

Meeting Minutes: Mayor's Commission on Reentry

Date: April 18, 2022

Time: 1:00-2:00 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present:

Kristin Barker
Becca Covington
John House
Waleisah Wilson

Keith Mitchell
Joseph Obermeyer
Stacy Rivera

Gamaliel Torres
John Wade
Monica Spencer

Waleisha Wilson made motion to approve March minutes. Monica Spencer seconded.

1) Communication –

- **Kristin Barker** would like to start proactively reaching out to other organizations that aren't represented in the commission but are providing assistance to people exiting incarceration.
 - Each month, we can highlight an organization on Facebook.
 - The organization could also attend a meeting.
- **Kristin Barker** -We need to focus on releasing press releases.
 - Kristin Barker said that John Wade suggested that we put out regular press releases.
 - We had a student that was going to do the press releases, but he is not going to be able to.
 - Kristin Barker would like to sit down with John Wade and Gamaliel Torres to talk about PR strategies.
- **Gamaliel Torres** suggested we could speak with a Northside or Shaw high school student.
- **Kristin Barker** will send an email to Gamaliel Torres and John Wade to see if they can set a meeting to come up with a simple strategy.

2) Employment –

- **Kristin Barker** spoke with Tracey, and he says we're getting close to finishing the research phase of the Ban the Box project. They've been doing research at both the national and local level to see what worked in other communities.
 - He will have that info and do the focus groups soon.
- **Kristin Barker** says that we have a meeting with the Transitional Center this week. We are going to see what they need, how Better Work Columbus can help them, and see how we can get their people into one of the assembly jobs in companies with which we have been working. We would also like to see if there is a way for them to provide transportation for these people to and from those jobs.
 - Potentially 10-15 people.
- **John House** reached out the City HR department to see how to get inmates in the Muscogee County Prison trained for a CDL license. The City hires people who have been released from prison, and, right now, the City is desperate for people with CDL licenses.
 - The HR director said that she would reach out to the Warden.
- **Monica Spencer** suggested that we try to partner with Walmart to train drivers. – She referenced the news article that said that Walmart pays drivers \$90-100K/year.

3) Housing –

- Nobody from that subcommittee was present.

4) Data Sharing –

- **Kristin Barker** had a meeting with Becca Covington and Lucy Sheftall from the City Attorney's office. She then had a meeting with Stacy Rivera, Becca Covington, and other people from the Department of Corrections and the Department of Community Supervision.
 - We revisited the “why.” – We still don't have a connected process that ensures that everyone existing the system have their needs met and don't fall through the cracks.
 - We still need a MOU for GA Dept. of Corrections, Dept. of Community Supervision, and Sheriff's Department to provide basic information (like who is going to be released in the next 90 days.
 - Then, we will create a Google form that can be shared with those individuals who are going to be released in the near future. That form will allow them to self-disclose what they need.
 - We may be able use Home for Good to look over those forms and refer the people to community partners.
 - We wouldn't need a big database to store the data since it would just be a form.
 - **Stacy Rivera** suggested putting a consent on the form.
- **Kristin Barker** said that we still have some key questions to answer, but there are fewer questions with this system than the one we were previously discussing. Stacy Rivera and Becca Covington agreed.

5) Faith –

- **Monica Spencer** reported that the faith subcommittee will be meeting on May 12th. They are going to invite the faith community to that meeting. It will probably be a virtual meeting and will serve to regroup and redefine the subcommittee's priorities.
 - At that meeting, they will be sharing the questionnaire that they have. Hopefully, when they come out of that meeting, they will have more data to share.
- **Kristin Barker** suggested Monica Spencer should reach out to John Wade to ask if he has any suggestions about who in the faith community she should invite to the meeting.

Next meeting of the Reentry Commission will be on May 16, 2022.