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3 FERGUSON COMMISSION HEARING

4 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

5 APRIL 13, 2015

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CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL

13 #1 MARK TWAIN CIRCLE

CLAYTON, MO 63105

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A P P E A R A N C E S

Co-Chairs:

Reverend Starsky Wilson
Rich McClure

Commission Members:

Becky James-Hatter
Patrick Sly
Rose Windmiller
Gabriel Gore
Daniel Isom
Reverend Traci de Von Blackmon (absent)
Scott Negwer
Bethany Johnson-Javois
Brittany Packnett
Rasheen Aldridge, Jr.
T. R. Carr, Jr.
Grayling Tobias (absent)
Felicia Pulliam
Kevin Ahlbrand (absent)

Court Reporter:

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1 (Starting time of the hearing: 5:16)

2 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: I'd like to say good
3 evening to everyone. If we can, I'd like for you to
4 end the last part of a very engaging conversation that
5 you're having and begin to come forward to take our
6 seats for the ninth Ferguson Commission meeting. I'll
7 wait a few moments so our commissioners can come in.
8 Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

9 We're going to start tone with a quick call
10 to order. This is the ninth Ferguson Commission
11 meeting that's being called to order now by Bethany
12 Johnson-Javois, yours truly, here at Clayton High
13 School located at # 1 Mark Twain Circle, Clayton,
14 Missouri. Commissioner who are in attendance tonight
15 behind me, would you please state "present" as your
16 name is called. Reverend Starsky Wilson?

17 REVEREND WILSON: Present.

18 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Rich McClure?

19 MR. MCCLURE: Present.

20 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Kevin Ahlbrand has an
21 excused absence tonight. Commissioner Rasheen
22 Aldridge, I see you, so I know you're present. Pastor
23 Traci Blackmon? Gabe Gore?

24 MR. GORE: Yes.

25 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Becky James Hatter?

1 MS. HATTER: Present.

2 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Dan Isom. Scott

3 Negwer?

4 MR. NEGWER: Present.

5 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Brittany Packnett?

6 MS. PACKNETT: Present.

7 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Felicia Pulliam?

8 MS. PULLIAM: Present.

9 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Pat Sly?

10 MR. SLY: Present.

11 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Grayling Tobias has an
12 excused absence for this evening. Byron Watson?

13 MR. WATSON: Here.

14 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: And Rose Windmiller?

15 MS. WINDMILLER: Present.

16 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Thank you so much for
17 the call to order. At this time we're very happy to
18 say we understand that "What high school did you go
19 to?", in some circles is a very charged and loaded
20 statement, but I just have to break that for a second
21 because this is my high school. So I want to say --
22 yeah, you can clap, too, because you're from Clayton.
23 I want to say how grateful I am to be back at Clayton
24 High School. One of the reasons I'm standing here the
25 at mike, and I also like to do while I'm here, is to

1 introduce the Clayton School district Superintendent,
2 Dr. Sharmon Wilkinson. If you please come to welcome
3 us here tonight? Please receive her. Thank you.

4 MS. WILKINSON: Good evening. As was said,
5 I serve Clayton School District as Superintendent of
6 Schools, and my name is Sharmon Wilkinson. And it is
7 indeed my pleasure on behalf of the Board of
8 Education, our students, teachers, parents, and the
9 entire Clayton community to welcome the members of the
10 Ferguson Commission and your guests to Clayton High
11 School.

12 In Clayton, we believe that our schools and
13 our community are learning environments. Our
14 students, teachers, parents, and community members
15 embrace the opportunity to learn from, and with each
16 other. Our vision for our students seeks to develop
17 leaders who shape the world through independent,
18 creativity, and critical thinking. We work to
19 educate, to inspire, and to empower. Our role is not
20 unlike the one that lies before the members of this
21 commission. Each of you serve on this commission
22 because you're leaders. Individually and
23 collectively, you endeavor to shape something vital
24 and transformational. Independence, creativity, and
25 critical thinking will be foundational on your journey

1 to successfully fulfill the charge set forth for you.

2 Your work to try to a new path toward
3 healing and positive change for the residents of the
4 St. Louis region will require listening, learning, and
5 building on the collective efforts of the many who
6 have invested themselves in this process. I, along
7 with many others who are following the work of this
8 commission, eagerly await your recommendations and
9 stand ready to do our part to make the region a
10 stronger place for everyone. Thank you. Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Thank you so much, Dr.
13 Wilkinson. At this time, we have a treat that is
14 before us. We were reached out to by the Atonement
15 Lutheran pre-school class who is in the front row to
16 my right under the direction of Karen Wyles. They
17 would like to sing a song for us as our opening
18 selection tonight called "Caring, Sharing." May I
19 please ask you to join us in a round of applause and a
20 selection from Atonement Lutheran pre-school class.

21 (At this in time a song was sung.

