

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
 Falcon Heights Inclusion and Policing Task Force
 City Hall
 2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
 March 7, 2017 at 7:15 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:16 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

ANDREWS	X		JOHNSON-POWERS	X
BALLENTINE	X		LEEHY-CO CHAIR	X
COLOND	X		THOMPSON	X
DEMERATH			WADE	X
JOHNSON	X			

STAFF PRESENT:

MAYOR LINDSTROM	X
CO-CHAIR/COUNCIL MEMBER GUSTAFSON	
CO-FACILITATOR QUICK	X
CO-FACILITATOR MORRIS	X
ADMINISTRATOR THONGVANH	X

Homework for next meeting on Tues. March 14, read Einstein article.

I. Call to order
 7:21pm

II. Review Agenda
 No changes were proposed.

III. Review meeting minutes
 Amy was out sick last time. No other corrections. Dan motioned to accept the minutes with changes, Jay seconded, and all were in favor.

IV. Debrief of Mar. 2-community conversation some facilitators and circle keepers seemed a little conflicted about whether they should provide input. Some do some do not. Members felt the discussions were healthy and respectful. Some questions were awkwardly worded. One member was surprised at the opinions that were accepted as facts. The police officer in the group established some facts about practices and lack of data about traffic stops.

Some community members are disheartened by elected officials. One member appreciated the diversity in room and seeing participants from outside of Falcon Heights. However, people of Falcon Heights need to show up if there is going to be change in the city.

Another member was able to look in different groups, hear different ideas and conflicting views. Does the city need 24/7 service? If not, response times could be 5-10 minutes. vs. 2-3 minutes.

One group was quite productive by producing 50 idea cards with just eight people. How can community values communicated? There is a struggle to make community more engaged and welcoming.

One facilitator seemed more like an interrogator in seeking clarification rather than listening.

A question came up about who is paying for the snacks and water. Facilitators need to communicate what they need. Reimbursement from the city is available. Sack or Mariah can be contacted.

Would it be possible to keep the introductions shorter? Some things need to be covered so every one is on the same page.

Some groups are more engaged and willing to commit more time. How can the discussion continue?

How can we keep people engaged and leverage this energy.

How can we obtain responses from elderly that cannot attend? How about a meeting at one of the senior buildings?

How important is it to pull people back together? Some closure needed although some want more time for small group discussion.

V. Discussion around policing approaches and best practices Discussion was continued from the last meeting where members were given homework to think about policing practices and improving outcomes. Pick two or three areas where we would see the most benefit.

An analogy was made regarding a hospital setting with patient experiences and their satisfaction level.

Could a satisfaction score be created for police? There typically is not the same trust factor with police as there is with hospitals. Could data be compared with other police departments? Public perception of those who enforce rules is not usually positive.

Roseville police has a process for people to provide feedback after police interaction. Data is available online. One suggestion was that any time a police officer talks to anyone they must give out info for a city controlled monitoring system. Problems can potentially be addressed quickly. Another suggestion was an 11 week training session where officers get to know community in various ways. Police can gain insight on how to be engaged. Regarding the contract, what are the consequences of not being compliant? Could there be financial penalties or other repercussions?

Typically, contracts have language regarding breaches with time periods to avoid reoccurrence. Also included would be language about a remediation process and termination. Switching to a different police department could take 12 to 18 months.

Other departments are not hiring in case they need to cover Falcon Heights. Contract needs to be modified with community values. Some intermediate things could be done if something comes up. A probationary period could be used and financial incentives to do what they agreed upon. The current contract has been in place a long time and people have been happy with it. SAP is looking to improve the performance of its officers. Council formed this task force to get recommendations. The community engagement committee could be a recipient of police feedback cards.

We do not want to micro-manage police but we want to provide some general guidance.

We want to put specifics on the framework of policing and community process. Regarding police encounters, in general a white guy is nervous but the black guy is thinking my life could be over.

Different camps can be formed easily but we need to realize that we all have a stake in optimal outcomes.

The proposal of a joint powers of authority was brought forward where the cities of St. Anthony, Lauderdale, and Falcon Heights have equal say in policing. The cities of Centennial, Lexington and Circle Pines have this arrangement. Funding can be complicated and could be based on population, amount of crime and other factors. The city would have more influence over policing, hiring and budget with this agreement. More investigation is needed into this. Currently, recommendations can be made to SAP and they seem responsive but this vehicle would give the city more authority.

Break 8:50pm

Other members provided input regarding hiring officers with a diverse background and having experience with people from different cultures. The hiring process needs to convey the values of the community. Regarding the suggestion of officers walking the city, this would affect response times to other parts of the city or would require more officers which would increase costs. Another suggestion was to have police issue more warnings about vehicle issues like broken tail lights. This could help improve the community's perception of the police and convey that they are being helpful rather than just enforcing the rules.

VI. Blink discussion

We all have embedded biases and make quick decisions with little information based on what we have learned. However, we can retrain ourselves. Applying this to the city, police could get out of their cars more and citizens could engage the police at community events. Some see the police as serving the community while others do not.

The practice of personal de-escalation can be practiced by police and citizens to slow down and obtain additional information. One example was given about a domestic dispute where an officer was pushed three times but the person was not arrested. The person was not seen as a threat to the officer's safety in the situation. Many variables are involved like the mood of police officer and previous call experience. We won't know the variables before an encounter but we will make a decision.

Review of the task force timeline:

Task force meetings on 3/14 and 3/21

Community Conversation 4/3 to review policing draft recommendations Task force meeting on 4/11 to review recommendations for the council City Council meeting on 5/3 to present recommendations from the task force

VIII. Preparation for March 14th Task Force Meeting

Notes from the community conversation turnaround was a challenge given the timing of the task force meeting.

Will references to websites and input from outside experts be available? Melanie is working with the design team and they are shooting for 3/21 for expert input.

IX. Announcements and Updates

The next task force meeting will be Tuesday March 14.

X. Adjourn

9:33pm