

**DURHAM RECOVERY AND RENEWAL TASK FORCE  
TASK FORCE VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

Friday, August 21, 2020

8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

**MINUTES**

**Task Force Members**

Steve Schewel, Mayor City of Durham  
Wendy Jacobs, Chair, Durham County Board of Commissioners  
Katie Galbraith, Task Force Co-Chair, President, Duke Regional Hospital  
Maticia Sims, Task Force Co-Chair, Vice President and Corporate Controller, Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC  
Ibukun Akinboyo, M.D., Assistant Professor, Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Duke Health  
Susan Amey, CEO, Discover Durham  
Ed Boyd, Chief Strategy Office, iNvictus  
Dr. Herbert Reynolds Davis, Senior Pastor, Nehemiah Church  
Lois DeLoatch, Executive Vice President, Self-Help  
Geoff Durham, Durham Chamber of Commerce  
George Habel, Vice President, Capitol Broadcasting Company  
Philip Harewood, CEO, Lincoln Community Health Center  
Rodney Jenkins, Health Director, Durham County Department of Public Health  
Jodi Miller, Deputy County Manager, Durham County Government, representing the Emergency Operations Center  
Pilar Rocha-Goldberg, President and CEO, El Centro Hispano  
Anthony Nelson, Dean, North Carolina Central University School of Business  
Nicole Thompson, CEO, Downtown Durham Inc

**Call to Order**

Co-Chair Maticia Sims called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and recognized that the 100<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary of the Renewal and Recovery Taskforce was on Sunday, August 23, 2020.

**Priority Updates**

Mayor Schewel provided updates on the funding of the Task Force proposals. He stated the City funded half of the cost for the Health Ambassador, provided funding for the Durham Mask Distribution Initiative and assisted with the Communication Plan and the Risk Mitigation Fund including a warehouse to store Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Mayor Schewel shared the Community Engagement Team discussed how to communicate with the disengaged and Afro-American communities with the creation of a roundtable and more virtual community meetings. He added Durham Public Schools, the YMCA and Student U proposed the City and County provide assistance to the Hope Learning Centers. Mayor Schewel stated the City's first allocation of \$1.4 million of the Coronavirus

Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funding was to provide broadband connections to the nine (9) Durham Housing Authority communities; with the first being McDougald Terrace. He added Downtown Durham Inc. was also working with the City and downtown restaurants to provide more outdoor dining.

Commissioner Jacobs provided an update on the County funding programs which included providing meals for vulnerable food insecure families and low-income energy assistance. She added the County was working with the Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) to provide rental assistance of up to \$6,000 and planned to support funding for the Hope Learning Centers.

Co-Chair Katie Galbraith shared while testing decreased at Lincoln Community Health Center, it was successful at Holton Career and Resource Center. Task Force Member Phillip Harewood explained that Lincoln Community Health Center tested over 2,000 residents with an average of 230 residents per day. He added Lincoln Health had vacant slots and ordered signage to be placed on Fayetteville Street to advertise testing.

Co-Chair Galbraith explained the need to prepare for the flu season and to address the importance of the flu vaccine with the possibility of drive-thru locations. Task Force Member Pilar Rocha-Goldberg shared that El Centro Hispano partnered with the state to receive approximately 40 Community Health Workers; these workers would help with education, food and mask distribution, contact tracing and supporting testing sites.

Co-Chair Galbraith stated Mayor Schewel sent a request asking higher education partners to join the Education Roundtable. She added the Education Roundtable was scheduled to have their first meeting during the week of August 31, 2020.

Co-Chair Galbraith provided a COVID-19 hospital update which included the following:

- the seven (7) day average of 33 hospitalizations
- 15 patients were in Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
- hospitals were at 90 percent vacancy

### **Update from Public Health**

Task Force Member Rodney Jenkins provided the following update for Durham:

- 45 new cases, 292 active cases, 6137 discharged cases, 2 deaths and 12, 643 contacts.
- LatinX were at 37.8 percent, Afro-American were at 37.4 percent and Caucasians were at 14.7 percent of all cases
- Most cases were in area code 27704
- Construction workers and restaurant workers both showed an increase in positive cases especially among Afro-Americans
- He added 21 percent of positive cases were individuals under the age of 18

Task Force Member Ibukun Akinboyo stated community spread was causing the increase in the under age 18 individuals.

