



Austin-Travis County Reentry Roundtable

*Building Successful Strategies for
Reentry and Reintegration in Austin/Travis County, Texas*
www.reentryroundtable.org

PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, November 14, 2022
12:30-2:00 p.m.
Zoom

Meeting packet: <https://app.box.com/s/rumjr0pjkn500z5dqlz3g3vrfx47dwa>

Members present: Charles Moody (Chair), Donald Tracy (Past Chair), Cynthia Simons (RAP Representative), Sonja Burns, David Clauss, Helen Gaebler, Mia Greer, Carl Hunter, Cathy McClaugherty, Hank Perrett, Kaleigh Phelan, Paola Silvestre, Louella Tate

Guests: Happye Dyer (Care Guide Services), Kevin Lee (Urban Alchemy), Karen Boyd (Integral Care), Anabella Tarango (United Way for Greater Austin), Amanda Cassidy-Trejo, Quiana Fisher (ECHO), Beverly Johnson, LaKeidru Blaylock

- I. 12:30-12:40 p.m. – Welcome**
 - a. Guest Introductions
 - b. Advocacy Fellow Update – Amanda Cassidy-Trejo
 - This month, Amanda began working on Annual Report with WNA, put together content for the newsletter, facilitated the November RAP Meeting, and participated in the first RAP Visioning session for this year's Peer Network deliverable.
- II. 12:40-12:45 p.m. – Voting Items**
 - a. October 2022 Minutes
 - A membership quorum was not present in this meeting to take action on any voting items.
- III. 12:45-12:55 p.m. – Quarterly Above & Beyond Award**
 - Paola Silvestre was chosen as this quarter's Above and Beyond Awardee for dedication to the Roundtable's mission and involvement in Building Promise USA's HIRE Initiative. Paola opted to give her donation to BPUSA.
- IV. 12:55-1:30 p.m. – Governance Structure Fishbowl Activity**
 - a. **Fishbowl #1: Persons who are system-impacted**
 - Invitation: What is the good, the bad and the ugly of your involvement as a system impacted person engaging with the Reentry Roundtable and participating in Planning Council meetings? How do you think an updated governance model could better center the experiences and needs of

folks directly impacted by the criminal justice system?

- The Roundtable is not always being realistic when looking at systemic problems, especially when it comes to geography. With the demographic changes of Austin, we need to engage more at pre-release to understand where people will be going after release because most people are pushed out of Austin due to affordability. Need a better understanding of the reentry services in the areas surrounding Austin/Travis County.
- The Roundtable has come along way, but we are still behind. Still haven't discussed or decided what to do to support people who are exiting incarceration to centralize resources and services. What can the Roundtable provide? Sometimes it feels like we do a lot of talking and not a lot of doing. We need to really focus on action and change policy and address stigma.
- Not enough work being done to change how people are viewed. One way to address stigma is to have system-impacted folks at the front of the movement for culture shift.
- Policy and advocacy should be a huge priority, there needs to be changes in law in order to hold government officials accountable
- Could not find resources from Reentry Roundtable when first released, so the Roundtable needs to be a stronger navigator and take some of the burden of navigating reentry services off of individuals
- Utilized Reentry Roundtable as a meeting place but have not effectively coordinated resources. The Reentry ecosystem is here, but still people work in silos.
- Fear that Executive Committee will not have enough lived experience, worried about leadership pipeline
- Shouldn't there be a pipeline from RAP to the Planning Council? Needs to be more cohesiveness between RAP and Reentry Roundtable, which will also help RAP attendees be more involved in policy work, involvement in decision-making processes and see impact
- Lived experience on Executive Committee should not just be 1 representative, but 50-75%
- So overwhelming to keep track of appointments and meetings when you are early in your reentry journey; could try to coordinate with TDCJ Reentry

b. Fishbowl #2: Past & Present Executive Committee Members

- Invitation: What is the good, the bad and the ugly of your involvement as a Roundtable Executive Committee Member? How do you think an updated governance model could update, enhance, and expand the Roundtable's capacity and offer leadership opportunities for more participants in the network?
 - Good: meet regularly as an Executive Committee and move forward during those meetings, don't often get stuck. Bad: Sometimes did not have a great handle on what's next. The Strategic Plan helped see the needle moving. Meeting times and frequency make it difficult though because many people aren't able to give this amount of time for free.
 - Good: Opportunity to participate and move the needle. Have a chance to share your opinion and debate out decisions and be heard. Bad: Sometimes you come in and the agenda is already set, and the Roundtable is already moving a certain way and there is not a chance to turn it. Can give opinion but there may already be things in the works. Already existing history and context you need to learn and can take a while to understand the dynamics. Ugly: hard to balance the needs of the many Roundtable constituencies
 - Challenges with the huge time commitment. In a leadership role, you put in dozens and dozens of hours each month by leading workgroups and projects. Many hours working

alongside WNA to move projects forward.

