

North Fork Unity Action Committee
Presentation to Southold Town Board Work Session
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Preface

1. We are particularly conscious that in calling on the Town to initiate a comprehensive assessment of the justice system, we foreshadowed the mandate that Governor Cuomo delivered in his executive order.
 - a. The 'New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative' Requires Local Police Agencies work with local leaders and community activists to Develop a Plan Based on Community Input
2. We come here amidst a nationwide - indeed worldwide movement to ensure that all people are treated equitably, in particular, by police forces and by the justice system as a whole.
3. We come here also recognizing that all of us care about the importance of equitable treatment.
 - a. We know you share this commitment to fairness and equity.
4. Therefore, we come here to propose the creation of a task force to be charged with engaging in the process of a thoughtful, transparent, and thorough assessment of each of the components of Southold Town's justice system.
5. The structure of this task force is in line with the governor's expectations as laid out in his executive order, bringing together community members and activists, local leaders, and representatives of the police and justice system.

Proposed Task Force

1. Proposed Task Force Structure

- a. The total number of people on this task force would vary except for the following members:
 - i. 6 community members who represent the communities within our town who are most vulnerable and historically targeted
 - ii. 6 community leaders
 - iii. Two town board members
- b. A timeline would be set up to focus on each of the various components of the justice system, tracking each system that members of the community would come in contact with from their initial encounters with police, following along whatever trajectory occurs as an individual follows through the justice system: including by not limited to:
 - i. Policing
 - ii. Southold Town jailing
 - iii. District Attorney
 - iv. Justice Court
 - v. And any other offices or agencies charged with administering justice

- c. As we focus on each area, representatives from that area would join the taskforce for the duration of the assessment of that area

2. Proposed Task Force Structure

- a. Conduct initial research into best practices in the review and evaluation of policies and procedures associated with justice systems.
- b. Conduct focus groups & public hearings inviting members of the public who have had experience with Southold Town's justice system to share their experiences both positive and negative
- c. Bring feedback from these forums to the taskforce as we review and evaluate policies, procedures and practices associated with each of the areas of the justice system on which we focus
- d. Concurrent with the process described above, we would engage the community of Southold, including the media, public leaders and every day folks to engage in a public discourse about what public safety means in Southold, envisioning what we believe is the best way to achieve public safety in all its various manifestations in Southold town
- e. Throughout this process the task force would invite input and consultation from experts in the justice system, representatives from organizations focused on equity in policing, etc.

3. Proposed Task Force Timeframe

- a. As mentioned above, our first priority will be on policing as that is the focus of much of the current concern and because encounters with the justice system typically begin with encounters with the police. And, lastly we are faced with a very specific deadline set by the Governor of achieving legislative reform in policing by April 1 of 2021.
- b. We will, however, continue the process of examination and as necessary, recommendations for reform, beyond the police. This is a very significant and serious undertaking and we recognize that all of this cannot be done well in six months or even a year.

4. Proposed Task Force Preparation

- a. All standing and eventual Task Force Members will participate in a full day of education in order to all come to the task with a shared grasp of the challenge.

5. Proposed Task Force Town Support: Funding and Staff Resources

- a. While we recognize that these are difficult fiscal times, in order to accomplish this profoundly important and historically significant task, the Task Force will need to have support. Once convened, the Task Force will submit a proposed budget and resource plan in order to move forward.

It is important to emphasize that, in line with the mandate of the Governor, we see this as a collaboration of the stakeholders in an effort to ensure that our justice system is fair and equitable to all the members of our community.

See attached Governor's Executive Order