

MISSION STATEMENT

We collaborate with allies to eradicate personal, institutional, structural and systemic racism for Black and Brown People. Beginning with ourselves, our Rochester community, our nation and the world, we will work towards creating systems of universal justice, equity, fairness and equality. We will create safe spaces that enable difficult conversations in order to understand, educate, empower and advocate for policy changes and will provide a venue for lifting the voices of people experiencing gross injustice.

In attendance: Kathleen FitzPatrick, Pastor Wanda Wilson, Kanza Chatman, Shirley Bond, Ralph Carter, Brigit Hurley, Jemuel

Meeting Agenda, March 8, 2021, 6 pm on Zoom

1. Opening Prayer
2. Greetings and Introductions
3. Volunteer to take minutes
4. Approval of February Minutes
5. Review the mission statement with suggestions from the RocACTS Board.
6. Update: Markeisha and Kanza: Review of previous position paper on police reform
7. Update: H.A.L.T. pushing for passage in the NYS Legislature
8. Email outreach to RocACTS constituent congregations
9. Interest in the Task Force Containers: Legislative Initiatives, Research, Actions, Advocacy, Education
10. Advocacy: Update: Plush Dozier, Shonda Williams, Keyvin Chatman
11. Additions?
12. Closing prayer.

1. Opening prayer - Kathleen
2. Greetings and Introductions - Answer the question "What brings you here?"
3. Volunteer to take minutes – Brigit Hurley
4. Approved meeting minutes from February meeting
5. Kathleen suggested that we start with agenda item #9, Task Force containers

Kathleen stated that she has come to think that "Action" should be a part of every container, not a separate one. We don't want to create silos. Let's think about what we're doing and how we can be effective with a structure that is porous, making it easy to reach out to other activists. Others agreed.

Kanza asked if we had seen the video of the mother with her 3 year old daughter being pepper sprayed. She asked "What can we do?" and encouraged us to get into the fight and support the reform. The training and laws need to change. The police don't even think they have to follow the law and protocol. They don't take into account the trauma they are inflicting on children, and that the trauma might develop into a hate of police. They don't see people as human. There's no compassion, no empathy. What if this was our family member? We need to find out how to reform the police. Sometimes the police are not bad, they have fun events, but then they turn around and cause trauma.

Kathleen asked Kanza how she feels about her own children. Kanza replied that there is a fear that goes with having a Black son. I wonder, will they ever be on the other side of the TV screen? It's really scary, you just never know. Sometimes I talk to my daughter about justice and I tell her that I don't think we'll get even a quarter of the way we need to go while I'm alive.

Kanza said she just saw a movie about an anti-lynching law that didn't pass in 2020! There is so much work to be done and so many systems that have been building for years. We need people with passion on all of these systems.

Pastor Wanda wanted to offer some hope and encouragement. We got PAB done in 3.5 years! I thought we wouldn't get it done in my lifetime. We have the right board now. We just need the disciplinary powers. Racism is the original sin, once it is dismantled it will impact all systems. Wanda is grateful there are youth to pour into.

Jamuel said he wanted to echo Pastor Wanda's comments, that he is feeling optimistic. We have a lot of pain but the George Floyd bill will radically transform towns and cities and policing in the U.S. We've lost people we care about, we have inhumanity. We need to change our feelings into legislation, and advocate at the city, state, and federal level. We should keep a running list of accomplishments.

Jamuel's second comment is that there are a lot of people who are tired and fed up. People don't understand how they can change the system. They don't know what they can do. I'm willing to join in this effort.

Kanza: I really appreciate this encouragement!

Ralph asked for clarification on our containers – is one of our containers the PAB in general. If yes, what is PAB doing. I heard the Executive Director speak and he had a really good presentation with very good data.

Pasta Wanda explained that we need to be pushing for more funding for PAB for staff and investigations; they need subpoena power. In addition to money, we need to advocate for police reforms in Executive Order 203. There are other good things, like requiring that RPD applicant be approved by a community panel before they enter the academy.

Kathleen summarized our action items:

- 1) When there is an incident with the police we should investigate it and show up at press conferences.
- 2) We could learn more about the PAB by attending meetings of the PAB Alliance. Pastor Wanda said everyone can attend, the more the better. Rev. Wilkinson and Roberta Davis are the RocACTS representatives.
- 3) We can keep our congregations informed about the PAB.
- 4) Kathleen will send out information about the PAB Alliance for those interested in attending.
- 5) We will look at commenting on or endorsing the PAB's recommendations for the Executive Order 203. Brigit will draft a letter that Kathleen will send out so we can all make suggestions, edit, etc.
- 6) Wanda will get Kathleen information about workshops being held on Tuesdays and Saturdays on Zoom.
- 7) Ralph will share a link to the PAB Executive Director's presentation.
- 8) Kathleen suggested that we deal with the rest of the agenda via email, and that we think about groups we might like to invite to come speak to us.

Pastor Wanda offered a closing prayer.

Next meeting: April 12, 2021 at 6:00 pm.