



NYC Racial Justice Commission

Racial Justice Commission Meeting 12/3/21

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PPEARANCES:

- Jennifer Jones Austin, Chair
- Henry A. Garrido, Vice Chair
- Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq.
- Rev. Frederick Davie
- Darrick Hamilton
- Chris Kui
- J. Phillip Thompson
- Ana M. Bermúdez
- Yesenia Mata
- Anusha Venkataraman
- Melanie Ash
- Jimmy Pan

Jennifer Jones Austin (JJA): 00:00:00

We can begin to straighten this at the instances that we are a quorum.

Anusha Venkataraman (AV): 00:00:05

You do indeed.

JJA: 00:00:06

Thompson and commissioner David, commissioner Kui, commissioner Bermudez, Vice chair, Henry Garrido (HG), are we a quorum? I can't–

AV: 00:00:24

Yes, we have met quorum.

JJA: 00:00:26

We've met quorum, okay, good deal.

K. Bain (KB): 00:00:28

Commissioner Bain is here as well.

JJA: 00:00:30

Commissioner Bain, good to see your-- read your name I apologize to you, very much apologize. I am going to call the meeting of the Racial Justice Commission - The New York city Racial Justice commission to order and begin with a review and vote on the November 16 and November 22 minutes. Those minutes were sent out, I'm hoping that our commissioners have had an opportunity to review the minutes. If anybody hasn't had the opportunity and would like a minute just let me know.

KB: 00:01:23

I have not, I'm doing so now.

JJA: 00:01:25

Okay, okay good deal.

Henry Garrido (HG): 00:01:30

My chair, I think it's in order to put a motion to accept the minutes first.

JJA: 00:01:34

Okay, I'm sorry forgive me. I don't know-- I'm still new at all of this even though I served on 1001 boards. I was just asking people to review them first, forgive me. May have a motion to review and consider the minutes and go to approve them?

Rev. Frederick Davie (FD): 00:01:53

I second.

JJA: 00:01:54

And a second?

Melanie Ash (MA): 00:01:56

Second.

JJA: 00:01:58

Okay.

HG: 00:01:59

Now we have discussions.

JJA: 00:02:04

Are there any comments or questions or any changes that people want to recommend? Any discussion on the minutes?

HG: 00:02:17

That's the point of information, we're talking about two separate minutes.

JJA: 00:02:21

November 16 Minutes and even November 22 minutes.

HG: 00:02:26

Thank you.

JJA: 00:02:23

All right, hearing and none and seeing no question, no hands raised, may I have a motion to approve the minutes?

HG: 00:02:43

The motion was made in second I think we need—

JJA: 00:02:46

Okay, good job. I'm catching up Henry, forgive me. All in favor please say aye

All: 00:02:51

Aye.

JJA: 00:02:54

Any opposed? Good deal, Okay. The minutes have been approved. I'm noting that Commissioners Mata and Commissioner-- Commissioners Mata and Hamilton have joined the meeting, and so I just want to make sure for the record we have a correct accounting of everyone who is in attendance. Commissioner Pan, Commissioner Matta, Commissioner Hamilton, Commissioner Bermudez, Commissioner Davie, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Henry Garrido (HG), Commissioner Coy and myself. I don't believe that I've left off anyone. Commissioner Bermudez, I'm not sure if I called her name. I just first on before we get into the business of the meeting, I do just want to on behalf of the Commissioners and the commission staff convey and express our condolences to you Commissioner Bermudez on the passing of your father.

Ana Bermudez (AB): 00:03:46

Thank you.

JJA: 00:03:51

Today's meeting is-- the purpose of today's meeting is to continue to review and discuss our consolidated proposals so that we can move forward with a presentation of a resolution for a vote at the upcoming December ninth meeting. We have since our last full meeting, had several smaller conversations with commissioners to hear additional thoughts and ideas specific concerns for the developed the proposals that have been put on the table, and we will continue to do the same in this conversation with the aim of moving forward a resolution to vote on the proposals at the upcoming December ninth meeting. So what we're going to do now is to have our Executive director initially in Anusha Venkatara and the policy Director of Policy Director Jimmy Pan lead us through the latest iteration of the proposals and what they'll do is point out the progress that we've made since our last meeting, and what we'll do is we'll discuss each proposal one by one, and then go from there. So we've got about an hour and hour and a half before us, and that's what we plan to do today. Before we do

