

Reparations Commission

SUMMARY/ACTION MINUTES

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Location: Alameda County Training & Education Center
Oakland Room
125 – 12th Street, 4th Floor, Oakland, CA 94607

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Debra Gore-Mann at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members present:

Leo Bazile
Jesse Burlison
Alan Dones
Phillip S. Gardiner
Debra Gore-Mann
Shenita Hurskin
Carolyn Johnson
James Knowles
Larry McClendon
Brandon T. Sass
Shadrick Small
Natasha Tripplett

Excused: Artavia Berry, Lori Cox, Vickie Stephens

III. Public Comment (items not listed on the agenda)

Deb Sica, Acting Librarian, Alameda County Library, was present at the meeting, at the request of Supervisor Miley, to support the work of the Reparations Commission.

Bishop Henry C. Williams commented about his reparations work and he would like to be of assistance to the Reparations Commission.

IV. Approval of Minutes – Action Item

A motion was made by Commissioner McClendon and seconded by Commissioner Dones, to approve the minutes of July 10, 2024, as corrected.

Ayes: Bazile, Dones, Gardiner, Gore-Mann, Hurskin, Johnson, Knowles, McClendon, Sass, Small, Tripplett

Noes:

Excused: Berry, Burlison, Cox, Stephens

Motion passed 11/0

V. Debrief of Board of Supervisors - Ad Hoc Committee July 16, 2024, Meeting – Informational Item

Chair Gore-Mann reported on the Ad Hoc Committee on Reparations meeting, held with Supervisor Márquez and Supervisor Miley, to review several action items from the Reparations Commission.

The first action item was to secure departmental sponsorship. The Ad Hoc Committee on Reparations approved County Sponsorship through the County Health Department and the County Library.

The second action item was about allyship and partnership, particularly with civil rights, economic justice, and community-based organizations. The Ad Hoc Committee approved the action on allyship, with a focus on defining the term more clearly.

The Committee also discussed partnerships with academic institutions and review the proposed Reparations Commission \$4 million budget. The budget was not approved but will be further discussed with the County Administrator's Office.

The Committee discussed a two-year extension, including who would continue to serve. The Reparations Commission remains active until the extension is officially granted.

VI. Overview and Discussion - Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) Reparations Task Force Report – Informational Item

[Attachment](#)
[Attachment](#)

Chair Gore-Mann reported on the Berkeley Public School District 's Reparations Task Force and its report.

The task force included 15 members, notably students, which Berkeley prioritized to bring a youth voice into the discussion. The task force held 13 meetings from April 2023 through June 2024 and conducted significant research, leaning on frameworks such as the California Reparations Task Force's 1,100-page report. They also brought in experts and conducted a community survey, receiving over 2,200 responses. Of those surveyed, 640 community members identified as descendants of enslaved people, and the feedback strongly supported the task force's recommendations.

Their key proposals included:

- 1) A harm report to document the historical impacts of segregation and slavery within the school system, with a focus on creating a lasting, accurate historical record and building educational curricula around it.
- 2) Curriculum development - The creation of educational materials specifically tied to the documented harms.
- 3) Financial payments - Direct financial support for descendant students, specifics of this were not fully defined.
- 4) Funding sources - Proposed obtaining funds from philanthropy, corporate giving, potential lawsuits, and even a ballot initiative for a tax measure to support reparations.

The task force emphasized a multi-pronged approach focusing on truth-telling, historical acknowledgment, and providing direct support to descendant students.

VII. Subcommittee Reports – Informational Item

Infrastructure - marketing, communication, outreach/community engagement, legal/political (Leo, Jesse, Larry, Lori, Artavia, Vickie, Shad)

Commissioner McClendon reported that the subcommittee has not met frequently since completing the scopes of work, budget.

Safety/criminal justice (Leo, Jesse, James, Carolyn)

Commissioner Burluson reported on two upcoming meetings regarding juvenile justice: a Juvenile Justice Commission meeting on September 11th and an SB 823 meeting scheduled for September 12th.

Commissioner Burluson proposed to add an action item to the September agenda for submitting a proposal to the Board of Supervisors in November to request reparations-related actions, such as land and funding.

After discussion, the Reparations Commission determined to follow the process previously set for the Reparations Commission concerning proposals to the Board of Supervisors.

Economic - housing, small businesses (Brandon, Alan, Artavia, James)

Commissioner Dones reported on ongoing community projects such as the Coliseum project and Mandela Station. He expressed concern that previous economic development efforts, were exclusive and displacing, failing to benefit the broader community, especially people of color. Exclusionary development worsened social issues like homelessness. He advocates for more inclusive, community-led projects that address systemic inequities and call for accountability in future investments.

Commissioner Knowles reported that the subcommittee contacted Michelle Starratt, Housing Director for Alameda County, and her staff person Eileen de Guzman, who provided access to their website for review and there is an upcoming housing advisory committee meeting he plans to attend.

The subcommittee discussed funding opportunities, particularly questioning whether the county's retirement fund (ACERA) is investing in local, Black-owned, or minority-owned businesses.

Health and Education (Natasha, James, Shadrick, Shenita, Phillip)

Commissioner Hurskin reported on the Health & Education subcommittee meeting, including items related to the proposed budget and data collection. They discussed waiting on a budget decision or identifying alternative resources from agencies, such as the Alameda County Health Department and school districts to collect data. The focus is on gathering data on disparities in health and education, using race, ethnicity, zip codes, and gender as key metrics.

The subcommittee also discussed creating a framework to align initiatives based on available data and resources; leveraging existing equity initiatives in different departments, conducting an audit to avoid duplicating efforts. Emphasized collaboration with existing organizations working on health and education disparities could strengthen recommendations.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2024.

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