

Roanoke City Gun Violence Commission

Meeting Minutes

2/8/22, at 5:31 pm Noel C Taylor Municipal Building, EOC Conference Room, 159

Commissioners Physically Present: Tim Harvey, Stacey Sheppard, Joe Cobb, Elliot Major, Decca Knight, Nicole Ross

Commissioners Virtually Present: Taisha Steele, Shakira Williams, Kathy Cohen

Topic (Agenda Item)	Notes from Discussion
Roll Call	See roll call above  Quorum present in-person
Approval of Minutes from January 2022	Motion to adopt minutes: Stacey 2nd: Nicole Motion passes
Old Business	<p>Briefing on Conflict of Interest and FOIA: Laura Carini</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● FOIA<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Information handed out when we first became commissioners</li><li>○ FOIA applies to public meetings and to public records (texts, emails, paper documents, etc.)</li><li>○ Preference to conduct official business at meetings</li><li>○ Laura is always available to answer questions</li></ul></li><li>● Conflict of Interest Act<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If there is ever action on the board agenda, money involved, employer, contracts, grants, etc.</li><li>○ Not everything is an actual conflict so discuss concerns with Laura</li></ul></li><li>● No more than two of us can meet to discuss GVPC<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ This includes working groups</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Minigrant and Violence Interruption Grants: Angie O'Brien</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Mini grants: \$300,000 total<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ \$5,000-\$10,000 recommended as the base</li></ul></li><li>● Violence Interruption Proposal \$400,000<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ \$25,000-\$50,000<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Elliot recommends \$25,000 starting as the base</li></ul></li><li>○ 8 - 16 grants</li><li>○ Elliot requests clearly defined guidelines and specific examples<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Joe gives examples: Dept. of Justice Services Grant</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

- Operation Ceasefire: problems solving police strategy; Gang reduction and Youth Development; Group violence intervention and focused deterrence: identifying chronic violent offenders; hospital based violence intervention programs; Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TFCBT)
- Feb. 23rd at 7:00 pm Information session for possible grantees
- Tim asks about initiatives that go beyond the threshold
- Nicole asks can organizations go after both grants?
  - Angie states that currently we are only awarding one grant per organization
  - This needs to be clarified
- Elliot asks about the timing and communication
  - It felt rushed last time and some people didn't know
  - Angie states that after the 23rd we would open up the grant period and hold it open for 30 days
    - Continuing the same communication currently being used with ARP funds
    - Angie requests support in getting the information out in the community
    - A commission meeting with be used for review
    - Feb 17th meeting schedule with Youth Service Providers where information will be shared
    - Groups that don't have non-profit status needs to partner with non-profits

Youth and Gang Violence Assessment: Elite Business Strategies; Necole Holton and Alexa Pupillo

- Refer to slide deck and report from Elite
- Community Assessment Timeline
  - Nov 1 - Dec 10, 2021 for interviews and assessments
  - Various methods of dissemination and various surveys for different groups
  - Roanoke City Public schools and various youth serving agencies helped in efforts
  - The team attended several community events, used incentives, etc.
- Final numbers
  - Met baseline goal of 60-75 for each category
- Assessment findings: Alexa
  - Youth and Student Survey: 247 participants
    - NW students majority of participants
    - Protection rose to the top of reasons for joining a gang, as well as monetary and social bonds
    - >50% said it was easy to get a gun
    - Most students felt that they had school staff they could talk to
    - Youth identified more jobs for young people, more activities, and free individual counseling at schools and agencies as top 3 things that might help
    - Recreation and sports were the least important reasons to leave a gang
  - Community and Resident Survey: 522
    - 85% feel less safe than they did 2 years ago
    - Gang activity is of most concern to the community
    - Poverty, family issues rose to the top for encouraging gang culture
    - What can be done about gangs: mentoring, more police protection, jobs, recreation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Assessment results similar to community survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Youth-Serving Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lack of transportation is an issue, lack of mental health care, homelessness, poverty, lack of stable home life, etc.</li> <li>■ Youth violence goes beyond gang violence to interpersonal issues</li> <li>■ Lack of trust between community members, police, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make police more present in communities</li> <li>● Trauma training and diversity training</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Joe: we are resource-rich and there is a disconnect between getting services to those that need them in addition to barriers</li> <li>○ Necole discusses the assessment team and standout interactions with community members</li> </ul>
<p>Guest Speaker</p>	<p>Javonda Merkmán</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stacey introduces Javonda and asks her some questions</li> <li>● How did your family survive gun violence? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ June 3rd son shot 3 times with an AR</li> </ul> </li> <li>● System failures for her family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Found out about our services through a community meeting</li> <li>○ Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Moving out of current housing and no safe place to go; became homeless; asked to go to a shelter</li> <li>■ Available finances and services not available for housing because of how some programs are funded by grants</li> <li>■ Unable to work because at son's bedside</li> <li>■ Evaluate a family based on their needs not by a checklist</li> <li>■ Defining what "help" means</li> <li>■ Promise help but then don't follow through</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Things you can celebrate out of process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Resilient</li> <li>■ Faith</li> <li>■ Support from school system, teachers, etc.</li> <li>■ Counselor support</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ What does the future look like for your family? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Do what you were designed to do; keep the kids on track</li> <li>■ Javonda walked away from financial services to work as a youth advocate</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Chris Roberts sings Javonda's praises</li> <li>○ Joe addresses the barriers, individual situations, advocacy, etc.</li> <li>○ Stacey addresses how GVPC needs to address funding issues</li> <li>○ Chris addresses the victims that aren't part of the numbers</li> <li>○ Elliot states that the system is broken and is working as it is designed</li> <li>○ We need to consider the secondary and tertiary victims</li> <li>● Youth Voices "This is My Why Not Program" at Fleming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Aleeshia, Terry, and Karmen</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Name: represents a reason for not doing a violent act or crime</li> <li>○ Mission: reduce violent acts among students in school and the community</li> <li>○ How: secular mindfulness activities, stress relieving activities</li> <li>○ Goals: life skills, conflict resolution skills, self-compassion, building compassion for others, faith-based conversations, free speech with no repercussions from administration, etc.</li> <li>○ Started in Sept/Oct: met with Joe C and Chris R, Donna Chewing from restorative justice, training for student counselors, restorative circles, etc.</li> <li>○ How can we support their efforts? Give us specific asks.</li> <li>● Tim says these stories should guide our granting efforts</li> </ul>
Announcements	<p>Information Session on the 23rd at 7:00 for the Grants</p> <p>Resiliency Champion Training - Friday, February 25, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm</p> <p>Gun Violence Prevention Commission Meeting, Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 5:30pm</p>
Adjournment	7:30 Adjournment early