

A Call to Action Focus Groups

These focus groups were narrowed down based on the December 29th meeting, the DOJ sessions, and ideas generated by the Call to Action Planning Group. We will be breaking into groups during the meeting on March 10th. This document can help you think about which group you might want to work in. *Note: the titles of the focus groups are open to change based on input from the group members. Further, ideas for additional groups may be suggested and implemented.*

- 1. Tompkins County Accountability Task Force** – This group would focus on the Community Police Board and/or other mechanisms to keep police accountable to community members for their decisions and behavior.
- 2. Building Relationships** – This group would work on engagement ideas that bring community members and police officers together in creative ways to bridge the gap in understanding, build trust, and increase respect both ways.
- 3. Training & Education** – This group would explore the many learning opportunities suggested for police and community members.
- 4. Policy** – This group would organize around ideas for changes to city and IPD policies.
- 5. Crisis Liaison Group** – This group would take action to address crises when they occur through direct communication with Chief John Barber and Mayor Svante Myrick.
- 6. Media** – This group would plan and implement ways to use the media and social media.
- 7. Paradigm Shifts** – This group would look at overarching issues that might frame the dialogue or cover issues that, without attention, might hamper good efforts, and take actions to move everyone in the community toward justice.
- 8. Storytelling Group** – This group is included to give participants who want to share their stories and truths about experiences with police in a safe environment. This group is for people who are not members of law enforcement.

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Tompkins County Accountability Task Force – This group would focus on the Community Police Board and/or other mechanism to keep police accountable to community members for their decisions and behavior. There is an idea of having a reviewing body for the entire County, not just the City of Ithaca.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

Laura Burch & Jaimi Hendrix

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorms and our planning group:

- Invite Rochester Review Board creator to come and speak - Laura B. has already reached out to the Mayor and Chief asking about their availability/interest in hearing the talk by Frank Liberti. (Laura B.)
- Document the problem – designate community members to collect stories from people who have been mistreated. (Joanne?)
- Active engagement with Common Council
- Community involvement in Mayor and Chief decision-making
- Include mechanism for addressing racism and implicit bias
- Active engagement with Police Benevolent Association
- Implement appropriate consequences for inappropriate and illegal police behavior
- Police should be given a self-reporting mechanism and receive training in acceptable behaviors.
- Accountability Measures....Some are State wide, e.g., the AG picking up investigation
- Town hall meetings on a regular basis for the purpose of allowing the public to ask questions, present concerns, report crime that otherwise would go unreported
- Create a mechanism for holding each other accountable on both sides when non-constructive comments are made

Community Police Board

- Community police board - process transparent, express view @ meeting, more outreach
- Create a new body - Research other models of community board - Rochester police board has subpoena power over the police. The creation of a truly independent body/person to investigate accusations of police wrongdoing.
- Change the policies of the existing CPB:
 - A community police board that is elected by the residents not appointed by mayor
 - Civilian review board that has subpoena power for complaints, and firing power
 - Elected community police board that has fire power.
 - Include 5 members (at least 3 minority members) elected from existing community groups.
 - budget, legal skills, and a bulwark against the Legal, Authoritative Power of the PBA,
- CPRB majority vote may choose to utilize an investigative team of an attorney, investigator and clerical support person, chosen beforehand by the Board and paid for by the City and County. This team may exercise subpoena power and may directly convene a grand jury that will be examined by the DA and the Boards attorney.
- The form for less serious police sanction can be addressed by the Boards charter.

