HB1980 Committee Meeting

Agenda

Date: August 24, 2023

Duration: 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Platform: Zoom

Attendees: Bonnie Newman Davis, Matt Conrad, Jonsette Calloway, Dr. Nakeina Douglas-Glenn, Bill Martin, Sheryl Garland, Dr. Faye Belgrave, Dr. Kevin Harris, Samantha Wheeler Marrs, Rhonda Keyes Pleasants, Dr. Clifton Peay, Dr. Leonard Edloe

# Discussion/Updates

* B. Newman Davis provided an introduction
* Approval of [August 10 minutes](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1z6otQG542HoqHS9DJkOzRu3Gv7c07N8564WnrjbSTjs/edit?usp=sharing) (Chairs)
* Workgroups presented progress updates (Workgroup co-chairs)
	+ Memorialization workgroup (Dr. Faye Belgrave)
		- Group met four times for 1.5 hours
		- Dr. Belgrave shared the operational plan document
		- Key points:
			* A feasibility study is needed to determine building capabilities
			* R. Keyes Pleasants expounded on FRC recommendations
		- S. Garland–Has Stephen Davenport seen this list?
			* They were turned over, but no input has been received as of yet.
			* Dr. Belgrave–Asked S. Davenport to look at recommendations and timeline and is very supportive of recommendations
			* M. Conrad–Reached out to S. Davenport who expressed strong support provided these recommendations didn’t bleed into interment recommendations.
			* S. Garland–Need to highlight EMSWP recommendations during meeting with President Rao
				+ S. Davenport is the VCU entity responsible for the memorialization recommendations
		- B. Martin–We don’t have the names of the bodies dissected; would encourage additional research on this topic; t here’s so much more we can learn from what happened at MCV
		- Dr. Peay–Do we know how many bodies were impacted, or is additional research needed?
			* R. Keyes Pleasants–We estimate about 50 individuals, to include children
		- S. Garland–The unknown is how many were not retrieved
			* R. Keyes Pleasants–FRC has expressed interest in the feasibility of seeing if there are additional remains in the area that can be done with ground radar; however, based on the engineering of Kontos, we don’t know if we would be able to retrieve the additional remains in the area wells.
		- S. Garland–The opportunity to establish a memorial at the Kontos site is critical
			* B. Newman Davis–Sounds like all of this took place pretty quickly; Is Shawn still involved in the project in any way?
				+ Shawn worked with students over the summer with a film camp, and they developed a documentary; he does have involvement
	+ Community-based economic development programs (Dr. Douglas-Glenn)
		- Group has been meeting every week since July 11
		- Dr. Douglas-Glenn shared the workgroup’s operational plan
			* Grouped recommendations into themes
			* Skill-building was marked as a priority
		- Dr. Peay–Touted the plan’s role of the university and community

Development; are there any current partnership with Virginia Union?

* + - * Dr. Douglas-Glenn–MOU with VCU’s School of Engineering and VCU’s Wilder School.
			* Dr. Peay–Another point was the relationships with the community colleges. What’s the current status?
				+ M. Conrad–Trying to remove any barriers to enrollment; as of a few years ago, VCU was the only institution that accepted from start to finish the full block from VCCS.
				+ Any certificate program partnerships?

M. Conrad–VCU has a two-year transfer grant from individuals who come with certain

S. Garland–VCUHS has been working with Reynolds to set up pathways and pipelines for certified individuals; VCUHS has hired 60 certified medical assistants

Dr. Peay–Any relationships with the penal system?

Dr. Douglas-Glenn–Know of some smaller initiatives and Wilder School partnerships

Would this be an opportunity for incorporation?

Dr. Douglas-Glenn–Yale just graduated their first cohort of students. Something we can definitely consider.