Commissioner Jacobs asked what could be done to help with the increase in positive cases in the Afro-American community. Task Force Member Jenkins stated continue to monitor the data and pivot if

needed. Task Force Member Ibukun added Durham numbers were shifting to match the racial breakdown.

### **RRTF Presentation and Discussion: Voting, Voter Registration and the Census in a Global Pandemic**

Derek Bowens, Durham County Director of Elections shared the *Board of Elections Preparations Update* which highlighted the following: COVID-19 Polling Place Preparations, Sample Polling Place Diagram, Early Voting Preparations, Absentee-By-Mail Preparations, Election Day Preparations, Outreach Initiatives and Financial Impacts of Covid-19. Phillip Lehman, Durham County Board of Elections Chair stated extensive planning and preparations were executed to ensure voting would be accessible, efficient and secure.

Kate Fellman, Founder and Executive Director of You Can Vote stated the number one (1) focus was on voter education. She provided an overview of the information available on the You Can Vote website and recommended the RRTF members attend a volunteer training.

Mayor Schewel inquired about same day registration. Mr. Bowens replied an identification document to show proof of residency was required for the same day registration.

Task Force Member George Habel inquired about the options for returning the absentee ballot. Mr. Bowens responded ballots could be returned by mail, in person at the Board of Elections and in person at an early voting site. Task Force Member Habel asked if the in-person return would be contact free. Mr. Bowens replied no, voters would have to complete a log mandated by the state.

Commissioner Jacobs inquired about including voting information and Census information with the tax bills. Mr. Bowens responded staff was working with Deborah Craig-Ray, General Manager to include voting information. Ms. Fellman replied outside agencies were not allowed to include information with the tax bills.

Co-Chair Sims asked how the Task Force could assist the Board of Elections. Mr. Lehman replied the task force could spread the word; adding voting in person was safe and workers would be wearing face mask or shields. Ms. Fellman added 99 percent of votes count and absentee ballots were great but had to returned in time and filled out correctly for the vote to count.

### **Updates from Roundtables**

Task Force Member Rocha-Goldberg explained the Durham Immigrant and Refugee was holding a virtual Town Hall meeting to discuss Coronavirus and Beyond – adding this would be the first trilingual meeting in English, Spanish and Swahili. She continued to say the meeting would be recorded and posted for the community to view.

Task Force Member Nicole Thompson discussed how restaurants in downtown Durham were working with the City to expand their outdoor seating. She added the outdoor seating would start with a pilot of a small block on Main Street and restaurants would have to follow guidelines, take reservations and advertise. Commissioner Jacobs asked if the outdoor seating would be shared by restaurants. Task Force Member Thompson responded no, it would be an extension of the restaurant's outdoor capacity.

Task Force Member Dr. Herbert Reynolds explained the Durham Congregations in Action posted on Facebook requesting places of worship, property owners and the YMCA for space for homeless. He hoped to have a meeting in September for further discussion.

Bryan Fox, Vice President of Public Policy of the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce stated the efforts of expanding outdoor dining and Durham Delivers were to help support restaurants and the community. He added many fitness centers were closing while others were providing online services; however, support was still needed. Co-Chair Galbraith added there has also been discussions of evictions at the Fitness Roundtables meetings.

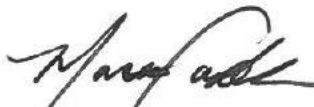
Task Force Member Anthony Thompson expressed concern that small businesses needed help with payroll and rent and the work being done was not helping them; adding small businesses needed help with long-term solutions. Task Force Member Geoff Durham stated ultimately there would need to be a financial solution for small businesses to survive. Commissioner Jacobs explained she discussed with the Durham Delegation to seek more funding. Task Force Member Nelson stated Durham needed resources to help small businesses generate sustainable resources for long-term.

Task Force Member Nelson shared NCCU had five (5) students, seven (7) employees and one (1) contractor to test positive for COVID-19. He added 63 percent of courses were online, 30 percent were hybrid and four (4) percent were face-to-face with the option to move all classes to 100 percent online if necessary.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Macio Carlton  
County Deputy Clerk