- Co-executive chair positions were used in the past to alleviate some of the burden and spread responsibilities more widely. Could be something the Roundtable does again.
- Could build more support within RAP to help create that leadership pipeline
- Currently, flexible schedules are necessary to fully participate in Executive Committee which is a big barrier
- Create space for more members to have an impact. Could we build in a mechanism for engaging more people in the deliverables and hold space for making decisions in work groups, rather than having those steps already decided? Opportunity to co-create workplans for each goal.
- Very supportive and in-tune Executive Committee, very good experience so far, but it would be helpful to have more system-impacted persons involved especially with intersectionality in mind. There should be a more even ratio of system-impacted folks. Compensation for the time is really important for system-impacted folks as well. It is contradictory of the Roundtable's values to ask for system-impacted folks to share their experience without any compensation.
- Is there intentionality in the strategic plan to align with the organizations represented in the Planning Council? We know that the Roundtable has value to the people who participate because people stay engaged for a long period of time, but there could be more goal alignment

c. Fishbowl #3: Roundtable Guests

- What is the good, the bad and the ugly of being a guest at Reentry Roundtable Planning Council meetings? How could an updated governance model provide a more welcoming and inclusive space for those who are not current Planning Council members but are interested in working towards an improved reentry system?
 - Guests feel a little lost most of the time. Once guest introductions are over, I still feel disconnected. The good part is that this meeting is consistent and meets regularly. Find it frustrating when the experiences of families of someone who was incarcerated aren't talked about enough in this space. Often family members go make relationships with employers, parole officers, etc.
 - Would be helpful if there was a mission statement or blurb to share in the chat at the beginning of each meeting. Something to help direct guest contributions. Really appreciate the consistency of this meeting time though.
 - Really appreciate this conversation about what is working and what is not working regarding governance structure. Governance structure work is very hard, especially to do so intentionally and carefully.
 - Is the purpose of this space around networking and policy? Advocacy and resources? It would be helpful to clarify the mission, for Planning Council meetings especially, because that helps shape who is in the room. Sometimes there isn't much movement if the goals are too big. Appreciate the consistency as well. Feel like there is a different collection of people than in other community meetings.
 - What would it look like and feel like to get rid of voting members all together and to engage from a place of community if there is no hierarchy? It could help guests feel more connected.
 - Website is well-populated, there is a lot of transparency with past meeting minutes, Zoom link, and signing up for newsletter. But don't post agenda for upcoming meetings publicly, so many guests come in blindly and don't know what will be discussed.

- Prioritize guests and people with lived experience, rather than prioritizing voting members
- Want more action-oriented items and status updates, more ownership and next steps for participants, clarification of roles and responsibilities

V. 1:45-1:55 p.m. – Chatterfall Reflection

WHAT IS A QUESTION COMING UP FOR YOU AFTER HEARING THESE FISHBOWL CONVERSATIONS?

- How to incorporate meaningful, but manageable, opportunities for those with lived experience to participate in planning / activity of roundtable
- Why don't we have more system impacted folks either as guests or as council members
- what are the next steps
- Can RAP be a nonprofit supported by the Roundtable community?
- What would it look like and feel like if system-involved people were leading in this space?
- How to facilitate involvement for justice impacted individuals as we broaden opportunities
- Is our work on the round table meaningful impacting the lives of those with lived experience?
- How to make sure that the skills of people with lived experience that we will be compensating has the training and skills they need to participate?

IF WE WERE 10x BOLDER, HOW WOULD YOU SUGGEST WE CHANGE THE ROUNDTABLE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE?

- People with lived experience would be leading the way supported by the organizations
- Allow system involved individuals to take the lead, set the agenda and make bold changes now
- Pay people as consultants
- Have the entire Exec Comm be comprised of system impacted people
- Shifting to networking and organizing

VI. 1:55-2:00 p.m. –Member Updates & Announcements

- For Roundtable announcements, join our community on Mobilize. Here is the [Mobilize sign-up link](#) and [user guide](#).
- The December Planning Council meeting will be the annual potluck. It will be held on Friday, December 9th from 11:30-1pm at Grassroots Leadership. All are invited, and you are welcome to come for the whole time or drop in when your schedule allows. [Here is the link to RSVP.](#)
- C2H's Annual Health Fair is this Saturday at the Boys and Girls Club, please contact Mia to attend. They will be giving away 250 turkeys at the event.
- In 2023, BPUSA with Indeed is opening up a grant fund for people exiting incarceration, will be \$500 a week for participants to help reach their reentry goals. Indeed is also funding a project manager position for BPUSA and supporting more HIRE events next year.
- C2H is working on a Tesla partnership. They will provide guidance to Tesla on their hiring processes for persons who are system-impacted.

NEXT MEETING

Friday, December 9th, 2022
 11:30 – 1 p.m.
 Grassroots Leadership