

Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council

Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair: Angelique Tomeo (Elect)

Vice-Chair: Melissa Haney (Elect)

Meeting Date: 4/1/2021

Meeting Location: virtual

Start Time:

Adjourn Time:

Member Attendance x = present			
Name		Email (Optional)	Organization
Carmen Pacheco-Jones		Carmen.pachecojones@yahoo.com	SRLJC RE Community Rep.
Francis Adewale	x	FAdevale@Spokanecity.org	Muni Public Defender
Rick Matters		rickmatters@gmail.com	SCAR, Episcopal Church
Jazmyn Clark	x		City Public Defender
Melissa Haney - Vice Chair Elect	x	mhaney@spokanecounty.org	Public Defenders Office
Andrew Warlaumont			
Michiko Fjeld		mfjeld@spokanecity.org	
Em Daniels	x		
Curtis Hampton	x		
Kurtis Robinson	x		
Angel Tomeo-Sam - Chair Elect		angel.tomeosam@gmail.com	
Karen Boone	x		
Natasha Hill	x		
Rick Deekon Jones			
Other Attendees:		Email (Optional)	
Maggie Yates	x	MYates@spokanecounty.org	Law & Justice Administrator
Candace Aguirre	x	caguirre@spokanecounty.org	Office of Law & Justice
Annemarie Frohnhoefer	x	frogflipper@yahoo.com	Scribe
Mary Lou Johnson	x		SRLC Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair
Brian McClatchy	x		Democratic Party;Redistricting Committee
Colin Tiernan	x		Spokesman-Review
Melanie Perry	x		Human Rights Activist Coterie of Spokane
Alex Gibilisco	x		Spokane City Council Manager of Equity and Inclusion Initiatives

Quorum is Present

All meetings and hearings held by the SRLJC and its subcommittees are held in facilities which are accessible to disabled individuals. For more information regarding the accessibility of the specific meeting room, or to request reasonable accommodations, please contact Law&Justice@Spokanecounty.org

Vice Chair (Elect) Melissa Haney called the meeting to order at 11:40 AM.

Attendees introduced themselves.

MINUTES

Some discussion regarding committee attendance ensued. Attendance is taken at every meeting by the scribe. There has not been any member with consistently poor attendance. Committee Member Francis Adewale suggested that members that have missed meetings be contacted in order to determine their interest in the committee and their removal as a voting member of the committee, if necessary.

Melissa Haney opened the floor for a movement to pass the minutes. Committee Member Natasha Hill moved to approve the minutes. Committee Member Em Daniels seconded the motion.

The minutes for January, February and March were approved unanimously with Kurtis Robinson abstaining because he had not read them in full.

Equity Impact Tool Update

Haney requested that Maggie Yates, Office of Law & Justice Administrator, give an update on the equity impact tool.

Maggie Yates reiterated what was presented at the March meeting.

- \$3,000 in MacArthur funding is slated for the development of an equity impact tool
- Judge Aimee Maurer, Alex Gibilisco, Carmen Pacheco-Jones, Karen Boone, Director Sparber, Annemarie Frohnhoefer and Just Lead WA experts are members of the work group
- The funding is being spent on stipends for community members participating in the work group

SRLJC Update

Melissa Haney requested updates from Maggie Yates on the proposed dissolution of the SRLJC.

Maggie Yates responded that the situation has not changed much since the last time she spoke on the issue to the committee in March. She explained that:

- No action has been taken by the Board of County Commissioners or the SRLJC on the proposal
- The proposal and discussion are on the agenda for May and will include opportunities for public comment

Committee Member Francis Adewale asked if it would be appropriate for the Racial Equity Committee to make a statement on the proposal. He stated that the WA State Bar Association is aware of the situation and would back and share any statement supported by the REC. Emily

Arneson was present at the meeting as a representative of the WA State Bar Association and appreciated learning about the REC and its valuable role in the SRLJC.