this, I just want to say a little bit about the proposals themselves. We've been at this work as you well know, since March, and we knew when we sat down as a commission to look at and carefully examine the charter, that our work was essentially a beginning. We did not expect that we could, in the period of time that we have, completely rewrite the charter to make sure that we were addressing every element of city law and policy and practice to up end racism and inter sexual intersectional in at least. But we wanted to take that first very critical step to do the foundational work, and it's my it's my great sense and confidence that we've done just that with all of the commissioners working alongside the staff to towards that aim, towards that objective. There, as we all know, is a window that you know that we have at this moment, and I fervently believe and I believe other commissioners do as well, that if we do not take advantage of this window, this window where you know, the nation and the city are looking at how racism continues to pervade every aspect, every pillar of our society and disadvantage by park persons and communities. If we don't step into this moment and try to act to at least begin to undo the structures that are in place, then we may lose the moment because the momentum and these windows don't stay open for long. And we're just trying to jump in and make sure that we can do what needs to be done Foundationally speaking. We've heard from community members, we've heard from thought leaders around the country about how structural racism is operating in cities and across the nation. And we've heard a lot about the harmful inequities and accountability marginalization, wealth building neighborhoods and more on persons of color. And what we've done as a charter commission, is committed ourselves to trying to make a change for the people and the children and for generations to come here in New York City. So we've done the work, working with staff some of us commissioners and working with staff, we've read the charter, we've engaged in countless conversations, we've listened to New Yorkers, we've grasped structural change at its root, structural racism, I should say at its root, and with these proposals what we're aiming to do is to begin the process of shattering structural racism as calcified in the foundation of our city charter. What I'm confident about is that the proposals that have been put forth will eventually-- we're going to put them to New York City voters. We believe that what these proposals will do is strengthen the work that has begun with the task force for racial inclusion and equity, but go deeper than program and policy. We're hoping and believing, based on the conversations we've had with thought leaders from around the country, that our work is not only going to strengthen efforts aimed at undoing racism and advancing equity here in New York city, but around the nation. We've heard from many thought leaders that what we're putting forward can really begin to create a spark and feed work around the country, and so that inspires me. If we can-- if that's what we accomplish, then we will have done some good, not just for New Yorkers, but for people across the nation. Let me say a few words before we jump into the proposals about the next steps. I mentioned a few minutes ago that we're going to have a meeting on December ninth. A calendar notification has been sent to the board members, the aim is that as many of us as possible will attend in person, and I believe that meeting will be at the Helby street Settlement House, is that correct? So, you have that information initially shaking my head. I think December 9, we're going to vote on the proposal concepts and then the staff will begin drafting these concepts into final ballot language, then we will come back together, thinking it's December 16th when we will vote on the final report that will incorporate these ballot measures. Additionally, we're going to be bringing forth recommendations, a racial

justice roadmap, recommendations that the commission will support but does not have to vote on in the December ninth meeting. This racial justice roadmap will speak to you actions, I think issues, initiatives that we believe should be undertaken, but they fall outside of charter revision work. They fall outside of the commission's ability to affect change, and so the charter revision commission will advance these recommendations that will appear in this racial justice room inside of the final report, and the aim is for them to continue to build upon the work that we have done. What we're going to do today is just take a few minutes to discuss. I shouldn't say today but on the 16th we'll give you a highlight that we will discuss in greater detail at the next meeting after we vote, what these recommendations look like. But we'll give you a little preview of it. Just want to be clear, December 9th is a vote on the resolution to take these proposals and convert them into ballot language. On the 16th, we'll vote on the final ballot proposals, the ballot language and we'll adopt the final report. The December 9th is critically important because that's when we vote forward and we vote out what we're actually going to convert into final ballot measures. December 16th will be our final commission meeting, unless the commission decides to keep meeting next year. But we will have done the main--we will have completed the main act if you will, of our work. So again today, we're going to focus on the proposals that we anticipate will advance as charter revision proposals from ballot measures, and our aim is to have a conversation today to continue to dialogue and deliberate these specific proposals. That having been said, I'm going to turn the meeting over to Anusha and to Jimmy.

AV: 00:12:23

Wonderful, thank you so much Chair. We're so excited to share with you today the most recent thinking of the commission and the commission staff reflecting input received at the last meeting, input received from commissioners in the interim. For members of the public who are following along with us you can find a copy of this deck on our website if you go under events and then click on the page for this meeting in addition to what you're seeing on the screen.

So, this summary deck lays out our most recent thinking. It contains the high-level points on each proposal that we are thinking of advancing. Commissioners do have further specifics on each proposal that you have received in your emails, so feel free to bring up information that is in those, but members of the public will be able to follow along using the deck. We'll go through each proposal and highlight some of the updates since we last met and discuss them, then we'll spend some time discussing each proposal as we go through it, and then have some time at the end for broader discussion. So, I think we can go on to the next slide here. So, what we see here is a revised organization of the three proposals that we are putting forward to you for advancing. One is adding a preamble to the New York City charter, two is advancing equity and accountability through creation of a racial Equity office to the City-Wide Equity plan along with racial Equity Commission, three is creating a new measurement of the true cost of living. Next slide. As a reminder, as we've been thinking through how to take the various ideas of commissioners, of the what has been shared from the public and distill them down into a finite number of proposals, we've been guided by these principles of aspiration or intent or values and action, what can we affect in terms of foundations for the future, and actions that we can propel forward, and three accountability, what structures are we putting in place for communities and New Yorkers to hold the city

accountable to racial equity goals and priorities. Next side. So, on the preamble, you won't see significant changes here. The preamble we still anticipate to create a strong aspirational vision for our city to contain a land acknowledgement of the displacement of the original Lenape people, an acknowledgement of historical harms and wrongs including those that continued to today, expressing an intent to reimagine our city's foundations in our future, in the vision of justice and equity and with the goal of repairing passing continuing harms, and that the preamble will serve to guide the interpretation of the New York city charter in its totality, but does not create a private right of action. So, at this point, I think we could posit each proposal and see if there are questions, comments, feedback, perhaps not too much on this one since it hasn't changed significantly, and Jimmy and our chair feel free to highlight anything I may have missed.

JJA: 00:16:29

Are there-- I don't-- I can't think of anything that you missed. Are there any questions or comments concerning the preamble?

AV: 00:16:40

Feel free to express support and excitement as well, especially for New Yorkers to it again.