22 Followed by applause.)

23 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: We would be so honored
24 if the Commissioners could take a photo with the young
25 children. Would that be okay with the parents in the

1 room? I think we have a green light to do so.

2 MR. MCCLURE: What a wonderful job by
3 Atonement Lutheran pre-school class. Thank you so much
4 for being here, for your parents, and for your
5 teachers, we are so grateful. Thank you again. My
6 name is Rich McClure. I'm one of the co-chairs of the
7 commission, and Bethany being unwilling to follow that
8 act, pushed me right up here and said, "It's your
9 turn." I don't know what really more can be said. The
10 phrases from the song, we all must take care of each
11 other, caring and sharing, summarizes our work most
12 appropriately. So thank you for starting us off in
13 such extraordinary fashion.

14 Tonight the Commission's work focuses on
15 developing policy recommendations that seek to address
16 the root causes of systemic and structural inequities
17 in our region. And as such our focus is on
18 institutional and structural racism. We'll learn
19 together that racism exists on multiple levels. We
20 heard in our last Commission meeting from the Kellogg
21 Foundation America's Healing Framework. And we looked
22 at that national model. Tonight's breakout sessions
23 are going to focus on individual levels, in addition
24 to our need to address institutional and structural
25 issues. We must reflect on how each of us

1 individually must be personally impacted by the
2 thoughts about racial inequity and racism and how it
3 impacts our interactions with others. So our time
4 together tonight, while it's brief, we hope we can
5 plant some seeds of awareness and understanding on how
6 we can build future skills and action. So we want to
7 acknowledge Rudy Nickens and Dr. Keira Banks and team
8 of small group facilitators who are here tonight and
9 worked with the Commission over the past month to
10 design tonight's experience. So as we have in the
11 past, we're going to start with polling and
12 understanding who is here and some facilitated
13 communication. Bethany is going to present the
14 findings from the last meeting. So we would like to
15 call on Jerrica from Vector Communication. Jerrica is
16 not going -- I'm sorry -- Monique is going to do
17 this. Are you ready, Monique Thomas.

18 MS. THOMAS: Thank you. That was amazing,
19 wasn't it amazing, you all. Great. So, we're going
20 to start off with polling. To do that, it's our
21 tradition, our practice, to get a sense of who is in
22 the room so we have a demographic set of questions and
23 then topical consideration. So if we can start giving
24 those out, passing those out. Does everyone have a
25 key pad already? Raise your hand if you don't have a

1 key pad. Okay. So we'll get that going. So, we have
2 less than ten questions for tonight, but just
3 generally -- just so, has anyone not used a key pad
4 before? Okay. That's fine to raise it higher.
5 That's okay. So generally I want you all to look at
6 your key pad. You will see that you have ten letters
7 and ten numbers on the key pad. Those are places
8 where you will have answers, and the answers will
9 course with those specific either letters or numbers.
10 So we'll have a test question, a practice question, to
11 get you ready. So let's go to that practice question.
12 So I'll ask this question and then I'll give you a
13 chance to indicate the number or letter that
14 correspond most closely with your truth and choice
15 that best fits you. So now you will see to the top
16 right hand corner there is polling closed indicator.
17 If you're entering numbers or letters right now, it
18 won't plug in. So I'll let you know when polling is
19 open and then when it's closed. You will enter the
20 last answer that you have given. If for whatever
21 reason you change your answer at the last minute, the
22 last one is what will be captured. So polling is
23 closed, but if you can open polling now. So polling
24 is now open. The question is, "What is your favorite
25 color?" A is black, B is brown, C is blue, D is green,

1 E is orange, F purple, G is red, H yellow, I is white,
2 J is other. Okay. It looks like we're still entering
3 it. The bottom corner you see how many seconds we
4 have before it's closed, four seconds left. And now
5 it jumps to red indicating that polling is closed.
6 And so 24 -- a quarter of you have indicated that blue
7 is your favorite color. That's pretty consistent with
8 the last time. So that's fine. That's great. That's
9 the practice question. Okay. And so we're going to
10 dive into the other questions. We'll start again
11 demographically and then for tonight we are setting up
12 for the next meeting. So there is some cases where we
13 have topics that help us with today's content. This
14 will be helping us with next meeting's content around
15 health. Okay. So let's go to the next one. In what
16 -- are you ready? All right. You look ready.

17 In what demographic area is your primary
18 home or residence located? A) St. Louis city, B) St.
19 Louis County, C) St. Charles County, D) Jefferson
20 County, E) Franklin County, F) St. Clair County, G)
21 Madison County, H) Monroe County, and I) is other. If
22 it's not represented there. All right. Polling is
23 open. Ten seconds left. All right. Polling is
24 closed. Okay. About 50 percent of you are from St.
25 Louis city, 41 -- excuse me -- St. Louis County is 51

1 percent. St. Louis City 41 percent, and the rest of
2 that minority is kind of throughout the other --
3 excuse me -- other geographic areas. That's good.