A Call to Action Focus Groups

Building Relationships – This group would work on engagement ideas that bring community members and police officers together in creative ways to bridge the gap in understanding, build trust, and increase respect both ways.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

Fabina Colon & Rit Gallucci

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorms and our planning group:

- Engagement activities and events (with police on and off duty)
- Conduct talking circles for police and community members (Audrey/Fabina)
- Artistic engagement – Civic Ensemble, Performing Arts for Social Change (Sarah/Cynthia H.)
- More social workers involved with police work. [Someone disagreed with this and said it's militarizing the social workers]
- Auxiliary police force experience down state (training, volunteers) citizens on patrol.
- Mentoring programs
- Including employees of important organizations (ICSD employees, Cayuga medical employees, Firefighters) in the conversations
- School engagement by officers - DARE officers in public schools, good relationship with lots of kids, officers know kids, school board, field trips, youth activities, New Roots project with Jhakeem
- More walking, more biking (for police)
- Community members change in outlook - Consider police as part of the community – change language from community-police to civilian-police
- Find ways for police point of view, feelings, to be voiced
- Share history, culture and sociology of Ithaca community stakeholder groups
- Discussion of particular incidents from variety of perspectives
- Police connecting with civic organization leaders like (CDRC- led dialogue?)
- West Village- community room – one of the pair of beat cops set up for an hour, once a week to interact with the community.
- Town hall meetings on a regular basis for the purpose of allowing the public to ask questions, present concerns, report crime that otherwise would go unreported
- Creation of neighborhood watch – type organizations
- Police show interest in how they are perceived by the public.
- Roll call dialogues
- Educate Community members about law enforcement efforts

A Call to Action Focus Groups

Training & Education – This group would explore the many learning opportunities suggested for police and community members.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting: Larisa Camacho-Lillie & Katie Cox

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorming and our planning group:

Training for Police:

- Education about implicit bias
- Police need training about how to deal with scary situations besides just using weapon
- Role play - Train police with role playing different races
- Talking circles training
- Training that increases cultural competency
- Each officer reads *The New Jim Crow*
- Training for police similar to civilian police academies - show what some of our most vulnerable citizens are going through
- More humane training – respect for all community members and for community intelligence
- Seminar, once a week organized by citizens, eight (8) week educational series.

Training for Community members:

- Residents need to know how to act around the police, this determines the reaction of the other - Program in schools to teach young people how to interact with police
- Bystander training
- To examine the myth of the past and present role of the police to keep communities safe by a community reading of *The New Jim Crow*; rooting ourselves in the abolitionist history of this land.
- Clarity of what police culture is - helps to have better understanding
- White skinned people help educate others with white skin about privilege and history
- School curriculum - hold classes to include all law enforcement issues
- Citizens Police Academy
- Outreach by police to at-risk youth in the form of junior police academies, police camps, big brother programs.

A Call to Action Focus Groups

Policy – This group would organize around ideas for changes to city and IPD policies.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting: Joanne Cipola-Denis & Jeri Gallucci

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorms and our planning group:

- Center for Policing Equity (Audrey) - Work with police departments in North America - Racial profiling, policing equity, relationships with community and changing culture of department
- Model of Richmond, CA - they changed their entire mode of working as a department. Can we emulate?
- Benchmarking with other cities – what are other folks doing? (Joey)
- Working together with the Municipal Drug Policy Committee (MDPC) (Jennifer Radcliffe/Jennifer Ortiz)
- Limit discretion police have when arresting/citing
- Change hiring practices to include a minimum number of women, blacks, lbgt on the force
- Increase continuity between the various police agencies, sheriffs, state police, campus police
- Are police trained to deescalate or to aggressively shut down a situation?
- Police union power needs to be diluted.
- Where are our police resources going? Are decisions about where money is spent good decisions with positive outcomes for our community?
- Are our officers getting down time? Enough?
- Give IPD officers incentives \$ to live in the city
- Change policy in regards to incarcerating people for small crimes and look at prevention
- Review of rules, policies for use of police body camera
- Legal structural issues, grand jury indictments
- Mayor needs to be accountable to pick the chief of police that follows mayors vision - put pressure on mayor and police union
- Stop SWAT raids, demilitarize the police - Homeland security demands that IPD uses equipment at least once a year
- Walking/biking for police officers - great interactions occur
- All training done in collaboration with police and community
- Having a counselor on staff and available to officers
- Mental health screening for everyone that works with public for government:
- The police should allocate money for employees to take part in these conversations - Make community involvement a part of the job.
- Recruitment.....Pysch Assessment, what's done now?
- A Restorative Justice Model and Alternative Policing Models
- IPD members treat all members of the public with respect, even those being arrested for probable cause.
- The IPD to honestly debrief any controversial situation publically, listen to and include community members in problem-solving solutions.