Mary Lou Johnson, co-chair of the SRLJC Strategic Planning Committee, stated that if the WA State Bar Association gave an opinion and a recommendation, then now is the time for the REC to have a discussion and make a formal recommendation.

Francis Adewale agreed with Mary Lou Johnson and suggested that REC compose a letter and copy organizations and system professionals to request their support for the REC's work. He continued that it is important for the REC to weigh in on the issue "ourselves" and ask who "will join us in this?"

Melissa Haney agreed that this was appropriate to discuss.

Committee Member Em Daniels asked if part of the letter in opposition of the resolution should include a request about community members also automatically getting a seat at the council.

Francis Adewale replied that he did not want the current issue to become conflated. He agreed with Daniels' sentiment but went further to say that the community requires a diverse SRLJC and that "we have done that, we have written that before, but this [the proposed resolution] is a new issue and it would be best not to combine the two."

Committee Member Karen Boone wanted to know if "community member" includes impacted communities. She referred to a statement in the proposed resolution and shared her thought that it wasn't specific enough.

Melissa Haney asked if it would be possible and or appropriate to contact the three men who wrote the updated Blueprint. She suggested that REC speak to the review's authors and have them speak at the next SRLJC meeting about REC's role and ask to amend or add to the update.

Maggie Yates confirmed that a "few status report authors" reached out to the commissioners and will attend the next SRLJC meeting.

Mary Lou Johnson asked if the authors had reached out to REC for input when they prepared their update report.

Melissa Haney said that she did not know of any outreach.

Maggie Yates stated that several community organizations and individuals were contacted including Toni Lodge of The Native Project, Northwest Justice, Cam Zorrozuva, and the health district but they had not reached out formally to the REC.

Mary Lou Johnson confirmed that the authors had not reached out to the Strategic Planning Committee. She encouraged the REC to act on Adewale's suggestion. She explained that the Strategic Planning Committee will request at the next SRLJC meeting to have a discussion and look at the resolution. She further stated that the Strategic Planning Committee recommended that the REC chair be a member of the council and asked whether or not that had been passed.

She wasn't sure why there had been no action on this but was reminded that it was up to the Board of County Commissioners to act.

Committee Member Daniels stated that they briefly looked at the Blueprint for Reform and couldn't help but notice that no timeline was presented as to when certain milestones for reform needed to be met. This caused them to question why this proposed resolution was happening now, why the BoCC was suddenly wanting to stop community engagement now, especially when the REC is working actively within a system that is not supporting the work. They went on to state that this is a mirror revealing the sort of systemic slowness and all the ways that community-driven reform efforts get slowed down. They wondered if there were a way to reference that in the REC letter, that they [the system] need to stop acting as gatekeepers.

Adewale thanked Mary Lou Johnson and Em Daniels for their comments and observations. He began to dictate the content and outline of the letter, the final draft of which can be [found here](#).

Committee Member Kurtis Robinson reiterated the thoughts he shared at the March REC meeting and requested that the letter include the following points:

- #1. Add on a statement to really call it out that this is not a new game being played and we've got to be really mindful of the systemically removed community voice from the SRLJC and the intentional minimization of its impact. Anyone who pays attention can see the pattern.
- #2. The question is whether or not we are going to change our tactics instead of being put back on our heels by going back to the same games that get played time and time again.
- #3. This is a tactic we see time and time again to silence the voice of the impacted.

Numerous committee members wondered what Robinson thought could be done to ensure that the pattern stops repeating.

Robinson explained that his tactic is "if you want to keep doing this, then we will play softball with you, but if you keep minimizing the voices then we will elevate our voice out here - the inside/outside game. If you don't listen then we can bring this action to fruition."

Adewale reminded Robinson that the difference now is the level of consciousness. He doesn't see a great number of system players signing off on the resolution. This is why he suggests that the letter be cc'd and distributed to City Council, the Bar Association, NAACP and others so that these orgs can weigh in on the stigmatization being purported by the resolution. He emphasized the importance of having everyone weigh in on the issue.