4 All right. Let's go to the next one.

5 Okay. In what geographic area is your primary work
6 and/or school? And for the case if you're retired,
7 you can put other. Okay. Open it up. A) the city,
8 B) the county -- St. Louis that is. C) St. Charles
9 County, D) Jefferson County, E) Franklin County, F)
10 St. Clair County, G) Madison County, H) Monroe County,
11 and I) other. About five seconds left. Okay. So,
12 consistent fairly, 44 percent St. Louis counsel; 39
13 percent, four out of ten, they work or they go to
14 school in the city.

15 Next question. With what gender do you
16 identify? So select one, A) would be female, B) is
17 male, C) is other, and D) is decline. Polling is now
18 open. About ten seconds left. Polling is closed. 67
19 percent of us are female, 33 male.

20 How would you describe your ethnicity or
21 race? A) is white, B) black, African-American, C)
22 Hispanic/Latino or Spanish origin, D) Asian, E)
23 American Indian or Alaskan native, F) native Hawaiian
24 or Pacific Islander, G) other, H) is decline. Polling
25 is now open. About 15 seconds left. Great. Polling

1 is closed. 62 -- six out of ten of you are white;
2 21 percent black, African-American, ten percent Asian,
3 eight percent other.

4 So the next question; in what age group do
5 you belong? We like to know self identified and
6 anonymous, so please be truthful. Okay. A) is 21 and
7 under, B) 22 to 34, C) 35 to 44, D) is 45 to 54, E) is
8 55 to 64, F) is 65 and over, and then G) is decline.
9 So polling is now open. You guys are rolling. So we
10 have fairly -- not evenly distributed, but we have --
11 it's split between 22 and -- between 22 and 44 years
12 old. About 40 percent have 22 between 45 and 55. And
13 then we have 55 and over seem to be about over 40
14 percent. All right. Let's go it to the next.

15 So this is the eighth (sic) meeting of the
16 Ferguson Commission. How many previous meetings have
17 you attended? Now, working group meetings do not
18 count here. But we appreciate you attending working
19 group meetings as well. So now you must indicate the
20 number you have attended for the full Ferguson
21 Commission meeting. A) none; this is your first one,
22 B) one to two, C) three to four, D) five to six, E)
23 seven to eight. Polling is open. All right. So most
24 of you this is your first time. Welcome. 54 percent
25 have never attended another one. Then we have 20

1 percent who have done three to four. And then we have
2 seven percent who is done all of them. Thank you for
3 your commitment. All right.

4 So now we're going to go to the topical
5 consideration bringing us into the next meeting which
6 is health. So the text is a little small, so I'll
7 read them slower, answer choices. So what three
8 issues have the greatest impact on our community
9 health and well-being? A) insurance, B) ability to
10 pay for health services, C) environmental hazards like
11 air pollution, D) neighbor safety, E) distance to the
12 health care provider, F) ability to understand and use
13 health information, G) access to fresh fruits and
14 vegetables, H) stress, I) health care that is
15 sensitive to cultural differences. So you're able to
16 put three in. Polling is now open. 15 seconds left
17 okay. It's closed. So, it looks like our highest top
18 three look like ability to pay for health services is
19 top, followed by neighbor safety, followed by
20 insurance coverage. Okay.

21 So the next question focuses on impact.
22 What three issues have the greatest impact on our
23 communities ability to access health care services.
24 Okay. A) having health insurance, B) cost of health
25 care, C) transportation, D) finding a provider /doctor

1 that will see you, E) understanding how to find your
2 way through the health care system, F)
3 physician/health center hours of operation, G) being
4 able to get time off from work, H) length of time or
5 days or weeks to see physician after appointment is
6 made. Polling is now open. Again, select three.
7 About 20 seconds left. Okay, it's closed. So it
8 looks like a quarter of you are saying the top three
9 issues, rather, would be cost of health care, followed
10 by having health insurance, and then it looks like --
11 if I can see it -- understanding how to -- excuse me
12 -- understanding how to find your way through the
13 health care system, so navigation are the top three.

14 So that concludes it. Thank you for
15 participating. So with this, if you could again take
16 your key pad and raise it up high. That's good. We
17 are going to be collecting those key pads. They don't
18 do anything else but operate this, so we're going to
19 swiftly collect them. We thank you for giving that
20 in. They get lost all the time without us doing this.
21 So I appreciate you collecting them and we'll go down
22 the hallways with it. Thank you again. And now I'm
23 going to be giving it to Bethany Johnson-Javois, our
24 meeting director, who will be doing recapping from
25 last polling and some of the contents that came out of

1 the smaller groups.

