Gun Violence Reduction Task Force – Meeting August 22, 2018

Documents: Agenda, Violence Reduction Subcommittee Transition Report, Introduction Memo

Action Items from Meeting:
- Send out reading materials for next meeting (Oct. 5) – Jeff, Josh, Erich
- Research/Identify member of affected community to serve advisory role – Josh, Melissa, Flozell, Tamara
- Send any conflicts regarding future meetings. Calendar invites will go out next week
  - October 5, November 6, December 7

Notes

I. Welcome/Attendance
   a. In Attendance
      i. Melissa Sawyer
      ii. Nathalie Simon
      iii. Jeff Asher
      iv. Dana Peterson (on behalf of John White)
      v. Erich Caulfield
      vi. Josh Cox
   b. Calling in via conference
      i. Tamara Jackson
      ii. Flozell Daniels
   c. Absent
      i. Russ Herman

II. Introduction to Theory of Change – Melissa Sawyer and Jeff Asher
   a. Takeaway from transition work: gun violence is concentrated ("sticky")
      i. In theory, easier to solve, but often in practice makes it easier to ignore
   b. Our approach
      i. Engage with at risk population with social services rather than law enforcement mechanisms
      ii. Main challenge: literature and research on results of using this approach is scarce
      iii. Will utilize two academics
         1. Dr. Andrew Papachristos of Northwestern University
            a. Leading expert on gun violence
            b. Will focus on program design
         2. Dr. Jennifer Doleac of Texas A&M
            a. Economist
            b. Will conduct independent evaluation of program
               i. Will allow group to see strengths and weaknesses and adjust accordingly
      iv. *Important in moving forward to not be married to any single idea, need to be reactive to results as we get them
   c. NOLA For Life and Other Violence Reduction strategies – challenges and weaknesses
      i. Law enforcement led interventions with weak (if any) social service element

      ii.   Programs were not focused enough on homicide reduction, or not dedicating enough resources to homicide reduction

     iii.   Insufficient funding especially relating to social services

           1.   We are going to have to raise a lot of money **

     iv.   Did not engage community in design

      v.   Poor transparency and communication

  d.   Statistics to note – Jeff Asher

       i.   New Orleans has had >100 murders per year for the last 45 years

      ii.   Top 5 cities for murder rate for last 31 years

           1.   City size relative to others on list make this more alarming

     iii.   African American males made up 80% of victims in 2016

           1.   80% of those were under 40 years old

     iv.   The murder rate of African American males in New Orleans is 57X the national average

  e.   Questions/Discussion Points

       i.   Has the average age of victims changed? Not really, average age increased by about a year

           1.   Age range of population target by problems has typically been younger than the average age of victims

           2.   In relation to programs, important to recognize difference in needs based on age and life experience

      ii.   How large is our target population? A couple thousand people

     iii.   Are we discussing victims or perpetrators in relation to size of population? The population is not all that different, more important to think of the target population as possible victims

     iv.   EC: Engaging/Intervening with both those likely to be victims and perpetrators important? (i.e. CeaseFire approach)

           1.   JA: That population is not that different. More beneficial if we approach the target population with the idea that they are at-risk of being victims of violence. Nuance that a person could likely be both a victim and a perpetrator

      v.   TJ: Importance of thinking of those affected by violence, though not necessarily a direct victim or perpetrator (family, friends, social network, etc.)

           1.   JA: We have to build a tent big enough to capture that. Inclusion of known family, friends, etc. important when building our data in looking at connections, patterns, etc.

     vi.   FD: Need to reconcile idea of how we can rely so heavily on social services without including law enforcement. Low capacity homicide unit, incompetency of some responders, etc. Approach should be comprehensive

        1. JA: Transition report did call for independent review commission of law enforcement piece, not necessarily under purview of task force. Though, we must address this in some way

    vii. NS: Law enforcement piece, increasing resources/capacity as deterrence (if we solve more crimes, less likely to feel like you can get away with it). Additionally, community has to want to engage in services – how will we address changing social norms?

        1. MS: In personal experience, people overwhelming seek and want services

        2. NS: interested in more literature/data relating to what other cities have done and success/failures

   viii. Discussion on importance of metrics and setting realistic, incremental goals

    ix. Discussion on importance or effective and transparent communication, reporting on metrics, etc.

III. Subcommittee/Meeting structure – Josh Cox

   a. Proposed

     i. Monthly meetings

     ii. First hour: learning experience.

        1. Need to operate from same baseline knowledge, important to review literature and data

    iii. Second hour: subcommittee report out. Set goals an metrics for each, have a plan by May 2019

        1. Building an Organization

        2. Roll-Out Committee

        3. Fundraising/Finance

        4. Data and Metrics

        5. Interventions

   b. Discussion on structure

     i. Necessary to have subcommittees for 8 person task force?

     ii. Think of them as large task groups?

    iii. Work through them in phases?

     iv. Building an organization + fundraising/finance = one thing

     v. Important to have data and metrics done to start on the rest, especially interventions

     vi. How does our work fit into larger structure of City programs and work being done?

    vii. Have HW between meetings, don't break into subcommittees

   c. Housekeeping

     i. Switch Nov. and Dec. meetings to hold focus groups sooner

     ii. Oct. 5 Meeting – academics, Mayor in attendance, longer meeting

    iii. Internet drive of some kind for documents