



PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, September 12th, 2016
12:00 noon – 2:00PM
700 Lavaca, Room 1.112

Minutes

Attendees: Sherry Blyth, Sandra Eames, Helen Gaebler, Darla Gay, Darwin Hamilton, Melissa Orren, Jorge Renaud, Danny Smith, Laura Sovine, Louella Tate, Kenneth Thompson, Bree Williams, Sarah Worthington

Staff: Caity Barillas, Lauren Johnson, Kelly Nichols, Brook Son

Guests: Karen Keith, Susan Requejo, Emily Rogers, Marcus Ramirez, Laura Griebel, Rebecca Farrell, Rachel Grubbs, Samantha Turner-Nevarez, Claudia Durand

I. Introductions (Sarah Worthington)

Sarah Worthington welcomed the group and facilitated a round of introductions.

II. Approval of August 2016 Minutes

Kenneth Thompson moved to approve the August minutes, Sherry Blyth seconded, and the council unanimously approved the August minutes.

III. 2016-17 Officer Elections (Kenneth Thompson)

- Helen Gaebler, Chair
- Melissa Orren, Vice Chair
- Sarah Worthington, Past Chair
- Reggie Smith, Reentry Advocacy Project Representative

Kenneth Thompson moved to approve the new officers, Laura Sovine seconded, and the council unanimously approved the new officers.

IV. Approval of Locked Out: Addressing Criminal History Barriers to Accessing Affordable Rental Housing in Travis County Report (Melissa Orren)

Helen Gaebler moved to approve the report "*Locked Out: Addressing Criminal History Barriers to Accessing Affordable Rental Housing in Travis County*", Kenneth Thompson seconded, and the council unanimously approved the report.

V. Roundtable Visioning Discussion:

- **History & Accomplishments**
Sarah Worthington, Darla Gay, Laura Sovine, and Emily Rogers participated in an exercise called "The User Experience Fishbowl" to offer insights on the Roundtable's history and accomplishments since its founding in 2003.
- **Assessing our Purpose**
Using the "9 Why's" exercise, the group discussed the activities that each participant does to support the Roundtable, and then narrowed down their purpose for participating.

Common themes and insights included:

- **Problem Solving.** Taking real and lasting actions that address the root causes of mass incarceration and racial injustice.
 - **Lived Experience.** Many of us are personally impacted by the criminal justice system and personally motivated to do this work.
 - **Connecting Dots.** We see the impact of the collaboration in terms of introducing people and bringing resources to the table and sharing them, sometimes in surprising and unexpected ways.
 - **Facilitating Paradigm Shifts.** Diversity of perspective (lived experience, professional background, etc) is the “secret sauce” that this group wields. It is the power of collective advocacy.
- **Establishing the Core Elements of Our Work**
The “Min Specs” exercise was used to narrow down the absolute “must do’s” and “must not do’s” for the group:

Must Do:

- Think big and be brave. Speak “truth to power.”
- Focus on root causes. Identify root causes of massive hyper-criminalization.
- Build a collective agenda: Prioritize what we advocate for. Build consensus on thoughts and actions. Be collaborative.
- Build in accountability: Be accountable. Hold each other accountable. Go back to our positions and make changes we are able to.
- Be a learning organization: Listen. Make informed decisions.
- Communicate: Maintain internal and external communication.

Must Not Do:

- Lose focus on system change. Don’t let larger systems go unchanged.
- Beg off. Give up. Assume someone else will do it.
- Lose sight of the individuals impacted by the system. Don’t objectify individuals. Forget to provide resources and opportunities for individuals to succeed.
- Lose faith or passion. Get complacent. Get distracted by in-fighting.

- **Moving Forward**

The council discussed what steps to take moving forward to create movement and change for the group.

What did we do today?

- Reflection and reassessment
- Engagement
- Increased energy in the room

So What?

- This represents progress
- Interaction like this at meetings is critical to hearing everyone’s voice
- We need to do more shared work together

A/TCRRT Planning Council Meeting, September 12, 2016

- Now we need more concrete action steps

Now What?

- Proxy voting to better achieve consensus and increase productivity
- October meeting – further discussion on proposal for new meeting structure with more work group time and increased interaction during meetings

VI. Announcements:

- Expunction Clinics at the UT Law School will be starting up again this fall and Helen Gaebler will send the dates the clinics are resuming to the council.
- The University of Houston Law School will also be holding Expunction Clinics and Helen will send the dates of the Houston clinics to the council.
- Brian Stevenson will be in Austin for an event on September 27th at the LBJ Auditorium.
- Oct 10th from 1:00-4:00pm Mass Story Lab will be hosting an event focused on previously incarcerated individuals.
- The School of Architecture will be hosting an exhibit called *States of Incarceration: Spatial Stories of Migration and Detention How does architecture shape punishment?* from October 5-26th.
- Oct. 28th there will be an Opportunity Forum event on reentry and housing taking place at the UT law school.

Next Meeting:
October 17th, 2016
Noon – 1:30pm
700 Lavaca, Room 1.112