

Mayor's Commission on Reentry Minutes

August 19, 2019

In attendance: John House, Andrea Reese, Jeanette James, Norman Quarles, Michael Forté, Keith W. Mitchell

Guests: Dayna J. Solomon, Columbus Drug Court, Carolina Rodriguez, Columbus Land Bank and Baki Muhammad, Nation of Islam

The meeting was held in the Elections and Registration office, Citizens Services Center, 2nd Floor at 1:30 pm. Norman Quarles opened the meeting in prayer.

The minutes were reviewed from our July 16, 2019 meeting. Jeanette James made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Forte' seconded that motion, and the minutes were accepted by unanimous vote.

Baki was invited to the meeting by Councilor Pops Barnes and shared his interested in serving as a core member of the Mayor's Commission on Reentry. This will be discussed in our next meeting.

Housing for returning citizens is extremely important and Keith has been is discussion with Pastor Flakes who owns property in Columbus that he would gladly let us use it. The problem is getting money to rehab the properties. There is a program called Reentry Permanent Housing (RPH) of which Andrea Reese is very familiar with and Waleisah and Keith will look into it further. Keith requested to have a subcommittee to work on developing structure in guiding our efforts to address the housing issue. Carolina and Baki indicated interest in serving.

Keith shared about Stations of Hope which is a local faith-based initiative. He also spoke about a nonprofit in Atlanta which provides new and almost new clothing items. He also shared we are still recruiting faith-based partners

Andrea shared there has been changes with Georgia's reentry efforts. The program Healing Communities no longer has that name. She will keep us informed as she is guiding all efforts by the Department of Supervision.

Caroline Rodriguez of the Columbus Land Bank shared how we could collaborate with obtaining affordable housing for returning citizens. The Columbus Land Bank get the house that might have tax liens on them and the taxes are forgiven and they get the property. She distributed literature for us to look over.

Dayna Solomon of Columbus Drug Court shared how she has been able to been given approximately \$1 million dollars in grant money to make her program run smoothly and she will gladly help the commission apply for and hopefully obtain grant money as well. John House will ask the City Attorney how is grant money handled if the commission is under the Mayor's office.

The next meeting will be held Monday, September 16, 2019 at 1:30 pm in the conference room of the Elections and Registration office.