

Meeting - February 1, 2023 12-2pm (Shear Facilitating)

Introductions:

- Shear: grounding us in recognizing the first day of black history month and that black incarcerated people are feeling the impact of racist practices the most. Hoping people took time to care for themselves after the hearing.
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Attendees:

Deborah Lolai (taking minutes; she/her - Bronx Defenders)
Shear Avory (facilitating; they/them - New Pride Agenda)
Mik Kinkead (he/him - Legal Aid Society)
Heather Burgess (she/her - Board of Correction)
Lucas Marquez (he/they - Brooklyn Defenders Services)
Chelsea Chard (she/her - Department of Correction)
Michael Griffin (he/him - NYC Commission on Human Rights)
Sahar Moazami (they/them - City Council)
Liz Munsky (she/her - Department of Correction)
Natalie Fiorenzo (she/her - New York County Defenders Services)
Rachel Golden (she/they/Rachel - Golden Psychology)
Nicole Levy (she/her - Correctional Health Services)
Ronald Porceli (they/them - UNITY Project)
Kandra Clark (she/her - Exodus Transitional Community)
Saloni Sethi (they/she - Mayor's Office to End Gender Based Violence)

Recap of City Council hearing on 1/25:

- Shear: asking Chelsea if she has an update on the timeline of sharing the new directive
- Chelsea: no updates. We are reviewing it now and will share it once its been finalized. No timeline yet.
- Shear: do you have any updated numbers for us given CC's request that you work with us in good faith
- Chelsea: no, we don't have data to share at this time
- Shear: we should follow up with Chair Rivera and Chair Caban, and send a letter to City Council.
- Mik: there is definitely a desire from CC on follow up. We submitted a redlined version of the powers bill and will follow up next week. I'd love to host an editing session for the other bills. For example, CHS and the TF were on the same page about making sure the medical bills don't impede care. So I will send an email about that. There was a lot of follow up on The City article but not on the hearing. Democracy Now featured former employees of DOC
- Deb: Why didn't Chelsea speak? Where was Liz Munsky? we need to continue publicizing what's happening to people on the inside, because that is clearly all that DOC responds to.
- Dr. Golden: there is a lot more testimony I would like to share. The piece that was missed is reinforcing that gender is not linear, not binary, not a destination. Gender is multifaceted and experienced in many different ways. So we need to ensure that policies recognize this.

- Mik: As a TaskForce we can submit a followup memo btw - on any missed points like Rachel's or anyone else's
- Shear: I'd like to add our requests to this memo. We should also publicly release it for community transparency
- Shear: I want to acknowledge Grace's absence in today's meeting. This work is really hard and we've come to a point of utter exhaustion. I felt that in Grace's voice when she spoke. I wonder if that is why she is not here today.
- Shear: Chelsea, can you respond to the question of why you didn't speak?
- Chelsea: it is up to the administration to decide who speaks at these hearings. I am always at the hearings. That is my job. The commissioner is always the one who speaks at these hearings.
- Shear: is this how it was in other administrations?
- Chelsea: I can't speak to other administrations, just this one.
- Shear: Liz, is that also your response?
- Liz: Yes, it is.
- Mik: Liz and Chelsea, you've been there for longer than Molina's term. What is the same then?
- Chelsea: yes, it is up to each commissioner
- Mik: I'm asking because we specifically asked CC to see if Chelsea and Liz could testify, but that request was ignored.
- Shear: I want to note that for myself, I am being vulnerable at this moment and sharing my reflection bc I don't trust DOC. but I do recognize that Chelsea is on this call and the law requires DOC's engagement. But as the only black trans femme here, this is not safe for me. I took the time to go back and watch the entire 4 hour public hearing from start to finish, and I would encourage other folks to take the time to do that as well. It is very clear that Chelsea is with the commissioner at every public hearing as a senior advisor. When the commissioner did not have clear responses to questions or what dumbfounded, if you look closely, it's almost as if Chelsea is giving a signal to the commissioner. I think that's something that TF members need to be aware of. I'd also like to note that following the TF testifying, commissioner Molina made an appearance on the breakfast club, which is run by a very transphobic person. On the day of this public hearing after lying, not even acknowledging the TF in the room, he chose to sit alongside someone who is vocally transphobic. Caban drove home the point about how the dept is discriminating against trans and gender expansive people. Where she left it off is that it is different for cis people in custody. It has never been stated so clearly on the record. The lawyers here should consider a legal strategy.
- Heather: Link to the Breakfast Club interview:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BelGJ3HIHo>
- Shear: are there other folks who did not testify but want to share thoughts?
- Lucas: I was at the hearing and just wanted to say that one thing that stood out at me was how good the TF panels really were. The level of expertise and knowledge was really important.
- Kandra: I agree - them not having answers was disappointing and not seeing Liz there was disappointing. There is definitely a new feeling with this commissioner that is much worse than previous ones. The reality is that borough based jails are happening and trans folks have been left out of this conversation entirely. We need to talk about this and figure out how to incorporate trans people in this plan.
- Michael: I was not there in person but I watched it live, and wanted to thank everyone on the TF who testified and it was the most powerful testimony I've ever seen and I am honored to be working with all of you.