JJA: 00:16:53

And keep in mind that this--would pertain to the entirety of the charter, not just the specific proposals they we're putting forth.

HG: 00:17:08

Madam Chair if I may, I think it's incredible that in a city with the rich history of New York, at the epicenter of many of the historical and there was driven not-- as you said, not only the state but the nation, that the constitution of our city doesn't have a preamble. I think it's one of the most revealing things that I have ever seen because every general constitution including our own US Constitution, you know, has to have some guiding principles and a vision for values. And so I think that this is something that I'm proud of the work that has been done to get to a point where we normally recognize that preamble is needed, but that there is one that recognizes some of the wrongs of the past historically and provides a guideline for us to move forward as a city in the future. Thank you.

JJA: 00:18:12

Thank you, and I fully, fully concur and very much appreciate your remarks Vice chair, fully concur. Are there other thoughts concerning this, the preamble? All right, I'm going to take that as a good sign.

AV: 00:18:37

All right, me too.

JJA: 00:18:39

Everybody has a sense of this and we're going to keep moving.

AV: 00:18:46

Thank you so much, we can go on to the next slide. So, what we're envisioning as the second question on the ballot has a few different components. One is the component of creating a new office of racial equity led by a chief equity officer. This chief Equity officer would be an agency head level or higher, such as a deputy mayor. They would have the responsibility along with the office to work with the agency to create their equity plans and the citywide racial equity strategies and goals that would roll up into a biennial citywide equity plan that the mayor is ultimately responsible for. This office would provide technical assistance to agencies, help to build up the capacity of the city to do equity work effectively, help agencies that may face challenges, as well as house and support permanent and codified task force on racial inclusion equity which was begun under this administration. They would have additional responsibilities and powers in terms of building out a citywide access design program improving access for folks across the city, including in service design Planet language justice. They would have the ability to work alongside other relevant agencies and promulgating rules relating to occupational segregation, wage segregation, equitable hiring and promotion, something we know is very important to many city workers. They would be responsible for coordinating collection and reporting of data, including creating standards for the desegregation of data related to equity and last but certainly not least importantly, they would be supporting and pushing all agencies and prioritizing anti marginalization work including further work around wage and occupational segregation, access limiting the use of criminal history and background checks, identifying alternatives to punitive enforcement, and ensuring that resources are distributed within and across neighborhoods to the places where there's the greatest need and deepest disparity. I think we can go through all of number two in totality, and then and then come back to it for discussion, so you can go to the next slide some more details on the citywide equity plan. This hasn't changed significantly since you last saw it. The plan would still include those strategic goals and programs, both citywide and agency specific include indicators and data that will help us track disparities. We've made sure that and make sure that this includes disaggregated data since that was important to a number of commissioners, that there would be some required components including those mentioned on the previous slide under the responsibilities of the office. We've also subsequently thought through the frequency of the plan. It seems that most folks are good with issuing the plan every other year. The timing of the plan went aligned with the city's budget process, and we would anticipate that the first plan would be completed in 2024 if this proposal is passed, giving the next administration some time to set up the office, figure out the components of the plan and then release it in early 2024, and I think we can go to the next slide.

JJA: 00:22:40

If I may just quickly jump in there and just to just expand a little bit upon the timeline, you have to keep in mind that these proposals will not will not be voted on until the November 2022 election. And so, they would not come into effect if approved by the voters until essentially 2023. And that's why we're giving the administration in another year to begin to build out the plan-- to build out the plan.

AV: 00:23:19

Absolutely. That's a helpful clarification. You'll notice one thing that is removed here is in aligning the budget with the equity plan, there have previously been an idea around the plan-- the budget not being enacted until the plan is approved by the commission. Based on your input, we've removed that, but still are coordinating the process so that as budget decisions are being made, the equity plan is being put together and those critical decisions are made in tandem. Next Slide. So the last component of this question and this proposal is the racial Equity Commission. This is critically important. This is where we're providing both outside insight and expertise as well as community input. We have some updates. We envisioned this to be a 15-member commission led by Chair who is independent and supported by a full-time staff. Commissioner appointments will be split among various elected officials including the mayor, city council controller, public advocate, somewhat similar to a CCRB structure.

The commission would have in a very important role to play not only in providing input and providing some oversight over the equity planning process, but they would also have the ability to propose priorities from the communities that they represent, and indicators that could be considered in the development of the racial equity plans. There would be space for them to advocate for alignment between equity goals in the budget, they would review the progress reports, those indicators, performance data, and they would have a range of accountability roles ranging from collaboration and partnership, helping agencies to improve their work, to more proactive accountability powers to track agency compliance, and more reactive powers where they could receive complaints from the public. You'll notice one significant change here based on input, that we have received. There is no longer a racial Equity watchdog proposal as part of a component of this proposal, but we have thought through what are the powers of the watchdog that serves some accountability function that could be integrated into the commission in a meaningful way, recognizing that there should be a range of accountability powers from the friendlier to the less friendly. So I think that's the last slide for our proposal number two, so at this point we can open it up to questions and discussion on this multi-pronged proposal. And I do see a raised hand from Commissioner Daniel Favors.

JJA: 00:26:54

It appears that she still on mute, but she may not be aware but she did ask into the chat-- Okay. Are you with--

Daniel Favors (DF): 00:27:00

there we go. Sorry for that. Yes, are you able to hear me?

JJA: 00:27:02

Yes, we are able to hear you.