2 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Every crowd has a
3 different flavor and this crowd is a clapping crowd.
4 We appreciate that. What I'd like to do is direct
5 your attention to the right of the screen to the
6 commissioners as well to talk about the summary. Many
7 of you are new here. For each session we look to do a
8 brief recap of the learning that we've had from the
9 small breakout groups that has been part of our work.
10 Tonight it's focusing on racial equity and
11 reconciliation. So, again, like you did tonight, we
12 did electronic polling as well. And you can see that
13 according to last time that we met, almost nine of ten
14 attendees reside in either St. Louis County or St.
15 Louis City. Eight of ten attendees work or attended
16 school in either St. Louis County or St. Louis City.
17 And the gender distribution, a little bit more female
18 than male last time that we met. And equal proportion
19 of attendees identified as black or white. However,
20 in the smaller categories, it's about 18 percent. We
21 are seeing a little bit more in that last meeting of
22 people of color not identifying as black than we have
23 in the past. And age distribution of attendees, you
24 can see here 35 to 44 were 19 percent, 56 to 64 were
25 26 percent, pretty evenly with 22 to 34 years

1 distribution of age. So results of racial equity and
2 reconciliation recap. We asked the question and this
3 is response that we found, 94 percent of attendees
4 reported they do not avoid conversations about race.
5 The majority of attendees that came do not believe
6 reverse discrimination exists. However, you can see
7 that there is some disparity within those numbers as
8 well. Four of ten attendees are confident racial and
9 ethnic relations will improve in the St. Louis region,
10 which is a bit higher than what the national average
11 is. And here we ask two questions, which we got a lot
12 of feedback about, and I thought was interesting.

13 First question, 72 percent agree on
14 focusing on black and white relations. And in
15 subsequent question nearly 80 percent agreed that
16 moving beyond black and white relations was also
17 important. And so we see that as an "and", black and
18 white relation is important and need to focus beyond
19 that is also very important to us. 51 percent
20 strongly disagree that the Commission's work should be
21 achieve a color blind society. Practically, all in
22 attendance, literally 99 percent -- that's as close as
23 a consensus as you probably will get -- did not
24 believe the civil right era eliminated all racial
25 barriers. Almost eight of ten attendees agree or

1 strongly agree people of color do, in fact, carry
2 negative beliefs about themselves and their race. 95
3 percent of attendees believe white people experience
4 benefits and privileges that are not afforded to
5 people of color. Almost three of four attendees had a
6 definition of racism that equaled prejudice plus
7 power. And then you can see that other percentage of
8 our definitions, ten percent overt discrimination
9 against persons or groups, 11 percent negative
10 attitude and behavior, five percent defined it as
11 prejudice. Eight of ten attendees defined privilege
12 as systemic advantage last time we met.

13 And now we're in the public discussion, is
14 when the breakout groups -- this is the summary of
15 what we heard came back. First within the public open
16 mike, we heard comments that range within three
17 specific areas; a call for healing. Number two the
18 impact of the economic gap, which is the crisis that
19 needs to be addressed. And third area of public open
20 comments was need for invocation in diversity. I'll
21 let you read that for half a second. We'll keep it on
22 the screen.

23 Now, so within the frame of racial equity
24 and reconciliation, the first question that we posed.
25 If you could imagine a St. Louis that actively

1 promoted and supported public discourse on racism, in
2 your opinion, what would that look like? And the
3 responses that we found came into these categories;
4 dedicated and intimate community creating
5 opportunities to create relationship was important.
6 And spaces must be intimate and transformative and
7 safe. Must include members of faith community. The
8 second area of interest was coming forward to lean
9 into the discomfort. And encourage discomfort to get
10 to core issues, but we also have to create safe spaces
11 so people can get real and be honest about their
12 feedback. And third, an important priority area is to
13 engage youth in school systems by creating courses
14 that reach student racial equity as early pre-K by
15 mandating classes in civics again and ensuring
16 educators are trained for these very in depth topics.
17 The next question, if you could imagine a St. Louis
18 that actively promoted and supported public discourse
19 on racism, in your opinion, what would that look like.
20 Continued innovative and synergized communication.
21 We've got to go beyond the choir that we're preaching
22 to; encourage people to participate in racial dialogue
23 to include discussion around transportation, food.
24 Let's not talk about race for race's sake. Have
25 guided and structured conversation that can be

1 moderated in person or virtually using technology.
2 Consistent theme of challenging media bias and need to
3 address the implicit media bias. Broaden to true
4 regional discussion and dialog, which we are hopeful
5 plants a seed within that arena, and one that didn't
6 fit into a category, but we thought what's important
7 to include is need to live a life modeling
8 inclusivity. We can't just talk about it, you got to
9 be about it. The next one, what would your personal
10 contribution to healing look like. So getting out of
11 the systemic realm into what could I personally do.
12 The first is address implicit bias in institutional
13 policies by monitoring, by advocating to elected
14 officials, by using our personal voice in agency,
15 educate, health care, education system where some of
16 the inequity is playing out. Confront my own bias,
17 which is self awareness work, which is so important.
18 I can acknowledge it, I can challenge cultural norms
19 in my own pattern of behavior; where I eat, where I
20 shop, where I take my children, for example. And
21 third honor reconciliation 24/7. I can call out
22 inappropriate comments in ways -- in a way that can be
23 heard, maybe some are unheard and they can be heard.
24 I can help support youth activism and priorities that
25 young people have set in community and ways that

1 perhaps others can't do. And third, I can use the
2 Golden Rule. Media, communication, and arts is a
3 mechanism with which many talked about was very
4 important and personal contribution through stories,
5 through art spaces, through media as well. The open
6 and showing empathy. It sounds simple, but what we
7 heard from our audience is I can smile and I can say
8 hello, I can be authentic, and I can reinforce a
9 spirit of cooperation.

