

CITY OF ALBANY GUN VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
165 HENRY JOHNSON AVE.
4:00PM TO 6:00PM

Task Force Members Present

Rev. John U. Miller (*chair*)
Dr. Rev. Edward B. Smart (*vice-chair*)
Hon. Betty J. Barnette
Leslie Fisher
Mark Harris, Esq. FOR Hon. David Soares
Rob Serenka, Esq.
Mike McDermott, Esq.
Dr. Robert Worden
Dr. Leonard Morgenbesser
Chief James Tuffey
Allison Banks
Hon. Gerard Maney
Rev. Valerie Faust

Common Council Members Present

Hon. Councilwoman Barbara Smith
Hon. Councilman Dominick Caslaro
Hon. Common Council President Shawn Morris

Members of the Public Present: 9

Dr. Worden distributed a draft of the final report's recommendation section.

The Taskforce discusses the necessity to request a time extension to complete their work.

Hon. Dominick Casolaro said that in his opinion the Task Force has completed his work and was never meant to be an implementation team.

The possibility of members of the Task Force being available to answer questions in reference to the implementation of their recommendations was then discussed.

Rev. Miller asked if members would then be serving as an advisory committee as opposed to an implementation team.

Chief Tuffey is extending the GVTF per Councilperson Casolaro legislation as advisory to the Implementation team not to study any new issues.

Mr. Fisher said that some of the Task Force members could serve as a technical advisor and expertise consultants to an implementation committee.

Dr. Morgenbesser said that he cannot support the conclusion of the Task Force with a report that does not include the latest information regarding gun death statistics.

Dr. Rev. Smart asked how long the task force was supposed to meet.

Hon. Shawn Morris responded that it supposed to end a year after the first meeting.

Mr. Serenka pointed out that they do not have a complete final report at this point.

Hon. Barbara Smith said that Ron Cook Barrett was invited to make a presentation at one of the final meetings.

Chief Tuffey reminded everyone that the reason they wanted to get the report done was in order to get it to the Common Council by budget hearings.

Hon. Shawn Morris said that the Task Force should try to get drafts of the recommendations to the Common Council as they are completed. The earlier the better but definitely by **November 12, 2008**.

The Task Force discusses the Draft of the Final Report

Led by **Mr. Serenka** and **Dr. Worden**

Recommendation 1

Mr. Fisher requested that a community advisory board of technical experts that do not have any policy or program responsibility but would advise the implementation committee as needed, be added.

Ms. Banks asked if members of the community should be on it.

Dr. Worden said that we are heading towards recommending that the implementation committee be comprised of people similar to the members on the Task Force.

Mr. Fisher said the issue is that there needs to be some sort of technical advisors. We could simply add "internal and external advisors."

Chief Tuffey said that it should be up to the Common Council what the committee does.

The Task Force agreed to strike the last sentence in paragraph 1.

Recommendation 2

Chief Tuffey asked for specifics about what the anti-violence coordinator would be doing.

Mr. Fisher said that the City should determine what the job description is, but probably would involve searching for funding, and coordination in terms of community groups.

Rev. Miller said that the person should have a lot of people on the street.

Chief Tuffey said that, soon, there is going to be a crime analyst center where the Albany Police Department, using funding from DCJS, will hire a total of 5 analysts and they'll all be in one location.

Dr. Worden said that the job described in (a) would be done by the person hired under (b).

Recommendation 3

The Task Force agrees to limit all recommendations to issues concerning gun violence as opposed to all violence.
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Recommendation 5

Dr. Morgenbesser recommended adding that Rochester does it alone and the Baltimore program has more federal funding.

Mr. Fisher pointed out that no hospital has been interested in doing this without some sort of reimbursement.

Chief Tuffey said that the Task Force has made end roads with Albany Med and should leave the recommendation as it is.

Recommendation 6

Dr. Worden said that he saw this recommendation as attempting to transplant what is happening in some neighborhoods and transfer expertise.

Mr. Serenka suggested putting in some informal social controls to differentiate this recommendation from number 2.

Dr. Rev. Smart pointed out that this recommendation was supposed to have something to do with higher education's role in Albany as well.

Recommendation 7

Dr. Worden said that this recommendation is meant to be illustrative.

Dr. Morgenbesser suggested specifically recommending that the City make use of the State Education Department.

Recommendation 8

Chief Tuffey explained the importance of information sharing between the Police Department and other social agencies that help families in the area with societal needs. The program Operation Impact is designed to bring agencies together to collaborate in order to prevent crime. The problem is that families do not usually tell the police that they are using other services.

Recommendation 9

Dr. Morgenbesser said that this person would serve to facilitate grants for projects and other initiatives regarding gun violence.

Recommendation 12

Dr. Morgenbesser referred members to the Memo Re: Media Sourced Data for Calendar year 2008 through October 22, 2008. He said that the Task Force needs to know whether people are being put away on federal gun charges. He is concerned that at the caucus the Common Council wanted something regarding trafficking. He will email a paragraph to insert to **Mr. Serenka** and **Dr. Worden**.

Chief Tuffey said that the District Attorney collaborates with the federal government to see which office is going to prosecute it. They put a high priority on the seizure of anyone in possession of illegal guns.

Rev. Faust suggested that this part could be included in the section that covers additional issues relating to gun violence.

Mr. Harris recommended using the term proliferation.

Recommendation 13

Hon. Judge Maney suggested making this section a part of Recommendation 1.

Mr. Fisher said that the bottom line is that there is a divide between the community and the justice system but there should be a committee where the members and police chief DA.

Mr. Harris said that we have a Sexual Assault Response Team, Domestic Violence Committee and there are a number of others. We do not have one specific to gun violence.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE:
NOVEMBER 5, 2008
4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
165 HENRY JOHNSON AVE.**

Respectfully Submitted by,

Tehra Coles

City of Albany Gun Violence Task Force Intern