Robinson stated that he agreed "500%" with Adewale. He pressed for further actions beyond what Adewale suggested. Robinson wants it made clear that the community is adamantly against the resolution but also is calling for an increase in community representation on the board, an increase in capacity that truly represents and exemplifies the impacted communities and also an increase in the ability to perform meaningful action. This includes decision-making power, something beyond the committee's advisory role. He wants to see an SRLJC that makes clear,

concise, meaningful decisions that shift the dynamics and he would like to add that Commissioner Al French has time and time again undermined that progress.

Committee Member Karen Boone asked if there were a report card of success for the work the REC has done. She said that she has seen many successes within the group but she doesn't know if the community or the council are aware of those successes. She continued that it wouldn't be in the best interest of the REC to ask people to support the REC in blind faith. The truth, she continued, is that they are not aware of what we [the REC] are doing great things. She believes the letter should mention the achievements made by the committee.

Francis Adewale thought that Haney and Tomeo might want to start developing a list of successes, but he was skeptical if including any successes in the letter would change the outcome. He thought that a thousand things could be listed but it might not make a difference. He does hope that current REC leadership begin to document achievements, or that some committee members might start working on this.

Boone suggested going out and talking to the community. She said, "They don't even know what we are working on because it's like a hidden secret."

Kurtis Robinson agreed with Karen Boone and Francis Adewale and continued that he didn't believe it was the time to list achievements because he is tired of justifying his existence to a system that doesn't recognize him as a person.

Francis Adewale asked for a motion to oppose the resolution.

Haney seconded.

A brief discussion occurred regarding who would write the letter. It was agreed that Haney, Adewale and Frohnhoefer would write the letter.

The motion was unanimously approved.

IRC (Intake & Release Center) Update

After recapping the purpose of the IRC (as explained in the prior month's meeting) Law and Justice Administrator Maggie Yates presented updates on the Intake and Release Center.

- The IRC has been operating for a few months and the Law and Justice office can now share data snapshots
- The IRC has not yet hired a peer navigator, but the administration is working with the Spokane Resource Center to hire peer staff
- The peer position requires recruiting, hiring, and training but it is hoped that the position is filled soon
- When the position is filled the individual will be invited to speak at an upcoming REC meeting
- The IRC's hours of operation have changed. It is now open Tuesday through Friday from 1:20 PM until 11:20 PM. It is believed that extending beyond daytime hours allows more

people to be booked and released by the court without having to go to Geiger. New service numbers will be released next month to determine if the hour change helps increase numbers.

- Kurtis Robinson's request for a map showing surveillance coverage has not been met yet.
- Data is tagged to identify the number of individuals brought to the jail for intake vs. the number brought to the IRC. These numbers can be used to track whether or not law enforcement is choosing to use the IRC.
- Data is disaggregated by race. This will help inform any racial disparities in the use of the center and aid in an analysis of who is determined to be "combative" and therefore not diverted to the center.

Appointments

Vice-chair (elect) Haney turned the floor over to Committee Member Natasha Hill and Democratic party member Brian McClatchy. Both individuals have been appointed to the county's redistricting committee. They wanted to meet with the REC to explain the redistricting process and to provide information on how marginalized individuals and underrepresented communities can take part in the redistricting process.

Hill explained:

- The results of the last census showed Spokane County had undergone population growth. This means that Spokane County will have five county commissioners instead of three county commissioners.
- In addition, the rules of the election have changed. Previously, each commissioner participated in a primary for their district. After the primary, a general election was held in which every voter in the county could vote for all commissioners regardless of district. Now, districts vote only for their commissioner in both the primary and general election.
- Due to these voting changes, historically Democratic districts like District 3 won't be outvoted in the general election.
- Population growth and additional seats on the Board of County Commissioners requires new district creation and boundary decisions.
- Brian McClatchy and Natasha Hill were appointed to serve on the committee that makes these changes. Two GOP representatives also sit on the committee. The fifth committee member chairs the committee but does not have a vote.
- Hill urges every resident in the county to write every member of the committee, across party lines, and tell the committee members what is most important to them and to their community.
- Currently, communication logistics have not been worked out but as soon as email addresses are available and the website is up and running, REC will be notified.

