove any members whose social media posts or past actions raise suspicion.”
 - Example (continued):
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/us/politics/national-guard-capitol-biden-inauguration.html>

Support the role of community organizers and activists in public safety

- Remove and transform community police to community public safety
- Create a community public safety team; led by activists, community organizers, & credible messengers, who cannot arrest individuals but can contact the police when crimes are committed
- Reduce risk of police engagement when it's unnecessary by offering other resources, Cahoot and community public safety
- Decrease the amount of police patrol in the Urban, Marginalized, BIPOC Communities. It makes BIPOC youth feel unsafe

- Hire mental health professionals as well as mentors and credible messengers for the primarily diverse communities. Specifically for helping and maintaining leadership for youth and supporting families

Schooling:

- Increasing education for K through 12 when it came to understanding diversity and all cultures. Specifically indigenous and African American roots, from the forms of oppression to the systems built today to minimize the future of the cycle of racism in our systems.
- Opening an office inside of the Universities and the community colleges, specifically for BIPOC students where they will be able to receive assistance on available services,
- Example: receiving universal basic income (UBI) for four years until they receive some degree to help support through college.

Side note:

Have funds to pay for housing for up to two years and families are connected to a case worker to figure out how they can save for a down payment on home/property.

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Drug treatment centers located vastly around the city, mental health programs all over the city accessible 24/7

- Treatment for users, and sellers
- Racist historical context behind the punitive actions on drug users and sellers
- Decriminalize

Find SOLUTIONS to drug problems, not alternatives.

- Alternatives are given to the White majority, while disregarding the consistently harmed minorities.

Affordable housing, with little to no restrictions.

Decriminalize Homelessness, Loitering, Sleeping, Resting in public areas.

-----**Proposal: To have a one meeting to discuss the BLM Portland Demands**

BLM Portland Demands:

- Abolish the unelected city managers position and switch to a strong mayor system to ensure a more democratic process
- Retroactively decriminalize all drugs and sex work related offenses
- Implement community driven restorative justice programs to replace these punitive practices
- Release all people currently incarcerated for marijuana related offenses
- Establish mandates that protect workers from oppressive marijuana testing
- Police ban the use of lethal force on protesters
- Remove the Ice office from one city center and establish Portland as a sanctuary city
- Disband the main information and analysis center also known as me and fusion center
- Ban facial recognition technology
- Close longer development center

Environmental:

- For local and state wide acknowledgment of indigenous sovereignty over Penobscot
- Allocate city budget funding to create more public bathrooms, water fountains, trash and recycling receptacles in Portland parks
- Extend the five existing no discharge areas to include the entire main coast line. NDA's prohibits ships from dumping their sewage into the waterways
- Divest from industrial use of fossil fuels by removing our oil storage tanks in South Portland and calling for local officials to condemn CMP transmission pipeline

Public Health/ Housing/ Education:

- Increase funding for minority health programs
- Establish mandatory harm reduction quarterly training for all city of Portland employees
- Allocate funds from the city budget to create a COVID-19 response committee including creating city funded "no questions asked" testing sites
- Ban unhosted AIRBNB's
- Rent stabilization now. Tenant protections now. Keep people in their homes and curb gentrification.
- Education amend stem major specific loan forgiveness programs include all majors

- Make racial equity training a requirement for all staff in school and recruit more black and brown teachers, guidance counselors, and staff.

~~Here are my notes from the information I found in regard to Gainesville's program I mentioned. I was putting my proposal to be attached to Cahoot and I found it. The City of Gainesville in FL adapted a program called "Co-Responder" which is basically the same as Cahoot as a first step then,~~ ¶

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- ~~They adapted a Diversion and Deflection program to further equity by reducing arrests.~~ ¶
- ~~Non profit mental health organizations + the city+ the PD are building a central receiving facility where people with all types of crises will not be arrested or fall under the restrictions of emergency rooms as a third option after the jail and hospital.~~ ¶
- ~~My proposal as I and many of you mentioned is to ensure Cahoot's model success, such "third option facilities" should be a part of implementing it.~~ ¶
- ~~In order to make this is happen in Portland and given the housing and the sheltering crises, **here is my proposal:**~~ ¶
 - ~~Instead of building facilities (which is needed especially to reduce incarceration between young people of color), Portland City could put a call to rent such facilities or work closely with health NGOs and mental health NGOs to use their services before connecting the candidate in the "third option" to rehab centers or better permanent solutions.~~ ¶
 - ~~Portland city put an invite for local people to help in this, during the refugees crisis in Portland almost \$500,000 was collected and local families donated their summer homes to refugees until the city managed to find housing and other services for them.~~ ¶
 - ~~These facilities could be organized depending on the crisis , age difference and severity. It will act as a one stop resource for basic wrap around services for individuals and families in crisis.~~ ¶

- The Long Term goal for Portland city is to build more facilities for sure!¶

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