10 Next category to promote racial dialog and
11 healing. The program specifically was called out
12 promoting witnessing whiteness programs. I can get
13 people engaged in dialogue. And I can talk to and
14 teach each other about systemic racism with impotence
15 on commonalities in the process. Okay. Thank you so
16 much for listen and thank you for your feedback. I
17 just wanted you to know in every session we
18 incorporate your thoughts. And these thoughts are
19 posted on the stlpositivechange.org website under the
20 meeting tab where you can always down load these for
21 your use as well. Thank you. Good evening, everyone.

22 MS. FRANKS: So as you can see our agenda
23 now is the public open mike session. There were a few
24 individuals who participated and included their name
25 inside of our fish bowl. So we will go ahead and

1 start. This will allow for the public to speak with
2 the commissioners a little bit about their general
3 opinions, comments, suggestions, opinions. We will
4 also take note of this. So please note that we are
5 hearing everything that you are saying and
6 recommending it. Yes, sir. If we do have time. I
7 will be sure as these individual did already put their
8 name in the jar. Okay. You will have two minutes. I
9 will have a timer up here and I am watching. Okay.
10 We will start with Renee Carroll. Please forgive me
11 if I mispronounce your name. Renee and right after
12 Renee, we will have Ruth Meyer, so just be on standby.
13 And after Ruth we will have Caroline Fann. Also,
14 please introduce yourself, name, first name, last name
15 and city or organization that you are with.

16 MS. CARROLL: Good evening. My name is
17 Renee Jack Carroll and I'm the executive director of
18 the Diversity Awareness Group. I live in the city of
19 St. Louis and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to
20 you all tonight about some the wonderful resources in
21 this community that we have been doing diversity and
22 anti-bias work for the last two decades. We'd like to
23 submit a letter to the Commission from all of the
24 organizations that I'm going to list in a second. And
25 at this time I'd like to read two sections of that

1 letter. On behalf of the Anti-Defamation League and
2 World of Difference Institute, Diversity Awareness
3 Partnership, Focus St. Louis, NCCJ St. Louis, YWCA,
4 and Area Diversity Practitioner Taquik Wahib
5 (phonetic) we'd like to present the following. We
6 believe dismantling racism in our community is the
7 first step. However, we are clear that this takes a
8 continuum of efforts including awareness building,
9 training, listening, and healing. The organizations
10 around the table have consistently offered
11 opportunities both locally and nationally, and are
12 prepared to do more as we continue to rebuild our
13 city. We believe that it is possible for all people
14 in our community to feel safe and protected wherever
15 they may be. Our community has pretty clearly
16 experienced a deficiency of meaningful social justice
17 dialogue and understanding for people affected by
18 social, racial, and economic inequity. We believe the
19 first step on the journey to build a community free of
20 racial fear and tension begins with talking with, not
21 to or through, each other. Again, on behalf of Karen
22 Arresty from the Anti-Defamation League, myself, Eyem
23 Aconday (phonetic) from Focus St. Louis, David
24 Martineau from NCCJ, St. Louis, Andrea Bratist
25 (phonetic) YWCA, and Taquik Wahib, Area Diversity

1 Practitioner, we submit this letter to you to make you
2 aware our resource exist. We are here. We are
3 committed to doing this work. And we are happy to be
4 a resource for you in any way that we can. Thank you.

5 MS. FRANKS: Thank you, Renee. Ruth.

6 MS. MEYER: I'm Ruth, I'd like to speak to
7 my white brothers and sisters, if we could just play
8 for a moment a reverse role. Since we tend to -- we
9 whites -- judge ourselves by our best examples and
10 judge African-Americans by the worse. For this
11 example, we say we'll think of the people that have
12 been shooters in high schools like Columbine, grade
13 schools like New Town. All those shooters are white
14 males. So by your worse example, I see four people
15 here that are inherently violent. You are white
16 males. Now, African-Americans, that's not -- I mean
17 that's not so. We're going to have you -- there is
18 not going to be racism towards this. So if anything
19 happens towards African-Americans I wonder what that
20 would be like. Because that's African-American. That
21 must be the environment or maybe it's a parent, but
22 that's not who they are. But, again, my white
23 brothers and sisters, you see, if we talked about the
24 best example -- and that's what we do for whites and
25 African-American is worse example, but if we reverse

