

Mayor's Crime Intervention Task Force
The Gate
201 E. Gordon Street
Tuesday, February 16, 2023
Meeting at 10:00 am

Mayor Don Hardy called the meeting to order at 10:06 am.

Pastor Khayyam Shepherd delivered the invocation which was followed by the recital of the pledge of allegiance by everyone.

Consider approval of the minutes of the Crime Intervention Task Force Meeting on January 26, 2023
Debra Thompson

Linda Rouse Sutton made the motion, seconded by Felicia Solomon, and the minutes of the Crime Intervention Task Force held on January 26, 2023, were approved.

Introduction of Committee Chairpersons, Co-Chairpersons, and Vice-Chairpersons---Mayor Don Hardy

(PLEASE GIVE AN UPDATE ON YOUR COMMITTEE)

The committee lead persons of each committee gave the following updates:

- **Memorandum of Understanding Committee** – Mayor Hardy said the committee met and the discussion was about the need to have more teeth in the MOU. Today, he wanted to make sure they have the goals and the mission statement in place, and they would be coming back to speak with the entire Task Force regarding that. He asked if there was anyone with any additional input related to the goals of the Task Force to submit to the committee. Linda Rouse Sutton introduced herself to the attendees and encouraged the submission of any input they may have.

Mayor Hardy introduced Pastor Ryan Vernon, Co-Chair; Pastor Michelle Gooding, and noted that Pastor Reginald Bradshaw, Vice Chair was not present at the time.

- **Faith-Based Committee** – Pastor Ryan Vernon, 902 Church stated that the committee has not officially met due to needing more clarification. He said after this meeting they would meet to see which way they should go. Pastor Michelle Gooding, Herring Grove FWB Church located in the Falling Creek community of Lenior County said that the church has a senior program and a food bank to address the needs of that side of the county. She said they are looking forward to embracing the MOU and working with the faith-based team.

Mayor Hardy introduced Nick Harvey, Co-Chair, Frances Herring, Co-Chair, and Felicia Solomon, Vice Chair.

- **Education Committee** – Nick Harvey shared that there was an organizational meeting on Tuesday. Present was Ms. Herring, Ms. Solomon, and Dr. Beech. They came away with

three items: 1) Possibly having a community/student survey; 2) Summer Employment Job Fair; and 3) After school program community vendor fair.

Mayor Hardy introduced Jeff Harrison, DSS Director as Chairperson for the Resource Committee.

- **Resource Committee** – Jeff Harrison stated that the committee met on January 31st with 13 of the participants in attendance. The discussions included things and programs that used to happen across the favorable county. They discussed going back to revisit some of those such as day trips to colleges and universities, the Governor's One-on-One Program, Raising the Lines, programs for children under age six, Little by Little (literacy/mentoring), and involvement with the local fraternities and sororities working with children from the 7 to 12-grade level. A *recommendation* was made to consider creating a Youth Council of a cross-section of youth who would come to the table and meet with the Mayor and other leadership. They would talk about what their needs and community experiences are and create some opportunities for their voice to be heard in the community. The last thing talked about was recognizing the youth in Lenoir County when they have major achievements, He gave an example of a KHA annual program, a young lady participated in the poster contest, "What does home mean to me?". She drew her poster and won locally, at the State level, and at the national level. Mr. Harrison stated he reached out to the Lenoir County Commissioner Chair Ms. Linda Rouse Sutton and asked if there was a way during the Commissioner's meeting, as well as the City Council meetings to take a few minutes to recognize the accomplishments of our youth publicly. This would bring awareness to not just us, but also the community as a whole gets to participate, congratulate, and share in their experiences. This is an encouragement for them to continue doing their good work. He shared that building trust and Kinston coming together as one is "no credit given; we do it for our children".
- **Law Enforcement Committee** – Chief Goyette introduced himself and said they have not been able to meet as a group, but he has met with some people individually. He shared that they will address juvenile crime through the DMC group, school resource officers, Lenoir County Public Schools, Juvenile Justice Services, and the JCPC. Chief Goyette discussed some of the recent juvenile crimes committed here. He discussed violent crimes and related that they are focused on gun crimes in Kinston and Lenoir County. A representative from the DAs office will work hard on investigating and prosecuting the firearm crimes in Kinston and Lenoir County and it was suggested to put together 10 people in the community (City/County) that are wreaking havoc. They need to identify those individuals, investigate them, prosecute them, and put them away. He addressed illegal narcotics and gang activity. There will be a gang symposium in May and everyone is invited to come and see what they have to offer.

Mayor Hardy said that the focus is on elementary to middle school youth as well as others and stated we will use the holistic approach for not only the child but the family as well. It is important to identify what we have here as resources and he asked everyone to compile a list of resources they provide and submit them to the City Clerk. The clerk will forward them to each committee Chairperson. Mayor Hardy asked for any additional goals that anyone may have added to MOU.

Committee Breakout Session (15-20 minutes)

- Compile a list of goals specific to your committee

Each committee participated in an individual breakout session.

Mayor Hardy asked everyone to submit their goals to their committee chairperson for forwarding to the City Clerk. The list will be compiled and the MOU will be created. He added that the Mayor's Task Force will transition to the City/County Task Force.

Mayor's Crime Intervention Task Force Mission Statement -----Mayor Don Hardy

Mayor Hardy read the Mission Statement and asked everyone to submit anything they would like to have added to the statement to their committee chairperson for forwarding to the City Clerk.

Colleen Kosinski, Adult Accountability and Recovery Program which is a program working with folks with substance use disorders here in our court system. If anyone is interested in learning more about that process, the next session of the court is March 1st at 2:00 pm in the Civil Superior Court. Ms. Kosinski shared that there is an upcoming State of the Child Conference. This is the 21st year and the topics will be human trafficking, drug trends among youth in the community, and ACEs in the school system. She shared that the conference will be held at Wayne Community College and to attend in person the fee is \$35 and the virtual is \$15. The date is March 7th from 8 am to 3 pm.

Mayor Hardy discussed substance abuse and noted that we needed to put that at the forefront to figure out how to navigate that side (opioids). He shared that there is additional funding for those issues and his concern was whether to break that out or combine it within the Law Enforcement Committee. The next meeting date is scheduled for March 9, 2023, at 10:30 am at The Gate.

Comments were made by Sylvano Farris regarding his organization Idle Felons. He feels there is a need for substations in the projects, opening the centers, and having learning programs. He stated there was a need for mentors and additional lights to be installed. Mr. Farris said the gangs being discussed live in abandoned houses. He also addressed the need for housing, transportation, and a larger homeless shelter.

Sue Ellen Maddux made the motion, seconded by Michelle Gooding, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:11 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Thompson, City Clerk