

Tulsa City Council

Proposed Public Meetings

Exploring Equality Indicators Report for 2018 and 2019

Theme 4: Justice, Topics 1: Arrests and Topic 2: Law Enforcement

STATED PURPOSE AND GOAL

The goal of holding these Public Meetings is to welcome the public into our confidence as we further explore policy changes that establish a culture shift within the Tulsa Police Department that cultivates continual improvement and implementation of best-practices for Community Policing. We believe that holding open, transparent, and publicly accessible meetings to explore the findings of the Equality Indicators (EI) Report will help everyone in our community better understand why the numbers are what they are and what steps can be taken to improve outcomes. Goals for holding Public Meetings include:

1. **Building trust between the residents of Tulsa and Law Enforcement.**
2. **Improving transparency in city government especially as it pertains to justice.**
3. **Providing an opportunity for community stakeholders to share their expertise and insight as to why the numbers exist as reported and make recommendations to improve outcomes.**
4. **Ensuring that everyone knows the same statistical data and information, how it is reported and collected.**
5. **Leading to policy changes that will improve outcomes for Tulsans.**

This document serves to propose reasoning for initiating a series of meetings to explore the underlying causes of the Tulsa Equality Indicator (EI) results and findings in the category of Justice, as it pertains to Arrests and Law Enforcement for the years 2018 and 2019. The structure proposed is a draft open to suggestions from the City Council. It begins with the specific findings that have brought this need to our attention, is followed by reasons we feel that a Public Meeting structure would be superior to our usual task force method of exploration and finishes with finer details of the process itself.

THE NEED FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS

For more than 100 years there has been a pervasive sense of distrust in the law enforcement community by Black Tulsans. Tulsa has a long, history of systemic and institutional racism. The recently released 2018 Gallup-Tulsa CitiVoice Report: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/Citivoice> further demonstrates the current disparities in our city.

From Page 24 of the Gallup-Tulsa CitiVoice Report:

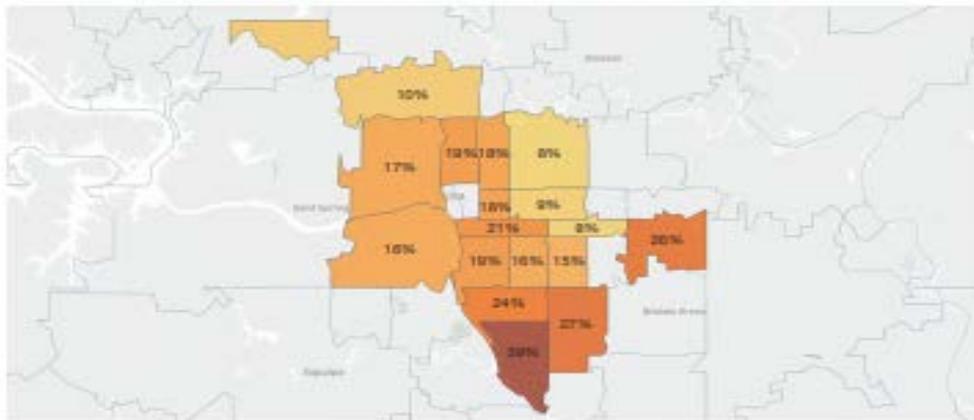
However, general trust in the police is high, with 43% saying they trust the police a lot and 35% some, but these positive sentiments are not uniform across Tulsa's diverse communities. In particular, only 18% of black residents trust Tulsa's police department a lot, compared to 39% of Hispanic and 49% of white residents. Conversely, 46% of black residents trust Tulsa's police department not at all or not much, compared to 22% of

Hispanic and 16% of white residents. Differences in attitudes concerning accessibility to police officers when questions or problems arise also fall along racial lines. Less than three in ten black residents agree or strongly agree that they have easy access to police officers in their community, while nearly half of white and Hispanic residents feel similarly (49% and 47%, respectively).

RESIDENTS HAVE VARYING PERCEPTIONS ON SAFETY, POLICING AND RACE RELATIONS

An essential aspect for fostering growth and well-being across all communities in Tulsa is the ability to make residents feel safe and secure. While 44% agree or strongly agree that the area where they live is always safe and secure, a substantial share of Tulsans (31%) disagree or strongly disagree. Perceptions of safety and security are strongly related to geography: residents in South Tulsa ZIP codes are more likely to strongly agree that they always feel safe and secure in the area where they live.