1 it and make the whites the worse example, then you fit
2 the description. And you would have to been monitored
3 especially by the police because there is inherent of
4 violence in you. It's a natural part of who you are,
5 right? Because you're the worse example and that's
6 the only way we judge. If we reverse what we do, we
7 whites do, and reverse it. I haven't loss you on
8 this? No? Good. So, what do we do, we have to keep
9 a close eye on you, have to monitor. You do fit the
10 description. And very important, since you are
11 inherently flawed, you don't ever get input on what is
12 the normal, and what would be the ideal that all would
13 have to strive for. That would only be
14 African-Americans that would tell us what would be the
15 ideal because you see we have this inherently flawed
16 violence in the while male. I hope that helps.
17 Thanks.

18 (Applause).

19 MS. FRANKS: And Caroline.

20 MS. FANN: Thank you for being here with us
21 tonight. My name is Caroline Fann. I am president of
22 OCA St. Louis. It is an Asian-American organization
23 here in St. Louis, and we've been around for 42 years.
24 So, I was actually up in Ferguson in the fall working
25 closely with a number of Asian-American businesses who

1 were deeply impacted. And I actually -- my husband
2 and I moved here about nine months ago from New York
3 City. And so what I was doing with them was helping
4 them apply for loans and grants to rebuild their
5 businesses even before the major confrontation had
6 happened. I guess what I'm curious about, you know,
7 considering that Asian-Americans here in Missouri,
8 according to the census have actually increased by 26
9 percent in the past ten years alone, is what kind of
10 in-language outreach is being done to immigrant
11 communities by the Ferguson Commission. Because race
12 in American is, you know, moved beyond just black and
13 white. And then the other thing I would like to say
14 is as part of our efforts to be an a civically-minded
15 organization, here we are doing a joint event with OBS
16 and Better Family Life the weekend of May 30 and 31
17 around Asian-American African-American solidarity from
18 the civil rights movement to the present. And I would
19 encourage those here in the audience to join us.
20 Lastly, I did notice that the resources which were
21 very thoughtfully put together for us tonight do not
22 list an Asian-American organization as a resource. So
23 I'd like to offer OCA St. Louis as that resource.
24 Thank you.
25 (Applause).

1 MS. FRANKS: Thank you so much. We have
2 time to go ahead and complete the public open mike.
3 We have Edmund Acosta and after Edmund, K. L.
4 Williams. And if we also have time, sir, then I'll
5 also provide the mike -- if we have time, I'll also
6 provide the mike for you. If we can have Edmunde
7 Acosta. Please introduce yourself to the Commission
8 where you're from, and organization, and where you
9 live.

10 MR. ACOSTA: My name is Edmund Acosta. I'm
11 a retired economist, civil servant economist and live
12 in University City. Three topics; the topics are
13 early education. Second one is voter rate
14 participation. And the other one is how to possibly
15 inject the topics and findings of the Commission into
16 the national elections that are up coming in a couple
17 years. We have some gems of ideas and thoughts and
18 challenges right here that will be articulated, but
19 how can that be extended into something akin to how
20 Department of Justice report became something really
21 important for the entire country. So for education,
22 especially education -- early education, how can
23 individuals help beyond the school environment, beyond
24 the school contexts. Through conversations here, I'm
25 sure we have plenty of ideas and knowledge of entities

1 such as libraries, such as science academy that's out
2 there, whose only mission is to engage youth. And
3 thanks for Superintendent Wilkinson for mentioning
4 critical thinking. So within early education, the
5 more we can do with regard to early reading,
6 arithmetic, and critical thinking. We have a nice
7 foundation. Kudos to all those involved in raising
8 the voter participation rate in the recent election in
9 Ferguson. So love to have your suggests, your
10 thoughts, your ideas as to how to increase that. And
11 of course, similarly, what are some ideas by which we
12 could make this set of discussions go well beyond
13 local and into state levels and national levels.
14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. FRANKS: Thank you so much, Edmund. K.
17 L. Williams, please introduce yourself to the
18 commissioners and you have two minutes.

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Hello, I'm K. L. Williams.
20 I am the director of Institute of Justice and
21 Accountability. We deal in police community relations
22 and our motto is building bridges. Not everything
23 that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be
24 changed unless it is faced. That's from James
25 Baldwin. Police officers are one of the few