A Call to Action Focus Groups

Crisis Liaison Group – This group would take action to address crises when they occur.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

Phoebe Brown & Gibrian Hagood

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorming and our planning group:

- Gibrian Hagood, Phoebe Brown, Olivia Armstrong and Katie Cox met with Chief Barber and discussed the formation of a group that would be liaison with the City in a crisis event
- The Call to Action planning group has suggested to the Mayor that the Chief write a “white paper” outlining his vision for the liaison group
- Neighborhood barbecues to spread the word about the Liaison Group.
- Crisis assistance team comprised of community holders to put out correct information

A Call to Action Focus Groups

Media & Outreach - This group would plan and implement ways to use the media and social media.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

OPEN

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorming and our planning group:

- Community outreach group to spread the word about community meetings (Call to Action) and events well in advance
- Increase use of social media, let police know bad interaction
- Ithaca Times article about police community relations
- PSA- educate the public about the police
- Media- press conference to police; get the facts out, educate the media
- Posters – What to do when stopped by the police.
- PR (media) promotion of law enforcement - support for better advertisement
- Community invest in getting positive "word" out
- Moderator for social media - statements should be made only after conclusion of investigation - things blow up and misinformation is spread
- Police social media; introduce officers to people
- Webpage updates
- Police Television show; radio show

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Paradigm Shifts - This group would look at overarching issues that might frame the dialogue or cover issues that without attention might hamper good efforts, and take actions to move everyone in the community toward justice.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

Ideas on this topic from past brainstorms and our planning group:

- Address the “hole in the heart” of the community caused by the deaths of Shawn Greenwood, Keith Shumway
- Find ways for the de-escalation and - Slow things down, deconstruct to see how things are, get the heat out of the situation - Requires concentrated training
- How to engage as and with “white allies” (Rit & Jeri)
- Gathering facts about a problem
- Politics.....Quotas, broken window theories, 'Comstat' directives, budgetary restraints, IPD Bandwidth issues, etc.
- Keep our eye on addressing the economic system of disempowerment, marginalization, disenfranchisement, etc. Are we generating a healthy economy or simply perpetuating one in which Black, Latino, Young, LGBTQ, and marginalized just people simply seethe with rage beneath the surface.....??
- Find ways to encourage IPD (PBA) members to become so committed to "serve and protect" all community members that they support the removal of officers who regularly disrespect members of the public, are violent or undermine programs of reform and improvement.
- We need a list of specific most troubling police behavior from the perspective of citizens, parents, youth, community, and also need to clearly list and find out the reasons why police believe they need to do the things that are troubling for the community
- Develop awareness of increase of violence and crime in the community

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Storytelling Group – This group is included to give participants who want to share their stories and truths about experiences with police in a safe environment. This group is only for people who are not members of law enforcement.

Facilitators for March 10 Meeting:

Audrey Cooper & Marcia Fort

This group came out of the comment made many times through the various meetings that there needs to be a way for people who would not go to the Community Police Board with a complaint to share the stories about what has happened to them. This group will have the opportunity to share their stories and potentially strategize about how those stories can safely and effectively reach a broader audience in an effort to provide data about unreported incidents.

There has been a suggestion that a Speakout be planned to give community members a chance to be heard and potentially for IPD and others to hear them. This group might be the one to talk about this if there is time/desire? (Jhakeem at New Roots might be interested in this...)