DF: 00:27:07

Okay, my apologies for putting that in the chat, I know that our preference is to not do that, but I have been in default zoom protocol mode all week, so my apologies for that. In light of the fact that the check on the budget has been removed as one of the accountability

measures, was there anything put they are in place to help ensure that the budget is aligned beyond what has already been discussed in terms of accountability provisions?

AV: 00:27:35

Yes. I can-- I can answer that and our chair can add as well. so in aligning the timeline, we seek to ensure that the planning for equity, the planning for how money is spent is happening at the same time by the same, same people. We also have some specific rules for the commission, so the commission would review and report on, do they see the equity goals, Do they see the stated priorities from the equity plan show up in the budget, especially in what they see in the preliminary budget, and then in the executive budget before it moves towards adoption. The other important point on the budget is that we would have places where NB or city planning in regards to the 10-year capital strategy would have to state in the narrative of the budget, where the equity priorities show up in the budget itself. We're working through the precise details of the timing of that, but that is the current thinking, and I invite our chair and Jimmy to add to that if you like.

JJA: 00:28:58

You've covered it in detail, I think we're good. Jimmy would you like to add anything?

Jimmy Pan (JP): 00:29:08

I would say that what we're contemplating here would set a foundation for future work. We've talked about different ways to score the budget and to really more closely integrate some of this thinking into the city's processes, so I think what we're putting in place here is allowing for a ramp up time for future implementation to take to the very next level I think in ways that we've discussed here in the commission.

JJA: 00:29:34

Thank you for that. Thank you. Commissioner Hamilton?

Darrick Hamilton (DH): 00:29:38

Yes. I'm wondering if it's possible-- if we have in the proposals anywhere explicit race equity scoring either in relative or absolute sense beyond just narrative. Is that possible or something we could think about, as it relates to both budgets and or proposed policies?

JJA: 00:30:00

Looking at the commission having the commission not authority and capacity to do that making that one of their undertakings. I think we can hold that. The condition side or elsewhere?

DH: 00:30:22

and or have OMB do it or some other scoring agency within.

JJA: 00:30:28

Okay. Jimmy raise your thoughts on that.

AV: 00:30:35

To respond to that, you know we've heard a lot of input on both sides of the value of this and I think Jimmy's comment before about creating a foundation for further work to be done is right on we're not currently contemplating including it as a requirement but you know as we get further into recommendations we may put forward for non-charter changes, that may be the appropriate place, since there would need to be a significant amount of work done for that to be ready to move ahead. Jimmy would you say that's accurate?

JP: 00:31:13

I think that's right, and I think that's again trying to address some of the concerns that commissioners had raised about timeline capacity.

DH: 00:31:21

Yeah I mean-- I guess I'll state that I'm an advocate for the commission and or in office within city government being charged with that responsibility is one of our recommendations.

JJA: 00:31:38

Okay, duly noted. So we will give that some further consideration. Are there any-- is there any other comment from any other commissioners on this point? Okay thank you Commissioner Hamilton, we will take that under further consideration and see what we can do. Let's keep going.

AV: 00:32:08

Wonderful. So, making good progress we can move on to the next slide. So, true cost of living. This is a proposal that we've heard very positive input from commissioners on, it has not changed significantly since the last time you saw it. This would still entail the requirement of the city to develop and release a new additional standard reflecting the cost of living in New York city, thereby rethinking the way that we understand poverty, the ways that we understand service levels and the level of support that New Yorkers, individuals and families need in the city. This new standard would be reported in the citywide equity plan, as well as when the city reports on poverty rates including in the charter mandated social indicators report, and reflected or referenced in the Mayor's Management Report. So, I think we can pause here and see if there are questions and comments on this proposal? Words of support even?

KB: 00:33:28

This is commissioner Bain and I'm very excited about this, and similar to what was stated by our chair earlier, we're in New York city historically known for setting standards, and just increasing awareness and action around these issues, I think this is a phenomenal proposal in itself. True cost of living on the film.

JJA: 00:33:52

Wonderful. Okay, Real Glad that we're on board with this one, all of them critically important. So, we've gotten through the first three-- the three proposals and Anisha, would you like to take us to the next slide?

AV: 00:34:10

Absolutely. So, on the next slide you will see what was previously included as a proposal for charter revision. You'll see it's no longer a proposal, but we didn't want it to drop off or leave without discussion, especially because this set of recommendations include many issues that we've heard significantly from communities, from advocates and other partners on including the ways that we can improve accountability within the city and especially within the criminal legal system, and the ways in which we could potentially impact the lives of those that are justice involved. So as a way of reminder what this previous proposal, now a recommendation for discussion, entailed is that we would recommend enabling the board of correction to have greater powers in bringing administrative action against the department of correction. This could be at oath or it could be in another venue. Second, strengthening of CCRB. We would envision expanding its jurisdiction, especially to include self-initiate investigations, but particularly looking at systemic patterns of misconduct and include recommendations for systemic change, which is something that CCRB cannot do right now. On CCHR these are the City Commission on Human Rights. We would envision recommending that there be a minimum size or secure budget to see CCHR to ensure that they can continue to do their work as meaningfully as possible, under you know many future administrations, and we've also fought through some changes that we can make to improve the power of EEPC, Employment-- Oh my gosh I'm forgetting, just-- Equal Employment Practices Commission, which would give them explicit jurisdiction over non Merrill entities allow them to fill vacancies on their board and also potentially address budget for them. Lastly, what we've heard from many oversight entities is that they don't always have the ability to ask for and receive access to data records to inform their own work and form their own investigations and decision making, and that they should have the power to require the agency that they oversee to either provide data privately to them or published data publicly. So, this is a set of important idea certainly doesn't address everything that we heard about in the criminal justice, in the criminal legal system reform realm but were ideas that were considered have been discussed at previous meetings and we wanted to make sure we present the opportunity for you to discuss them before we make a final decision on what to do with these. Chair would you like to add anything?

