

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

POST AGENDA MINUTES – RATIFIED

This document has been ratified or approved by the Fulton County Reparations Task Force and is not binding on the County or any officer.

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

- **Present:** Dr. Karcheik Sims-Alvarado; Marcus Coleman; JaNay Wilborn
- **Absent:** South Fulton Mayor Khalid Kamau; Olivia Reneau
- **Staff Present:** Fran Calhoun (External Affairs); Jasmine Campbell (External Affairs); Denval Stewart (County Attorney)

Adoption of May 5, 2022 Minutes

- **Marcus Coleman** made a motion to approve the May 5, 2022 meeting minutes. **JaNay Wilborn** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of June 2, 2022 Agenda

- **JaNay Wilborn** made a motion to approve the June 2, 2022 meeting agenda. **Marcus Coleman** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Internship Update

Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- Commissioner Arrington's office will sponsor the intern.

Denval Stewart

- No response received yet from Duke University regarding intern requirements.
- Will modify the intern application form used by Fulton County's Human Resources department for this position; Will send Fran Calhoun the final version next week after placing it on letterhead of Commissioner Arrington or Human Resources; Once intern signs the document, the fellowship will be able to start.
 - **Fran Calhoun**: Believes Commissioner Arrington will allow the intern form to be placed on District Five's letterhead; Suggested the County Attorney's office also provide a copy of the signed document to the Human Resources Department; Confirmed July 2022-May2023 internship period.

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

Fran Calhoun

- Will the intern need any technology or space at this time? Encouraged Chair to send additional research assistance requests during the internship.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado:**
 - Intern will mainly work with her personal nonprofit. The intern will compile quantitative data of map findings related to hospital on Spelman's campus as one of the task force research assignments.
 - **John Wright (Fulton County Library System)** confirmed there is office space available to anyone at the Central Library so the intern will use that space when necessary.
 - Requested Fulton County laptop for intern to allow separation of personal and task force related files.
 - **Denval Stewart** offered to speak to IT CIO, Glenn Melendez.
 - **Fran Calhoun** will discuss laptop request with District 5 and work with for IT support.

Research

Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- John Wright has provided the following update on research that has been found since the last meeting. The intern will be able to use this information to begin additional research without direct supervision of library staff.
 - 900 articles and documents on convict leading in Georgia (includes Fulton Co)
 - Found 2 Georgia Annual Labor Camps Reports of Deaths 1880 and 1896 (found outside of GA)
 - List of contractors in the Principal Keepers Report (found outside of GA): diseases, hospital reports, deaths, etc.

Convict Labor Company Owners

- Governor Joseph E. Brown
- E.B. Lockett
- L.A. Jordan
- W.B. Lowe
- Gov. John B. Gordan (later opposes prison labor exploitation)
- Thomas Alexander
- W.D. Grant
- W.W. Simpson
- John W. Murphy
- Willian Hall

Goods and Services

- Sawmill
- Coal mining
- Logging

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

- Turpentine
- Farming
- Bricks
- Quarry Rocks
- Railroad Cross-ties
- **Intern**
 - Map labor camps for Fulton County
 - Make list of contractors
 - Document wages of convicts
 - Need to quantify death toll
 - Chattahoochee Brick Company had 5 camps 1890
 - Explore railroad construction.
 - W. B. Lowe and William English: 4 camps
 - W.B. Lowe: 5 camps
 - Identify owners of prison companies: Dade Coal Co., Lowes, Georgia Pent. Co. etc.
- **Additional Research**
 - Land
 - Taxes and unfair distribution of resources for Fulton County services.

Fran Calhoun

- Suggested task force research be focused on specific topics such as land acquisition, convict labor, or additional interests provided of the intern.
- Will send website link and Interim Report from California's Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans to all members.

Discussion

Marcus Coleman

- Detailed differences between reparations task forces in LA County and California State; Would like to invite a representative from the California State Reparation Task Force to present finding, perhaps Chair Kamilah Moore.
- Provided titles of 13 chapters found in the Interim Report from California's Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans; Suggested all members read the 500 page document and become familiar with contents in order to discuss at next meeting; A final report will be completed in July 2023.
- California's task force defined who was eligible for reparations in March 2022. Would like the Fulton County Board of Commissioners to adopt California's definition of an eligible recipient; Believes vote will help inform the public of Fulton County's Reparations Task Force since currently no one knows about this being the first County

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpbNhV3V-xu4Amx

level Reparations Task Force; Does not want to waste time doing research if there will be no reparations due to politics; Will reconsider position on this task force if there is no affirmative vote; Mentioned using local HBCUs to help with research projects.

- **JaNay Wilborn**: Agrees with California's task force definition to a certain degree but their definition will leave out some people, including herself who is a person of mixed heritage; Does not think the Board of Commissioners should be presented with this vote until after the summer in order to allow more research and time to pass; Believes government differences between California and Georgia are large and must be taken into consideration when presenting recommendations to the Board of Commissioners; Suggested research must be completed first and our eligibility definition must be inclusive before making voting requests of the Board of Commissioners.
- **Fran Calhoun**: Acknowledged differences between task force resources, including scope of work, between Fulton County and California; Agreed intern and outreach to AU schools to create partnerships will help reach research goals; Believes recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on who is eligible for reparations should be made after research is complete since this task force is essentially a study committee assigned with first presenting data to confirm if reparations should be offered in Fulton County and to what capacity.
- **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado**: The City of Atlanta is currently addressing several issues such as riots, Chattahoochee Brick Company, etc. but unsure if they are symbolic gestures or will lead to real justice; Would like to see tangible results from this task force, not symbolic gestures such as an apology, historic marker or holiday; Believes significant social change is available and would like to use this opportunity to make reparations recommendations for descendants of slaves in Fulton County; Task force must strategically present the following to the Board of Commissioners: data including specific recommendations on reparations and recipient eligibility.