* + - * + Dr. Belgrave–Can I ask some of the people on your workgroup? It seems some of the recommendations overlap with some of the recommendations I’ve seen from other entities at VCU

Dr. Douglas-Glenn–Shared the list

* + Community-based economic programs for individuals
		- S. Garland shared the workgroup’s operational plan
		- Dr. Peay–As a parent, I forced my kids to take summer programs. I think with VCU committing to the partnership with RPS is a good idea. Have we targeted the parents?
			* S. Garland–The workgroup realized the information from the forums came from a broad base of the community, but we didn’t know if they were parents, youth. Developed a survey specifically for parents, guardians, and youth; and we received 270 responses.
			* Dr. Peay–Morehouse had a program for accepted students where students came to the campus to get a feel for the university. How do we reach parents as an important part of that formula; if we can raise the level of literacy of pride.
				+ S. Garland–Great point, especially since we have so many first-generation students at VCU.
			* Dr. Belgrave–There are a lot of existing RPS relationships at VCU. I would want to make sure that every unit that’s doing work understands Project Gabriel’s efforts. I’ve talked with many community stakeholders and one pressing issue that didn’t appear has been mental health for youth, and that came out in two or three community forums. Is there space to think about how we engage in supporting psychosocial support (ex: empowering parents to be advocates).
			* S. Garland–It’s a great idea. It’s in the recommendations as “addressing support services for VCU students that create barriers to employment.” There was a concern as a workgroup addressing mental health as a broad-based issue was beyond the scope of the workgroup.
				+ We were very reluctant to say “addressing mental health across the community.”
				+ Thinking about it from a resource perspective, we did not want to put anything on here that we cannot deliver.
			* Dr. Peay–How many VCU alumni stay in the area? Is there a girth of VCU grads who stay in the area?
				+ S. Wheeler Mars–Last memory, there are about 75,000 alumni in the area. The remaining are in the Hampton Roads, NOVA area, and a sprinkling in other areas.
				+ There are a number of different programs to engage alumni for a lifelong partnership.
			* Dr. Leonard Edloe–What I’ve found is that the parents in the schools can lack certain skills; Can this be a focus?
			* S. Garland–Wondering if some of the strategies should be clarified to include parents and students.
			* Dr. Peay–Curious about Matt’s thoughts about this.
				+ M. Conrad–Isn’t aware of any direct involvement.
			* Dr. Kevin Harris–There was an acknowledgment of the importance of engaging parents (especially first-generation Pell Grant recipients) formally by VCU’s Strategic Enrollment Management, headed by Dr. Daphne Rankin. In VCU’s high school programs, there was a parent component, but the approach that we take is self-sustaining, teaching students how to utilize their parents and family to be a part of a support system; tried to strike balance in programs
	+ Scholarships (Dr. Kevin Harris)
		- The report will move forward with content lacking funding/development piece; outline the broad intent of what SCHEV guidance requested
		- Had a conversation with UVA’s enslaved commission advocacy group to determine the conversation they’ve had with UVA and how they constructed components of the program and how they kept the spirit of the efforts alive.
		- The program document will be completed
* Reviewed draft report outline (B. Newman Davis)
	+ Do we have in-house publishing capabilities?
		- M. Conrad–Will speak to Grant Heston
	+ B. Newman Davis
		- Any graphics?
	+ Dr. Peay–Would be nice to have some sort of picture.
	+ Dr. Harris–The Board still needs to act and then make recommendations.
	+ B. Newman Davis–Thoughts?
* Jonsette reviewed the timeline (Chairs)
	+ **Aug. 21-** Submitting recommendations to S. Garland and Dr. Peay
	+ **Sept. 1-5 -** B. Newman Davis to have draft report
		- **Sept. 6-** Dr. Higginbotham and Gabriel Commission members to review
			* J. Calloway to draft PPT
	+ **Sept. 8 -** Final report due to co-chairs
		- Recommendations/report sent to Brian McNeil for story/release
	+ **Sept. 11-** Final PPT Presentation
	+ **Sept. 15-** BOV meeting

# Action

# Next steps

* J. Calloway to share operations plan around the Commission’s additional three recommendations
* J. Calloway to work with B. Newman on any needed information for final report