JJA: 00:37:35

Yes, let me jump in here and say that I appreciate what's been put forward here with respect to these specific recommendations for each of these government entities. I am one who was concerned that while they begin to address critical issues and concerns in these respective agencies or offices, they do not go--they're not comprehensive. They are not-- We have not done exhaustive review and you know to be certain that what we're putting forth is reflective of what is necessary to begin to foundationally dismantle structural racism, and my concern is that we should not, and this is borrowing on some of what Commissioner Hamilton's talked about another meetings, put some things out without having done a more than all rivers reviewed. The staff have done a tremendous job. This is not at all a reflection on their work. It's rather a reflection of all the work that that has been done and where we have really leaned in and really been able to develop some robust proposals. My thinking personally is that with each and every one of these agencies and the you know the issues that that are

you know in abundance for any one of these agencies There could be a charter revision commission centered solely on each one of them, and so, I don't want to shortchange, come up short on this, and so you know personally I think the most appropriate thing to do is to recommend that they be given full consideration, a firm recommendation in the in the coming, you know, in the coming administration, possibly in another charter revision commission. But I just don't think that they're where they need to be at this particular point. I looked like commissioner Thompson has come on the camera or taking his mute off. I don't know if you want to jump in here?

J Philip Thompson (PT): 00:39:56

Yes, I think what the Items one through three do is established a process for a sustained effort review scrutiny change throughout city government. And while it's true, someone might say well, you didn't reform the police department, you didn't reform the corrections department. Others will say well, you didn't reform Housing HPD, and night to and you didn't reform uh workforce and You know economic development. All of that's true I mean there are 50 agencies and work and as the chair just said. I fully agree that each one of these things could easily occupy a charter revision commission like us for a whole year easily. And so I think what we're doing is putting into place something unprecedented which is basically saying we're going to set up a structure to do the work, It's not going to be a quick fix, we're going to dig into these issues, and racial justice is not going to disappear. And I think that's realistic and powerful. I do think if we do sort of wave a hand at a number of these issues, we also invite criticism, that you know, there's a lot more that needs to be done if we're going to do serious reform at any one of these agencies. So I do think this is the correct approach.

JJA: 00:41:51

Thank you Commissioner Thompson. Commission, Bermudez.

AB: 00:41:55

I mean I essentially agree with what both you and Commissioner Thompson have said at the same time. I do think that for purposes of are you know I suppose credibility with the public, we find a mechanism by which to make a certain statement, about what you both just said. In terms of which I know it's encompassing the limited everything we've put out we've said there's limitations to this Obviously it's a short term entity trying to tackle decades old structural racism and so but I think we need to make a statement about the fact that all-- the all the agencies, all 50 agencies have played a hand in this, and there could be you know I'm saying like there could be commissions for each of the life areas that that the agencies sort of influence or are purported to serve right and that, you know, I don't know some way of addressing this particular shortcoming of what we're doing, because it was so, you know, the people who organized you know, as Commissioner Daniel favors repeatedly said and we noted repeatedly also, you know the people with the Public Land Trust and it may be that it's not something we can dig on right now etcetera, but the fact that they came, and they their passion and you know and there was like raising very important issues, I just don't want it to go unaddressed and I don't know-- I don't know-- I don't have the solution I don't know how. I have the best way of doing that but you know.

JJA: 00:44:07

Point so well taken, and one of the things that we've talked about is that the final report itself needs to speak to these very issues you know what we were able to do, what we did not do and essentially in some ways you know, give voice to and validate what we heard and the importance of taking it up, so we're going to try to do it through that. Commissioner Hamilton?

DH: 00:44:37

I mean, I certainly hear the concerns of my fellow commissioners and they are extremely valid, but there very well may be some pathways for some specificity about certain agencies because there are some that the issue of racial justice and equity is more beholden on or there might be some specific thing that we can at least put forth as a recommendation. For example, the CCRB, if it is clear that that commission is limited in its ability to have oversight and there's something specific for which we can recommend, Perhaps we should consider pursuing it.

JJA: 00:45:24

Fair Point. Are there others?

KB: 00:45:35

I just think-- I think about the-- sorry I don't know if I'm muted or unmuted. Can you hear me?

JJA: 00:45:43

We can hear you. Thank you.

KB: 00:45:47

All right, So the preamble keeps coming to mind and what our Vice chair said about how important and necessary it is in this conversation I think our approach has to be noted here as well, And I think the way that we approached, and are approaching even these proposals on a macro level is significant because we're essentially modeling how empathetic and thoughtfully you have to look at the structural racism that we're fighting against. So I think in our report documenting the way that we fought through some of these ideas and teased out others and that's on the macro and micro thinking about what Commissioner Hamilton's was speaking on, like how specifically can we put things in place that really address and get to the crux in the core that race plays in the discrimination that undermines everything that New York stands for. So I see you know again the preamble as a very important part on the macro, and I'm just grappling with some of the specificities and ways in which very specific ways that we can demonstrate How one should go into this work. It's very challenging work of unlearning, undoing racist practices.