- Shear: I agree with Kandra that we need to think about policies for intake in the new jails. Maybe we can have a chapter in the next report about intake / new borough based jails. Based on the commissioner's testimony, he doesn't believe that the TF has the expertise to advise.
- Shear: we made the following requests in our testimony: (1) CC to vote and support the bills introduced, taking into consideration our amendments, (2) make data available (3) investment of resources (4) DOC working in good faith (5) enhance BOC capacity (6) amend the TF bill to more clearly define our authority (7) follow up public hearing in 3 months with the public advocate to follow up on the City's reporting and any progress that the DOC has made to work with us in good faith.
- Mik: Bills include: 355 (choosing gender of CHS provider); 831 (navigator for women and gender expansive people on reentry); 887 (data collection); 728 (housing bill); Resolution 117 (on adding an X marker) and a resolution on GIRDS
- Mik: all of these bills have good intentions, but we want to make them more meaningful. For example the one amending the securing orders to include gender X.
- Mik: I appreciated that CHS said its not feasible to have non-binary people meet with non-binary providers,, so we wouldn't be able to offer that to non-binary incarcerated people. For the housing bill, we added a whole new intake section to it because thats a place that DOC could make major moves.
- Shear: It would be great to send CC a document with all our thoughts on each bill.
- Nicole: just want to clarify for you and the record that CHS did not say we had no non-binary providers on staff. Our testimony said it isn't feasible to staff each service in all of our clinics and therapeutic housing areas with female, male and non-binary providers at all times.
- Sahar: the bills are now in the committees, and movement depends on whether they are being nudged to move them along. Moving them past the committee is really on the agenda of the respective council members. Any additional email and nudges will be helpful in keeping this on top of the priority list. Brenda and Jeremy are good folks to stay in touch with about this.
- Lucas: BDS would like to work on the bill edits
- Natalie: I'd like to be looped in
- Deb: can we add someone to the TF with expertise on intersex issues?
- Mik: I attended a CLE lead by InterACT yesterday and asked them about participating. There was a lot of interest, but there is not a lot of resources and capacity. There is also Intersex Justice. But both get asked to present all the time on intersex issues.
- Shear: we reached out to freedom to live to see if there are folks on the inside who would be interested in collaborating with them to offer commissary needs of people on the inside who want to engage in the process, but FTL has very clear asks of orgs that want to access their resources, including a donation of \$500
- Rachel: Was also thinking about the ask for translators that was mentioned during testimony as well, to be able to collaborate with orgs with primarily Spanish-speaking individuals
- Deb: I can fundraise for the donation to FTL or directly impacted folks - does anyone see a red flag?
- Sahar: I will look into that and get back to you
- Mik: gave an overview of the process of writing last report
- Deb: we can make the second report shorter and get it out faster
- Kandra: I agree about making it shorter and more accessible and would definitely want to include a section on intake for the new jails
- Natalie: I've been checking in with clients, and would be happy to help on collecting anecdotal evidence

- Shear: we may want to consider hosting our own public hearings/listening sessions at the center. The first report was nearly 200 pages, and I think it would be best to stay within a 50-75 page report, and a 25 page report with more visuals that is more accessible to share with members, etc. I also want to hone in on the testimony. That was one of the most powerful elements of this report. Chair Caban was very moved by the anecdotes, and I would like to focus on including those, and also how we could work with more creative partners to have a public awareness campaign. I'd like to make posters and artwork to reflect people's experiences that also has a QR code for the longer report.
- Natalie: having a concise report would also be really helpful too for public defenders because they often ask for this type of info for bail arguments when arraigining TGNCNBI clients
- Natalie: small reels and videos would also be helpful. The more types of media the better.
- Mik: Shear and Saloni were working on this but it didn't pan out bc we had no resources
- Ronald: it would be helpful if this report included areas that need funding - spelling out which programs and what funding in detail would be helpful
- Shear: can we use the second hour of the next Task Force meeting as a meeting for the drafting committee? General consensus is yes, this is a good idea.
- Shear: I want to propose creating a formal structure for the TF. Including chairs, secretary, etc. so we can show up to the next meeting with a clear authority.
- Deb: was the 1-pager placed on the tablets as discussed at the last meeting?
- Chelsea: we have space on the tablets for resources and information, but they are not used for pop-ups and announcements.
- Mik: at the last meeting you said you would facilitate putting information about testifying at the hearing on the tablet.
- Chelsea: with stuff like that, the tablet is not a means for
- Shear: So I just want to make a record that there is a discrepancy between what was said at the last meeting by DOC and now what's being said now.
- Natalie: could there be a one-pager with Deb and Mik's contact info as a resource to incarcerated people?
- Chelsea: were open to considering it. We need to see the make-up of it first.

New Agenda Items:

- Mik has a question re: did the 1 pager go on the tablets before the hearing?
- Next report
 - Drafting committee will start to meet this month for the next report. We should think about how to have directly impacted folks be engaged in the process.
- Follow up requests for city council
- Powers bill

Updates from BOC, CHS, DOC:

Things to follow up on:

- Editing all the bills for CC and sending them to to city council as a package
- Email CC folks to let them know were going to send them edited bills
- Sahar to ask about whether it would be an ethical problem to fundraise for engagement of directly impacted people, or donation to FTL

- Drafting committee to meet in february
- Chelsea/Liz to give us a copy of what's in the LGBTQ folder on the tablet for LGBTQ resources. Contents: (1) resource guide (2) therapeutic activities
- Chelsea/Liz to inform us of process for getting approved for the tablet

Next meeting & facilitator:

- March 1st at 12:00pm (Deb facilitating)