Fran Calhoun

- California's reparations task force selected the reparations eligibility definition on March 30, 2022 with a vote of 5-4. This is an example of waiting until the scope of work and research is complete before determining who is eligible; Recommended task force determine what reparations topics to study and bring relevant topic research to meetings each month.
 - **Marcus Coleman**: Believes California's eligibility definition is appropriate and can be adopted without additional research by this task force; Does not agree that there is an opportunity for being inclusive since reparations should only be given to descendants of slaves.
 - **JaNay Wilborn** stated all African-Americans should be given reparations; Provided examples of inclusiveness that can be used when residents present their eligibility claims.

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

- **Marcus Coleman** specified all reparations recipients will be required to get DNA testing to prove slave connections legally. Test funding can come from the State of Georgia or Fulton County.

Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- Summarized Marcus Coleman's goals as the following: Does not want task force to work in vain; If task force recommendations include restitution then recipients must be DNA tested; and would like to test the position of the Board of Commissioners now and not wait for a different political climate before adopting an eligibility definition.
 - **Marcus Coleman** agreed with summary. Stressed he feels uncomfortable with waiting for the Board of Commissioners vote and does not want the task force to use previous or current ideology to determine next steps since changes can be made now.
- Respects strategic information from JaNay Wilborn and agrees task force must wait for the right time to request a vote by the Board of Commissioners.

Next Steps

Fran Calhoun

- Task force should review full California report before adoption of eligibility definition.
- Read resolution establishing this task force with an emphasis on duties; Shared resolution with members and staff via email.
 - **Marcus Coleman:** There are currently four Black and three Caucasian members of the Board of Commissioners; Clarified that he only wants to define who is eligible for reparations now, not adopt the full California report, and believes it will receive at least four affirmative votes; Was unaware the task force would not agree with his position but thankful for discussion.
 - **JaNay Wilborn:** Believes all black people should be eligible for reparations; Highlighted that her voice only represents one vote and will support the task force decision based on vote outcome.

Denval Stewart

Discussion: Prior to Resolution review

- Is it the intent of the resolution to study the descendants of slaves globally, in the United States, or Georgia?
 - **Fran Calhoun:** It is up to members to decide recommendation for reparations eligibility during the process.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado:** Resolution does not go beyond 1865 therefore our study will be limited to prior to 1865 even though slavery continued to exist in various ways after this time.

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

- How will the task force prove someone is a descendant of slavery in the United States? Provided personal Jamaican heritage as an example despite advising he would likely not be eligible.
- The task force should study who were slaves and make a connection to those who live in Fulton County today.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado:** Restitution should be for those who have ancestors that were enslaved and now live in Fulton County; Reparations does not have to only include money or remain at the Fulton County level; This County level study will be the blueprint for other jurisdictions across the state and ultimately the country; The larger picture goals can focus on the role of the Royal African Company and Dutch East India Company who were responsible for transporting slaves globally.

Discussion: After Resolution review

- Task force must define scope of research and potential reparations. Advised the resolution states the slavery reparations are limited to slaves in the United States and their current African American descendants who reside in Fulton County. Another determination the task force will need to make is the time of residency to limit people moving to Fulton County only to receive reparations.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado:** Agreed residency criteria needs to be narrow. One suggestion is that recipients must have identified as African American for two decades on Census; Would like to present data collected and make reparations recommendations including eligibility requirements at the same time.
 - **JaNay Wilborn:** Task force must be open to allowing more people to be included as recipient.
 - **Marcus Coleman:** Only request is to vote in favor of the California definition; Declared eight months on this task force without a definition is problematic and the requested vote will clear up all eligibility confusion; Will consider leaving the task force if an eligibility definition is not agreed on soon.
- Proposed bringing in expert advisors to help task force determine who is eligible; Also proposed bringing several eligibility options to the Board of Commissioners since they will need to consider funding for all recommendations.
 - **Fran Calhoun:** Members must decide the who at some point but believes it will be determined after more data and research is complete that is tailored to Fulton County, Georgia.
 - **JaNay Wilborn:** Agreed with proposal to bring several eligibility options to the Board of Commissioners who must also consider the constituents that they represent when voting.
 - **Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado:** Strategically believes if the approach is wrong then the task force recommendations might be lost completely.

Fulton County Reparations Task Force

Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 6pm

Zoom Recording:

https://zoom.us/rec/share/fm_Map9dPRuItxGCLxaY1LtpTJmEj96kip0H2405_f0JmNQHx9N7kztVsK3iwbDA.fJIpNhV3V-xu4Amx

Chairwoman Karcheik Sims-Alvarado

- Requested Marcus Coleman provide reparations eligibility definition and what the reparations will be at the next meeting.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.