

## Washtenaw Equity Partnership (WEP) Prevention & Front-End Subcommittee Meeting

May 10, 2022 5:00-6:30 pm

### Meeting Notes

#### Attendees:

Victoria Burton-Harris (Co-chair)  
Heather Martin (Co-chair)  
Lisa Jackson  
Elizabeth Spring  
Mary Garboden  
Judge Miriam Perry  
Tish Lee  
Aubrey Patino  
Tara Dhanraj (Vera)  
Alex Roth (Vera)  
Angie Carpio (Vera)

- Co-chair kicked off meeting.
- Subcommittee members voted to approve meeting minutes from the February, March, and April meetings.
- Priority area discussion
  - Subcommittee members discussed potential overlap with Behavioral Health subcommittee priority area, “Lack of harm reduction approach/programming”
    - Members stated harm reduction is a very broad area, and the overlap can allow for parallel capacity. Subcommittee members stated they will be in communication with behavioral health subcommittee members to ensure there is not duplication of research.
  - Co-chairs led subcommittee through exercise of narrowing the focus of each priority area.
    - Lack of community alternatives to police.
      - To date, some members expressed interest in working on this priority area.
      - Subcommittee members agreed that, anecdotally, most calls into police are for domestic violence related incidences, however, not necessarily for intimate partner violence. The way the statute is written, roommate or sibling conflict can be categorized as domestic violence.
      - Subcommittee members also agreed the other bucket of calls that often come to police are for behavioral health issues. There are requests to the WCSO to get 911 call data.
      - A member stated that some young people are incarcerated because of violence between a parent and child, which also falls under the umbrella of domestic violence. The challenge is that this often relates back to behavioral health issues.
      - When kids get into a “scuffle” at school, police are often called leading to poor outcomes.

- Traffic stops and violations might be difficult for this subcommittee to tackle. One subcommittee member is working on a traffic stop analysis that should be complete this summer.
- Three areas of focus within this priority are identified as: non-intimate partner domestic violence, calls to police made due to a behavioral health issue and how it is manifesting in behaviors, and school-related incidents.
- Discussion around who/what the alternatives to police might be. Must include people who are trained in these areas.
  - Group is interested in learning what jurisdictions around and outside the country are models.
  - Two present subcommittee members stated that they can share the research that CROS has conducted to date.
  - Multidisciplinary teams are most experienced. Important to have community social workers who specialize in different areas.
  - A lot of material available on different models. CROS conducted research on what could work in Ann Arbor.
  - Discussion around how a recommendation provided to WEP can translate into practice.
- Need for more culturally responsive social services that address basic needs.
  - To date, a member expressed interest in working on this priority area.
  - Basic needs in marginalized communities that need culturally responsive social services: transportation, access to technology for jobs, food access.
  - Social service agencies know they should be culturally competent, but no matter what, people exhibiting the same behavior are perceived differently based on how they look or who people think they are. This is an America level issue.
  - Something that works well is when there is diversity in who is being served and when there are people with lived experience on a team.
  - Subcommittee member wants to move away from “training our way out of this” because there have been years of training. Training existing professionals is not good enough.
    - Interest in cultivating more community liaisons, community health workers, and trusted advisors because they are more effective than anyone else.
  - Those who are most effective, often have many needs themselves; they need supports, connections, and not low salaries.
    - Subcommittee member indicated that there is research that states that violence interrupters must get paid a reasonable salary so that this can be their only job, and should receive health insurance, etc.
  - Cultural responsiveness should include multimember teams.
  - Research for this priority area could be a literature review of best/emerging practices in jurisdictions. Vera staff members stated this is a task Vera could take on.

- Subcommittee member stated that having alternatives to police as a response will naturally create more diversified culturally responsive opportunities.
  - Impact of system involvement on housing and other needs.
    - Additional members expressed interest in working on this priority area.
    - Discussion around the role of surveillance in public housing locally.
    - Rental violation notices can end up being coercive and lead to people losing housing.
      - There are unverified and unofficial reports that law enforcement officers create and give to landlords. These reports come with no arrest and no charge, but landlords think they must evict someone because they have received this report from law enforcement.
    - There might be opportunity to look at screening practices.
  - High police presence in specific neighborhoods and harms caused.
    - To date, a number of members have expressed interest in working on this priority area.
    - Subcommittee members that indicated interest in this priority area were not present in this meeting. Subcommittee members present want to task this group to think more specifically about what to focus on within this large priority area before the next subcommittee meeting.
    - Harms caused could include number of parents arrested and jailed, families that lose employment, children missing school when their parents are incarcerated, losing housing and vehicles.
    - At a community level, need more data and evidence to understand counter narratives. Over policing of communities is normalized in Ann Arbor when there is not a need for it.
      - Constant tension over this locally.
    - Determine tangible harms caused by high police presence.
      - Attach this to the capitalistic system: how much does it cost to surveil a community (e.g. cost of cameras)
      - How to take that cost and reallocate to address people's basic needs.
- Co-chairs requested Vera coordinate meetings for each priority area workgroup between now and the next subcommittee meeting.
  - Vera staff member clarified what research will entail for this project: fact finding and information gathering which can translate into conversation with community partners and stakeholders, focus groups, surveys, internet research, literature reviews.
  - Subcommittee members want to conduct focus groups for each priority area. Want to hear from the community. It is also a possibility to conduct a literature review of alternatives, bring those ideas to focus groups and ask people what they think about the alternatives.
  - Next steps: Vera will reach out to subcommittee members to determine if anyone else would like to sign up for a priority area and schedule meetings for each priority area between now and the next subcommittee meeting.