A question arose regarding the protocol should the committee reach an impasse regarding who to appoint as the fifth member. Brian McClatchy explained that if the four voting members of the committee cannot reach a majority on a decision by the 30th of April, then the state will approve a redistricting plan.

Haney asked how redistricting could help the REC and communities of color.

Hill answered that redistricting will impact city council seats in Spokane's Democratic core alongside the creation of new commissioner districts. McClatchy and Hill will be looking at ways the county can be divided to "stagger" the core across the county. In terms of the big picture, Spokane County is the only county that has seen growth in this census cycle. It is the only county to move from a three commissioner board to a five commissioner board. This shift can upend the county's GOP stronghold. McClatchy added that this is a "game changer" from everything from budget decisions to increased engagement from low-turnout areas where people did not think their vote mattered.

Committee Member Boone asked how McClatchy, Hill and other members of the redistricting committee consider in terms of the diversity of the redistricting. She clarified to say diversity of housing (renters vs. owners), economic development, opportunity zones and other forms of diversity. She wanted to know how members of the community can connect with the committee.

McClatchy and Hill reiterated that they will make their emails and website available once the communications logistics have been put into place.

McClatchy answered Boone's question regarding impact by stating that even if the majority of commissioners remain the same as they are now, additional seats added means that additional representatives will be able to engage in a number of county boards and commissions that current commissioners are sitting on now. As a result, this divides up the responsibilities of each commissioner and offers the opportunity for more diverse voices to sit on boards and commissions and offer different views and perspectives. Everything from Spokane Airport extensions, to solid waste removal, to the criminal legal system can benefit from having even one additional voice. He urged REC and the broader community to get engaged, weigh in, be present and reach out to all four members of the committee and identify areas that need better representation. If people don't see their areas of concern or their geographic area on the board or don't see themselves represented on the BoCC then let the committee know that. The committee has to make conscious choices so that the redistricting decisions make sense.

McClatchy and Hill stated they were excited about being a conduit to get democratic representation in Spokane at the community level. Redistricting holds the potential to change election results. If more people are voting and more impacted communities are voting, the Spokane County will begin to recognize and represent more communities.

Committee member Francis Adewale thanked McClatchy and Hill for their time and presentation. He then turned the floor over to Committee Member Kurtis Robinson who was recently appointed to the Criminal Justice Training Commission, a state-level commission that makes decisions and recommendations on law enforcement training in the state.

Robinson thanked Adewale and told the committee that he, Robinson, was the first formerly incarcerated individual to be seated on the commission. He's glad to have the position and is ready to hold the state accountable to training and laws that have been mandated. He provided I-940 as an example. The requirements of that legislation have not yet been met. He stated that the

last month's meeting of the commission he was met with the reality that many commissioned part-time officers are not being held to high standards of training. There was limited accountability and training as required in WAC and the RCW. Individuals with minimal hours and training are being given a gun and sent out on patrol.

Adevale mentioned that REC has long been against killology training styles and he is happy that Robinson can keep an eye on that in his new position.

Robinson responded that the guardian mentality vs. warrior mentality is paramount on the list as well as making certain that the commission is going back and reviewing the WAC and the RCWs that are already in place, for instance rules on SWAT teams.

Adevale requested that Robinson provide input on the CJTC at each REC meeting going forward.

ADJOURNED

With no other areas of discussion or questions presented, Vice-Chair (elect) Haney adjourned the meeting at 12:54 PM.

SCRIBE: Annemarie Frohnhoefer

Next Meeting: 5/6/2021