1 profession that officer and individuals run towards
2 the gunfire. That's what officers do; not from it.
3 Law enforcement is one of the few professions where an
4 individual will risk their lives to save people they
5 don't know. That's a special kind of person. But one
6 thing we have to keep in mind is that we have
7 tremendous challenge in front of us, not only here
8 locally, but around the country. And that is dealing
9 with erosion of trust. Erosion of trust between law
10 enforcement and the community. If you think about it,
11 if you didn't trust your spouse, if you didn't trust
12 your significant other, what kind of relationship
13 would you have at home. Well, that's the relationship
14 we feel in the community right now. That lack of
15 trust is having a devastating impact on our community.
16 And one thing we have to make sure officers keep in
17 mind is that they will be held accountable. They will
18 be held accountable for their actions and they will be
19 accountable for the things that they do. But we as
20 citizens and officers must work together and find
21 common ground. Black lives matter; all lives matter.
22 We are a society and as a society we must believe and
23 continue to understand that we hold these truths to be
24 self evident, that all men are created equal. And we
25 have to work together to find solutions to these

1 challenges. We have to be able to step up to the
2 plate, and we have to be ready to answer and ask some
3 tough questions and be honest enough to give tough
4 answers. Because a lot of times people are not
5 willing to reach that deep into their soul to
6 redevelop the things that are there. I have been
7 involved in law enforcement well over 25 years, and I
8 don't like a policeman pulling behind me now under any
9 circumstances. I still got memories and it's a
10 challenge. Thank you.

11 MS. FRANKS: If you can keep it under two
12 minutes, we do have time for both individuals. Please
13 state your name and your city or organization which
14 you're from.

15 MR. ADDISON: I'm Scott Addison. You have
16 known me from afar for a number of weeks. And this is
17 a hard thing to address. I was an applicant for
18 research and policies management job that came up in
19 January and into February, that then segwayed into RFP
20 for data management services because the enabling for
21 hiring here was not really in place. And when this
22 came up, I felt like as I might have written something
23 of destiny because I have had my feet on these grounds
24 for a long time, and a lot of skills to put into it.
25 The process has been really arduous and opaque. And I

1 understand really well what was required in terms of
2 the essential task of synthesizing all this public
3 input and best professional knowledge and practices --
4 synthesizing that into an agenda. And the job really
5 needed to get done and the delays have really
6 compromised that job. The RFP was issued last month
7 and it's been in gestation for a while. I had
8 actually considered coming today and withdrawing my
9 application because it's gotten to the point with that
10 job so critical, basically you're making that person
11 either the mule or the goat in how this process works
12 out, and the outcome of this Commission's work. And I
13 got a call today from the state, Liz Pallazola, who is
14 the buyer for the state on this contract informing me
15 that now the RFP has been canceled and that the
16 Commission is reassessing how this work is supposed to
17 get done. We've had no disclosure at all about the
18 methodologies that are going this. How this stuff is
19 getting synthesized, what thought process is going
20 into it. And so I want to express my disappointment
21 with this whole process. To be honest, it's very
22 unprofessional. And I ask you to reassess your
23 reassessments. Thank you.

24 (Applause)

25 MS. FRANKS: Thank you so much. And last

1 but not least if you can please --

2 MS. BURKE: Good evening. My name is Sara
3 Burke. I live in the city. I own the City Studio
4 Dance Center. And in some way more importantly, I'm a
5 commissioner on the Regional Arts Commission. I am
6 disappointed that there aren't -- and I know it's not
7 your issue -- but there aren't any active artists on
8 this Commission. Arts have historically broken
9 barriers in ways that we could not have. I had the
10 privilege of dancing with Katherine Dunham and being
11 in her company. And it forever formed my life. And
12 I'm on the Diversity Awareness Partnership, but to
13 dance with people you couldn't sleep or eat with, you
14 can't forget that. And it's very disturbing to me
15 that we're not using the arts through this commission.
16 That you don't have someone -- and I have tried
17 different ways -- on the commission we have a lot of
18 power. So we're trying through Dr. White, we're
19 trying many ways to get someone on this commission to
20 work with us. I also think I have a question that I
21 keep working. Who is at your dinner table? Having
22 been a part of the Dunham family. Our dinner table
23 looks -- well, it just looks much better than this
24 commission. There is just everybody in the world and
25 we're all very enriched. And we all stayed together,

1 and I think that's a question as we go along that you
2 might want to ask and think about is who is at your
3 personal dinner table. These meetings are great, but
4 this doesn't really relationship build in deep and
5 authentic ways. So I urge you to have dinner and have
6 coffee or whatever it takes, but, you know, travel.
7 We all went to Mexico. I mean we got to lighten up a
8 little. It's also about making friends and having
9 relationships. And I think in the end for me that was
10 the most invaluable part about the Dunham experience
11 forever changed my personal life. Please look into
12 ways you can include the arts because we have really
13 broken barriers through the arts. Thank you. And I'm
14 here to help if you need any -- any entrees or
15 anything I would be so happy to make it happen. There
16 are many of us are the commission that would like to
17 see this happen. And we do have a new executive
18 director who happens to be African-American and we are
19 extremely proud of that. It was a long search. So
20 hopefully maybe she could be on your commission. I'm
21 sure she would not be happy I just volunteered her,
22 but thank you for listening.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. FRANKS: Thank you everyone for your
25 comments. I will now pass this on to --