I always feel safe and secure in the area where I live in Tulsa. (%Strongly agree)



Results mapped by ZIP code and reflect the responses of residents within the City of Tulsa limits only. The following ZIP codes with fewer than 100 responses are excluded from the map: 74052, 74103, 74108, 74116, 74118, 74120, 74128, 75130, 74132 and 74145.

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Differences in attitudes concerning accessibility to police officers when questions or problems arise also fall along racial lines. Less than three in ten black residents agree or strongly agree that they have easy access to police officers in their community, while nearly half of white and Hispanic residents feel similarly (49% and 47%, respectively).

Whereas the findings in these reports are extremely alarming at face value, there are also other extenuating circumstances supporting the need to hold Public Meetings, such as:

- Actual or perceived scapegoating of individual officers or leaders for systemic issues.
- Morale challenges among officers who feel unfairly vilified by the community and need a good opportunity to share their perspective.

- Actual or perceived dismissal of the concerns of the Black community.
- The grand opportunity for improved transparency and oversight provided by the upcoming creation of the Office of the Independent Monitor.
- The failure of previous municipal task forces and commissions focused on justice and community policing to provide adequate perception of commitment and willingness to take action for positive change and outcomes that improve the health, safety and welfare of all Tulsans as well as for visitors to our City.

Therefore, a more formal, structured meeting process is recommended.

PROPOSED TOPICS TO EXPLORE IN A SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

This proposal outlines holding Public Meetings to explore the following two topic areas of the EI Report regarding Theme 4: Justice. The following is excerpted from the 2018 Equality Indicators Report for Theme 4: Justice 2018 score 35.33 out of 100 (2019 EI Report is forthcoming in April)

Topic 1: Arrests scored 35.67/100

1. Indicator 28: Race & Juvenile Arrests scored 33/100
2. Indicator 29: Race & Adult Arrests scored 38/100
3. Indicator 30: Gender & Arrests scored 36/100

Topic 2: Law Enforcement scored 23.33/100

1. Indicator 31: Race & Tulsa Police Department Employees scored 18/100
2. Indicator 32: Gender & Tulsa Police Department Employees scored 32/100
3. Indicator 33: Race & Officer Use of Force scored 20/100

Whereas the City of Tulsa contracts employment with the Tulsa Police Department, these proposed Public Meetings will focus only on the Indicators and Scores associated with the work of the Tulsa Police Department as outlined in Topic 1: Arrests and Topic 2: Law Enforcement.

We recommend the City Council address Topic 3: Safety and Violence, from Theme 4, in a different, separate proceeding, be it through holding additional Public Meetings or by establishing a Task Force. We make the same recommendation for exploring the numbers behind Equality Indicator Theme 6: Services.

It is incumbent upon us as a legislative body to thoroughly, publicly, and inclusively explore the reasons behind these numbers being what they are, especially as they pertain to the Tulsa Police Department policies, practices, and culture affecting the areas of Topic 1: Arrests and Topic 2: Law Enforcement.

PROPOSED PUBLIC MEETING FORMAT

The Public Meeting process shall be devised as follows (*bear in mind this is a draft proposal*):

1. This draft proposal being submitted to City Council for questions, input, and adjustments.
2. This draft proposal being submitted to City Staff for additional questions, input, and adjustments.
3. This draft proposal being submitted to the public for additional questions and comments at a City Council meeting.
4. A City Council vote to decide to adopt the plan to hold Public Meetings.
5. In consultation with City Councilors and Staff, dates set to host the meetings.
6. Consultation between City Council staff, Community Service Council, Resilient Tulsa, Tulsa Police Department, and the appropriate other entities to identify who shall be called to speak on behalf of specific findings.
7. Councilors gather input and anecdotes from constituents regarding these two topics.
8. Hosting the public meetings with all city councilors in attendance in a manner most accessible to the public.
9. After all Public Meetings are conducted, the City Council will make recommendations for policy changes focusing on improving outcomes for all.

