

RocACTS Justice Systems Task Force (Zoom Call)
January 11, 2021
6-7:30 pm

MINUTES

Attendees

zaynab Kathleen FitzPatrick; Bridget Hurley, Children's Agenda; Kanza Williams Chatman, Villa of Hope; Keyvin Chatman; Grace Carswell, 1st Unitarian Church; Dr Tiffiney Taylor, Executive Director, RocACTS; Alan Dickinson, Peace of Christ Parish; Ralph Carter, Elder, Third Presbyterian Church; Laurie Mahoney, Third Presbyterian Church

Missed

Cheryl Avery, Trinity Emmanuel Presbyterian Church; Cherriese Marie B; Shirley Bond, First Universalist Church

Meeting called to order by zaynab Kathleen FitzPatrick, Chair

Agenda and Notes

1. **Opening dedication prayer** by Kathleen FitzPatrick, chair
2. **Introductions.** Everyone shared a little information about themselves and community affiliations
3. **Review of proposed approach to work**
 - a. Kathleen FitzPatrick shared the history of the formerly named Criminal Justice Task Force, one of 3 task forces of RocACTS, which is a regional federation of 44 nationwide, of the Faith In Action Network.
 - b. The Task Force has been a collaboration with the Criminal Justice Ministry of First Unitarian Church. With this ministry of First Unitarian Church refreshing and revisioning, RocACTS decided to broaden the name and scope of the Task Force, and to utilize several of the recent learnings from the recent, very successful Faith In Action Virtual North East Training held September-October 2020, in which many RocACTS leaders participated.
 - c. The regional training inspired the following proposal utilizing several tools discussed for community organizing, "[A Proposal for the Criminal Justice Task Force, RocACTS](#)". (Click for link).
 - d. Kathleen reviewed key items in the proposal, which was well-received by our newly constituted group, the first of which is broadening our name to Justice System Task Force, so it is focusing on Justice rather than criminal issues!
 - e. A key strength for our work is to have a good cross-section of members with direct and indirect experience with justice systems, whose wisdom can help guide our community witness to and the urgent need for justice systems changes. We also need strong allies, with access to the institutions and those who lead them.

- f. The Task Force proposal can serve as an organizing template for how we pursue our work.

4. **Mission statement**

1. We need a guiding mission statement which grounds all our work.
2. Brainstormed items to consider: legislative advocacy, personal advocacy, press conferences, education of stake-holders, collaborations, ally building, increase accountability by whites, churches, Police Accountability Board, develop policies and procedures, research position papers. Utilize the Position Paper to organize into Containers (as described in Proposal).
3. Discussed words which might be utilized in JSTF mission statement:
 - Justice
 - Equity
 - Equality
 - Fairness
 - Racism
 - Personal, institutional, structural
 - Restoration of humanity and dignity
 - Understanding, sharing, listening, conversations
 - Creating safe space to enable difficult conversations
 - Have people who have personal story and able to speak out
 - Speak truth to power
 - The Power of Testimony
 - Lift voices of people who experience gross unfairness
 - Serve as a Witness to injustices personally experienced

5. **Activities**

- a. A small team was identified to draft a mission statement for discussion at our next meeting: Kanza Williams Chatman, Keyvin Chatman, Ralph Carter
- b. Mission Statement team to look at [Roadmap 2021](#) from Katie Schaffer, Director of Advocacy and Organizing, Center for Community Alternatives Inc., statewide group focusing on NYS legislation for system issues. To sign up for regular email updates from CCA, contact kschaffer@communityalternatives.org. More information about <https://www.communityalternatives.org>.
- c. All members challenged to do one or two One-to-one exploratory conversation with someone you don't know well

6. **Closing Prayer** was offered by Dr Tiffiney Taylor

Next Meeting

JSTF will meet on the 2nd Monday of each month. So, the next meeting is February 8, 6-7:30 pm. Kathleen FitzPatrick will send Zoom meeting notice with Agenda.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Ralph Carter