JJA: 00:47:23

Very helpful. Thank you. Others on this?

PT: 00:47:40

Well I put my hand up again.

JJA: 00:47:42

I'm sorry.

PT: 00:47:44

That's okay. I definitely-- I keep thinking back to what Commissioner Bin said a couple of sessions ago which was the devil's in the details, and I kind of feel like we could go and put in a long list of specific things affecting a bunch of different issues, but not really dive deep into any of them, and I personally think that would be a mistake at this point and you know just to be honest, like every week I kind of feel like a different issue was the key issue and it's just because they're also important. So, I just read a report from the new school by an economist James Parrot that almost one in four people unemployed due to the pandemic, still unemployed due to the pandemic in the entire United States one in 4 are in New York City, and overwhelmingly they are people of color. And I was really blown away by that and I'm like oh my God, that's the issue, we got to like really get on top of but then you know another week it's housing and homelessness, and I just think we could make a lot of arguments about you know all of this is important in that item and that item but I just feel like putting in place a structure so that we can really the hard many years that this work goes on and continues and deepens, I think that's our contribution. I know I said that before I just want to say it again. I think we're dealing with a lot of really important issues, not just one or two.

JJA: 00:49:53

Thank you. Commissioner Marta?

Yesenia Mata (YM):

Hi everyone, sorry for the background noise, I'm still in the office. but I am Um obviously I've been part of this entire process and I really have seen how everyone here has contributed one way or the other, we all have different backgrounds, and I know we're not going to come to a solution, and I think that was one of the biggest concerns right When I was asked to be in the commission. I was excited but I know I did say this in the beginning and I do remember the specific that I was like we're not going to come with like-- we're not going to be able to fix racism right? And I think but we could create a platform-- And I think and I usually talk about more like on the organizing side, I've always been like involved in marches and protests and you know in organizing the community, but never been on this side So it was like very different. This has been like a new experience for me but it has been an experience where I've seen that this is where the work that I have been doing on the ground, But the work of many activists have been doing that have been showing up, for example in these public hearings they're not being brought into this platform Like that's the other step to advocacy right? And I think what we're doing here helping them prayed that platform it's going to be stepping stone is going to be a vehicle for them to continue on their advocacy to another level So I think messaging it that way that will be very helpful because it took me a while to understand And I know I from a personal level I think I've I've developed that growth when at first I was like yeah we should go and demand this But then I forgot who it was I think it was Melanie or somebody else that told me she's like well your

commissioner today and today you're listening and I don't I don't know if it was mainly with somebody that told me that like you need to step back that you're listening today you need to listen to the issue And I think that was the moment when I realized I was like there's a whole level of advocacy and this is where we are at right now And I think we are creating that lay out for the next um commission or the next generation and the next advocates I think that would be very important to message to in a way to let them and let them know in the message this But as well the preamble is very important I know in the beginning I've also said this that it's very important that the preamble and I think a pain also said it like that we set the tone and the message or New York city stands and that and I and I always bring immigration because that's very personal to me that you know somewhere the other that immigrants themselves feel that New York city also represents them And I know everyone here has their own specific issue and I know they also want to make sure that their community is being presented So the preamble is going to have a lot of meaning for many.

JJA: 00:53:00

shade all that she said very much appreciate what you said Commissioner Hamilton I saw your hand go up but then I think you took it down I just want to be certain that's correct Ok okay I just want to make sure and it captured that Are there other others who like to comment at this point So having heard uh Commissioner Bermudez did you want to Okay yeah Um Commission Hamilton's.

DH: 00:53:34

I just want to see is it appropriate to talk about other things now I guess that's the-

JJA: 00:54:39

I'm just I'm just going to wrap this up and just thank everyone for the comments that they made as we reviewed the three proposals and this fourth recommendation and we've heard uh the thoughts that have been put forward both centering on how to do a how to incorporate the intent and the desire and the uh in the final report Uh make sure that the pre m really speaks to uh these concerns And then thirdly Commissioner Hambleton uh just taking a look to see if there's anything that we can do Uh and so hearing all of that very much appreciated what what has been presented And now we'll turn back to you Commissioner Hamilton if there are other thoughts that you want to put on the table.

DH: 00:54:25

Yeah I guess there's a few more things that I wonder if we can have for inclusion or might have been in other iterations One is uh the audits to proactively go out and detect discrimination to make it a clear value that we won't rely strictly on discrimination claims but to routine routinely by um both clerical but as well as literally sending out actors or testing systems with both in the city's production services and employment as to equitable and fair uh inclusion as well as those people that contract with the city That is uh an item I hope we can get back in the document I think it's critical Um then a couple other suggestions is that uh some of the work of the that I forget what we're calling it but I guess it's the Equity Council I forget what it's being called Forgive me on that But that they have a a charge to regulate the ways in which data is utilized in general So we have information India on data

but we know going forward that information and data is probably going to be a fault line especially as our economy shifts in that direction And I think we need to be proactive in that and that domain as well That that that committee is charged with some regulatory power And then the final thing I'll say is a suggestion that um again with regards to the goal of accountability that we keep in mind that the equity scoring in some way coincide with elections so that there can be some political accountability to how well the city is doing Um and then you know I just want to say also to my commissioners definitely grateful for all this work and to be with you But I also want to emphasize that you know at least from my perspective we certainly knew that we couldn't solve racism Um and I think that we all in good faith have and hopefully we'll still continue and we still have a long way to go Um we do have a heavy responsibility on us And even though we might not solve racism it's an ongoing thing We have a fiduciary responsibility to make sure that we do and have done our very best.

