

KENOSHA COUNTY
RACIAL & ETHNIC EQUITY COMMISSION

First Report
September 22, 2022

As Kenosha County’s first Racial and Ethnic Equity Commission, we did not have a map to navigate the ocean of these complex community issues. This report does not describe a destination, but rather charts our voyage so far.

I. Work Activity

- Monthly Commission meetings
- Establishment of Working Groups composed of Commission members and selected community volunteers: Law Enforcement & Judicial System; Education, Physical & Mental Health; Housing & Economic Support.
- Independent study by Commission members.
- Working Group information-gathering and data collection, assembly – particularly re Kenosha County Sherriff arrest/ imprisonment and hiring data and relevant policies.
- Meetings of Working Groups.
- Issued letter in opposition to Act regarding Anti-Racism and Anti-Sexism Training for Public Sector Employees, 2021 SB 410; 2021 AB 414.
- Due to the broad scope of workgroups and the enabling Resolution which created it, on June 16 the Commission decided to place on hiatus the Education, Physical & Mental Health and Housing & Economic Support Working Groups; Commission as-a-whole to focus on racial and ethnic equity issues in law enforcement until decided otherwise.
- Community listening sessions: August 10 at Human Services Building; August 17 at Kenosha County Center; September 12 at Bradford Community Church, Kenosha.

II. Other Actions to Date

- Initial review of data provided by Kenosha County Sherriff's Department arrest data appears to indicate disproportionate arrests of Black individuals, particularly Disorderly Conduct, Possession of Marijuana and "Other Offenses."

III. Goals for Next Six Months

- Further analyze arrest data; explore refining data to assess impact on certain populations; seek Departmental position re any apparent racial/ ethnic disparities in arrests and possible explanations for such disparities; explore possible remedies respecting any such disparities and offer recommendations.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing the hire, retention, and promotion of under-represented populations by the Kenosha County Sherriff's Department, particularly sworn positions.
- Assemble data linking Kenosha County economic development and the availability of housing.
- Gather data concerning the availability of low-income housing in Kenosha County, generally, and with respect to Black constituents and other under-represented populations that show disparities.
- Working with Kenosha County IT to develop a page on County website devoted to the Commission's work.
- Process and develop responses to input and suggestions received at Community Listening sessions

The Committee wishes to recognize the substantial contribution of its former members, Joshua Cao, Sharon Pomaville, and Trinity Williams, and employees of Kenosha County government, including but not limited to Joseph Cardamone, Kelsey Hubeler, John Jansen, Jennifer Kopp, Jennifer Madore, Michelle Peralta, Clara-lin Tappa, and Jennie Tunkieicz.