In reviewing best practices for how other municipal legislative bodies conduct exploratory public meetings, we propose the following:

1. The Public Meetings be held at City Council Chambers at a Special Meeting immediately following a regularly scheduled Wednesday meeting, on or about 5:30 p.m.
2. That the Public Meetings be live-streamed on the Tulsa City Council Facebook Page and via TGOVOnline.com The video coverage should be archived and linked to the City Council website and social media after each Public Meeting.
3. That all nine City Councilors are present and actively participating at each public meeting.
4. That four to six experts, determined by the City Council, be invited to share their insight and experience as a panel for each meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING PROCEDURE:

1. The Council Chairperson opens the meeting, welcoming guests, outlining the purpose, goals, and format. (5 minutes)
2. The Vice Chairperson will keep and record time for each speaker.
3. Each invited Panelist introduces themselves and gives an opening statement as it pertains to the meeting topic. (5 minutes each)
4. Each City Councilor gives an opening statement as it pertains to the meeting topic. (5 minutes per Councilor)
 - a. Councilors are encouraged to gather input and anecdotes from constituents prior to the Public Meeting and to incorporate those constituent stories as part of their opening statements.
5. Each City Councilor asks questions and receives answers from the panel of experts. (3 minutes per Councilor)
6. Comfort Break (10 minutes)
7. Each Panelist can make additional remarks, answer questions posed more in-depth, request clarification, etc. (5 minutes per Panelist)
8. Each City Councilor has additional time ask more questions or respond to statements made during the previous dialogue with Panelists. (3 minutes per Councilor)
9. Each Panelist has additional time to clarify, finalize and summarize their statements. (3 minutes per Panelist)
10. City Council Chair – Thanks the Panelists, Councilors, Staff, and Attendees. Announces the Next Public Meeting and Adjourns.
11. At a regular Council meeting on a week prior to a Special Meeting scheduled to address a particular equality indicator, the Council will include a public comment item for that equality indicator. Comments will be limited to a total of 60 minutes and up to 3 minutes per person. Public comment will not be allowed at the Council's Special meetings.

Meeting #1: Arrests – Adults

Understanding and addressing racial and gender disparities in police arrests of adults and current practices in place to improve outcomes.

Potential Panelists: Community Service Council Representative, Office of Resiliency Representative, Tulsa Police Department Representative, Tulsa County District Attorney,, Community Leader or other representative determined by a majority of the Council, and Tulsa County Public Defender.

Meeting #2: Arrests – Youth

Understanding and addressing racial and gender disparities in police arrests of youth and current practices in place to improve outcomes.

Potential Panelists: Community Service Council Representative, Office of Resiliency Representative, Tulsa Police Department Representative, Tulsa Public Schools Campus Police Department Representative, Tulsa County District Attorney, and Tulsa County Public Defender.

Meeting #3: Law Enforcement – Race & Officer Use of Force

Understanding and addressing racial disparities in police use of force and current practices in place to improve outcomes.

Potential Panelists: Community Service Council Representative, Office of Resiliency

Representative, Tulsa Police Department Representative, Tulsa County District Attorney, and Tulsa County Public Defender.

Meeting #4: Law Enforcement – Tulsa Police Department Employees

Understanding and addressing minority and gender underrepresentation in the police department and current practices that are in place to improve recruitment and retention of minority officers in the department.

Potential Panelists: Community Service Council Representative, Office of Resiliency Representative, Representatives for HR, Recruitment, and Training Departments at the Tulsa Police Department

PROPOSAL SUMMARY STATEMENT

City Councilors and Staff should engage in an ongoing dialogue to gather input to fully design a Public Meetings process that is transparent and effective. We must do our due diligence as a Council to explore the numbers behind the Equality Indicators Report as they pertain to Theme 4, Topics 1 and 2. Time is of the essence as we consider the Mayor’s proposed FY 2019-20 plan to establish the Office of the Independent Monitor and review the updated 2019 Equality Indicators report forthcoming in April. There are multifaceted issues surrounding the topic of Justice as it pertains to Arrests, Use of Force, and Employment Practices within the Tulsa Police Department.

As representatives of our constituents and the legislative body for our municipality, it is imperative that we do the work necessary to thoroughly explore the information and data we have received. It is clear from the discussions already held surrounding these reports that the Council needs adequate time not afforded through our standing committee meetings to inquire more deeply into the various data we have received thus far including the 2017 CALEA Report from TPD, 2018 Equality Indicators Report, and 2018 CitiVoice Tulsa Index Report. The best process for meeting our responsibilities as representatives elected to serve as the legislative body for the City of Tulsa is to hold open, transparent, public meetings as outlined in this proposal.