JJA: 00:56:57

Agreed. Thank you And so we've noted the suggestions that you put forward and what I will uh do is make sure that we work with the staff to see what can be done to incorporate what you put forward Uh I do understand that there's a follow up conversation to be had with your Commissioner Hamilton's So we'll delve more deeply into these issues And the suggestion is very much appreciate it Are there other thoughts comments Um I don't want to put any commissioners on the spot but there may be a couple who we haven't heard from them just want to give you an opportunity if you'd like to say order to

Frederick Davie (FD): 00:57:42

I don't know I just think the commissioners and the staff for the level of commitment and uh energy creativity and imagination that everyone has contributed to the development of this document Um I recognize that as um I think Commissioner Hambleton said and some others we would have loved it been able to get rid of structural racism in New York city by virtue of this project but that um while a lofty goal is one that I think most of us will be working on for the rest of our lives Um I and I do want to recognize that in any healthy democracy change is more incremental than any of us would actually wish But it's important to recognize that incremental changes still changed Uh and it's not a resting place Uh it's just uh it's a place where we can stake a claim now and then continue on to do the work that's before us. Final thing I would say is that um if we got nothing else out of this document except the Equity office and the Equity Commission I'd be totally satisfied Because what and if we get that approved by the voters I'd be totally satisfied because what it does it puts in place at least an accountability structure when it comes to racial equity uh and racial justice in New York and it's one that we can work with. Improve upon um hold accountable as well uh to see that the city at least and how it does business and all of the aspects with this what do we have \$100 billion budget uh and everything else that we do uh strives to uh exercise racial equity uh in uh the many dimensions of this of this city and its structure Um and so we if we could get those two pieces pass well in addition to the others But those two pieces I think we'll leave the people come out of us a pretty valuable legacy and then they can work on improving it And again I'll use the CCR B As an example David Dinkins 30 years ago uh 32 years ago maybe a little bit longer now gave us the currency CRB And perhaps with the

exception of the Giuliani administration successive administrations have worked to strengthen it And I think this Mayor city council uh and state legislatures have done more in the last three years then probably has been done in a long time to really strengthen the agency That particular agency I think the same thing could be said for what we're putting for now It's a great start It's an excellent legacy and I think it will be um it'll be um agencies of government that are that are successors can continue work on and improve. But it's a phenomenal and unprecedented start and if we can get it approved, we will make great strides.

JJA: 01:01:00

Thank you. Thank you. Very much appreciate those words and I'm sure the staff do as well in all the conditions Commissioner Kui.

Chris Kui (CK): 00:1:01:12

Yeah I want to second that you know what the Commissioner David just said because I feel very proud actually being on the commission and enable go through the process you know together with you in terms of you know for us to be able to get to this point you know I think these you know uh the proposed you know language on the ballot and then the work that we've done behind it I think is really going to move the city forward And I just want to go to complement that shared providing the leadership to kind of facilitate allowing us you know to be able to you know put four of our perspectives and then share our thoughts and experiences And so I think that's something that I just want to you know everybody to recognize you know not only the commissioners but staff but then also the people in the city who is actually watching this uh to appreciate the process I think And lastly I just want to say that the preamble really is something that I feel so significant because it really recognize you know the our forefathers who actually help you know build this city and then continue to toil you know to improve it and create the foundation for us today So I just really want to say that that's really critical and important for me and then I think for the community that I serve and then you know I think for the people of New York you know that they should feel proud and then I'm pretty confident that we do uh spend the time in the coming year to really talk about it to the public and make sure that they come out to vote to approve the these initiatives that that I think we would have done a tremendous job And so again I just want to say that and and we should feel very proud I think you know, Thank you.

JJA:01:03:06

Mr. McCoy thank you I echo the sentiments that have been expressed by just about everybody here on all these issues We have not um we've done some very good work and I believe that we have really begun to lay a very necessary foundation. There's always more to be done but we you know we have to begin somewhere and I think we can feel confident that we are laying a new foundation uh that will help to move the needle in significant manner. I do see that Commissioner Daniel favors has her hand up and so will go to to Commissioner Daniel Favors.

DF: 01:03:48

So I want to just say express my thanks as well for the staff and the team and for my fellow

commissioners who have really engaged in spirited discussion about these issues I just think it's important and I don't want to be a Debbie downer but I do want to have a realistic framing of what happens for all who are watching and listening to this conversation because what must absolutely happen if we are serious about seeing these provisions actually implemented in a meaningful way that creates a floor from which a body of racial justice can be erected it is going to be vitally necessary that our fellow new Yorkers fight for these uh initiatives come out and vote for these initiatives They do no one any good at all If they simply are are not passed or if even a pond passage they are not vigorously defended and advocated on behalf of and used as a point of expansion This is a very beginning It is certainly nowhere near to the end I think a point that has been wonderfully made and expressed by a variety of my fellow commissioners but this is really an opportunity for New Yorkers to take this moment. This brief aperture this opening of a sliver of hope within the very firmly erected building of institutionalized white supremacy to move our city forward in a way that perhaps um is in and of itself revolutionary in potential but potential is nothing if it is not tapped. And so I'm hopeful that you know the millions of folks who we saw come out last summer I'm hopeful not last summer to summer. So now see how the time changes I'm hopeful that in light of the increased repression that we are seeing sweeping this nation and from which our state is not exempt that this can be used as a springboard for activist's organizers people who care about the future of this city and securing a future. I want to be racially just. I am hopeful that this will be an opportunity and a tool that they will be able to use Um and that we will be able to use to push that agenda forward and to ensure that this thing we all know can happen actually has a shot and that this just doesn't become a moment in history when there was potential that could have been but that--

JJA: 01:06:07

you went on mute but and we were all like just leaning in

DF: 01:06:16

Oh I was done I was that was it.

