



A/TCRRT Planning Council Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2016
12 Noon to 1:30 PM
700 Lavaca, Room 111.2

Minutes

Voting Members Present: Sarah Worthington, Helen Gaebler, Laura Sovine, Sandra Eames, Darla Gay, Nancy Hohengarten, Doug Smith, Mia Sneed, Louella Tate, Kenneth Thompson, Bree Williams.

Staff: Lauren Johnson, Kelly Nichols, Caity Barillas

Visitors: Emily Rogers, Molly Cook, Michael Feferman, Brenda Musgrove

- I. **Introductions** (Sarah Worthington)
Sarah began with a round of introductions and asked each member to tell the group what their best personal attribute was.
- II. **Approval of March 2016 Minutes** (Sarah Worthington)
There was not a quorum so the vote on minutes was tabled.
UPDATE: As of 5/2/16, a quorum of the Planning Council voted by email to approve the March 2016 minutes.
- III. **Approval of Amended Bylaws** (Sarah Worthington)
There was not a quorum so the vote on bylaws was tabled.
UPDATE: As of 5/2/16, a quorum of the Planning Council voted by email to approve the amended bylaws.
- IV. **National Reentry Week: April 24-30th** (Lauren Johnson)
Lauren updated the group about First Degree, a documentary about college courses in prison. She asked the council to consider their level of involvement and mentioned that individual organizations could join. **Action Item:** Lauren will send out an email to the group about education from Inside Out and a request for broad support of the program.
- V. **Conspire Theater Performance/Women's Reentry Forum: June 30th** (Lauren Johnson)
Lauren explained that the last screening that was held was a successful event. She noted that Conspire Theatre is a group that facilitates theater and creative writing for incarcerated women and for two years they have been doing performances with women on the outside. Conspire Theatre will be putting on a new performance in the summer. Lauren stated that she would like the roundtable to support the performance on the 30th of June and have a forum to discuss women in reentry. She noted that volunteers are being accepted to form a work



A/TCRRT Planning Council Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2016
12 Noon to 1:30 PM
700 Lavaca, Room 111.2

Minutes

group for this event. It was discussed that government officials should be invited to the panel to raise awareness for the group. Lauren outlined that the support she is looking for is financial, help with getting elected officials on the panel, and advertising.

Action Item: Lauren will send information to the group about Conspire Theater.

VI. **Employment Work Group Update** (Sandra Eames)

Sandra will be serving as the interim Employment chair. Roundtable and ECHO has put together 3 forums for the Employment Work Group. The first forum will be held on Wednesday, April 13th. Planning Council member Dwayne Street, representatives from Workforce Solutions and Austin Community College, and an employer perspective from Adrian Neely will bring unique voices to the conversation.

VII. **Housing Work Group Update** (Kelly Nichols)

Kelly updated the group on the criminal backgrounds housing project – the work group is continuing with the project and will be developing a white paper focusing on recommendations for local funders of subsidized housing and their role in ensuring fair housing for persons with criminal backgrounds. The report will include an overview of the recent HUD guidance on housing for persons with criminal backgrounds. Darla provided copies of an overview of the recent HUD guidance. Sarah mentioned that Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA) has been successful in recent rulings on this issue, that the issue is an important policy for HUD, and that there may be opposition at the state level. It was discussed that local housing authorities have reduced their barriers. They have used appeals and their permanent supportive housing units to only use federal mandates about housing. They still look at arrests, but they have adopted more lenient policies. Darla also handed out a summary of the draft transitional housing report findings which the housing work group will be looking at in closer detail and bringing back to the Planning Council for final approval.

VIII. **Letter to House Corrections Committee Update** (Helen Gaebler)

Helen noted that the planning council was one vote short of passing the letter. The last discussion created questions about the letterhead and who could abstain. The letter was reworked based on these suggestions. The council decided to take the names of abstaining members off of the letterhead. **Action Item:** The council will take a vote to see if the letter passes and will add contact information to the bottom of the letter.



A/TCRRT Planning Council Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2016
12 Noon to 1:30 PM
700 Lavaca, Room 111.2

Minutes

- IX. Discussion: Guiding Principles for Organizational Support Letters** (Sarah Worthington)
Sarah led a conversation about guiding principles for organizational support letters issued by the Planning Council. It was discussed that the council must support complementary programs focused on successful reentry. It was stated that the council needs to be careful about their proposal having a basis in evidence; programs need to be evidence based and outcome driven and have measurable success. The strategic goals of the organization also need to be adhered to. Another concern that was raised was that the election criteria was exclusive to certain groups and there shouldn't be outright exclusivity unless it is specifically addressing a discernable gap. The Council discussed that they need to clearly articulate what the role of the Roundtable will be. The Planning Council agreed to continue this discussion.
- X. Misc. Announcements and Roundtable**
Doug announced that there will be a Senate Criminal Justice Committee hearing on April 26th that directly deals with reentry, and May 17th hearing on fees associated with reentry.