JJA: 01:06:21

We appreciate all that you said Uh and I'll go to Commissioner Thompson and then there are no other comments then will close out the meeting. Commissioner Thompson?

PT: 01:06:31

thanks I just wanted to uh say I don't remember if we um uh added anything to the preamble that um kind of reflects what uh Commissioner Kui said like we are building on a very long and powerful legacy fighting for racial justice and inclusion in this city You know I don't know if then maybe that's there but I think that's really important to say Um I mean we think about Ella baker think about Malcolm X think about you know James bald win you know so many people Um So that that was one I also wanted to uh just build on what Commissioner favors and Commissioner Yesenia Mata said that and I just think this should be a call to action Um and I also think there should there is joy and actually creating from our own work and solidarity and imagination together what an equitable and just city looks like And Uh and acts like I worked in a planning an architect texture department for 20 years

and I started going around all over the country asking designers and architects architecture departments what does a just and equitable democratic city look like physically. How do you decide it? What are the principles for designing such a city? And do you know what? Not a single answer. Not a single answer. Nor is there a book on how to do that. Nor is there an article on how to do that and none of us has ever seen it before. It's never existed before. So what we are calling for is something new to be recreated from us, from our people, from our communities, from our working together. I think that's a joyous enterprise and that is what doing these equity plans will consist of, area after area, because we haven't seen it anywhere in this country. We have to construct it. And so anyway, I just think that's a call to action. As Yesenia said, this is a platform for activist leaders, dreamers, you know, hard workers to actually use and have their voices heard and felt. And so if there's some way to have that spirit in there and how we message this, you know, I think it will excite people. Um, and it's not just holding people accountable, that's really important, but we also have to create something to hold people accountable to, and that itself is a big call to action.

JJA:01:09:48

Indeed. I am, I will have more to say at our upcoming meeting about what this experience has been for me and what I believe and feel confident we have done together, uh, learning from listening, to learning from the community. I am, I'm, I feel very proud of what the staff and the commissioners have set out to do and what we, what we have done. Uh, Rome wasn't built in a day, as they say, and uh, we know that racism will not be taken down and just you know, one, you know, with one shot, with one aim, so more work to be done, but a very good beginning. So, our next meeting will be December 9 and as I have said, uh, head of the outfit at that meeting, we will vote on the resolution to move these, uh, these proposals into ballot measures and uh, it'll be the finalization of the ballot proposals. There will be some work that continues between now and that you all have raised, uh, points for us to further consider and we're going to do just that. We'll let you know at the December 9 meeting if there has been a change to the proposals as they have been, uh, that varies from how they've been presented this evening, so we will present on the ninth the resolution we would like as many persons as possible to be in person. I think it's very important that if you can be there, that you are, that we do understand if you're not, but we would very much appreciate you being there and then we'll also, uh, present and discuss the racial justice roadmap that will be in the final report. And then December 16, we're going to meet again in person to vote to adopt the final report. In December 17th, the staff will submit the final report to the city clear. So it's hard to believe that we're here. Um, I'm going to, I'm looking at this like it's a big old Christmas gift, holiday gift. I celebrate Christmas and that's how I'm thinking about it. I think that Commissioner Hamilton's wants to make another point.

DH: 01:12:08

Madam Chair, just a question about process, we will vote on the final report before seeing it? I-I guess.

JJA: 01:12:17

yes. Ah, and ah, uh, Executive Director Anusha Venkatara, would you just kind of walk them throughout it.

AV: 01:12:26

Absolutely. Um. So, speaking to the resolution first um you should receive the resolution shortly as a draft so you have some time to review before the ninth that's where the concept and the substance of the proposals is as we're working on the final report. Um. You will have a chance to review the final report both as an earlier draft and as a later near final draft recognizing that this is all a quick turnaround. This is all you know not necessarily the ideal amount of time for reviews So thank you for your patience but you will receive them in advance. You will not be asked to vote on something you haven't seen.

DH: 01:13:12

Thank you.

JJA: 01:13:14

Thank you. We do ask that everybody uh just pay close attention to your charter emails over the course of the coming days because you will receive the resolution and we want you to review it in advance and if you have any comments or questions in advance, you can also be an email back to Anusha your thoughts on that. We um let's see what else do. I need to let you all know I told you about the next commission meeting and I think that's dead So um again thank you all for all the time that you've given and I really appreciate everybody just coming together and doing this very critical work. You all have volunteer your time and um you've given much attention to this work. And so we can't thank you enough and we're in the homestretch and thank you to the staff. I want to say have a good weekend staff but I know you're going to have a production.

AV: 01:14:13

We're going to be working every day. We will take some rest after that.

JJA: 01:14:20

Absolutely. There being no additional no further business the meeting. This meeting is adjourned.