1 REVEREND STARSKY: Good evening. So this
2 is the deal. I say this to my church folks sometimes
3 on a light Sunday after Easter, if it's a light crowd
4 and then it's your responsibility being here to make
5 up for the noise that your neighbor would have made if
6 they were here. And for the record, I will note this
7 is the lightest crowd that we have had. This is the
8 first time we've had a meeting here in the county
9 seat. This is the ninth meeting of the commission.
10 It's our second meeting talking about racial equity
11 and reconciliation. And it is the lightest crowd we
12 have ever had about one of the most intractable issues
13 that we have to discuss in our region. The reason
14 that we have found together is 42nd among the top 50
15 metropolitan communities across the United States in
16 economic mobility. The reason we have found together
17 has 18 year life expectancy longer here in 63105 than
18 it does in 63106 in north St. Louis. And yet for this
19 meeting we have so many empty chairs that you can tell
20 that we're politicians. Because good advance people
21 would have set a really small group of seats in the
22 center, so that it looked really crowded for all of
23 these cameras. Would that we could have expected that
24 when we discussed this issue that it's more that
25 relational to be clear; that it's more than who sits

1 around our tables, and more than who happens to go to
2 our church, synagogue, or masque. It is about equity
3 and measurable outcomes as much as it is about
4 relationships. And so, we come so that at least those
5 who are here and thus deputized to invite others into
6 the conversation will have a bit of common vocabulary
7 for the way forward.

8 The pontificating preacher in front of you
9 is Reverend Starsky Wilson. I have the opportunity to
10 serve as co-chair of this Commission and I have been
11 excited about that responsibility, but I am concerned
12 that as a region we have reached a bit of Ferguson
13 fatigue. I am concerned that we have gotten so deep
14 into discussions about issues and infrastructure and
15 the capacities that we need in our respective
16 organization that we have forgotten that we got to
17 this place because of police violence, brutality, and
18 need for accountability thereof. And in as much as we
19 must address all of these root causes and chase them
20 down like the dogs that people -- like Dr. King called
21 them -- those three dogs of militarism, extreme
22 poverty, and racism, that continue to rack us in our
23 communities and in our nation. We must chase them.
24 We must not forget that we got here because of a young
25 man being gunned down in the middle of the street in

1 his neighborhood walking to his grandmother's house.
2 No matter what we think about that event and because
3 we have found along the road that, as many of us who
4 enjoy the privilege of middle classness like me, or
5 whiteness like many gathered in this room, there are
6 those who do not get to come to spaces and places like
7 this. People who have come to eight of our meetings,
8 but for whatever reason due to intractable issues of
9 transportation and difficulty of our region that we
10 decided this is such a regional discussion that we
11 must come to the county seat, and such a regional
12 discussion that we must go to south county, such a
13 regional discussion that we must go to St. Charles,
14 this is the first meeting they can't quite make it to.
15 We who believe enough to make it and are privileged
16 enough to keep appointments on our own calendar
17 because we determine when there is enough gas in the
18 car to make it, have additional responsibility this
19 day to take vocabulary from this room, to take
20 experiences that come together in this place, to help
21 others to know yes, you should have been there.
22 Because this is your region and it is hurting.

23 I am pleased that in order to help us with
24 garnering that common language and perhaps going forth
25 with greater zeal than that which has been shown in

1 our region for the core issues over the course of the
2 last eight meetings, we have a friend and expert, a
3 leader for our region to guide us through the coming
4 conversation. Mr. Rudy Nickens is an experienced
5 facilitator, educator, and entrepreneur with strong
6 background in cultural diversity, business management,
7 and community development. Currently, Mr. Nickens is
8 director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division
9 of Missouri Department of Transportation. He oversees
10 the transportation work force ensuring that it follows
11 federal and state mandated statutes on diversity and
12 affirmative action programs. Additionally, he is
13 focused on initiatives to create inclusive work
14 environments for all employees. Previously, he served
15 as executive director of St. Louis Black Repertory
16 Company, the nation's largest professional
17 African-American theatre company. Prior to that he
18 was vice-president of St. Louis 2004, a civic
19 organization created to act as catalyst for community
20 development. While in St. Louis 2004, he worked on
21 initiatives related to work force diversity, zero
22 tolerance for hate and cease fire program to reduce
23 youth and gang violence. Mr. Nickens has taught
24 school of communication and media studies as a member
25 of the adjunct faculty for Webster University and lent

1 his skills and education to Planned Parenthood of St.
2 Louis as well as National Conference of Community and
3 Justice. For over two decades he has conducted and
4 educated and trained hundreds of local and national
5 and international organizations in the areas of work
6 force diversity, leadership development, cultural
7 competence, and conflict resolution. He specializes
8 in leading efforts on eliminating effect of
9 internalized racism and eliminate sexism and violence
10 against women. Mr. Nickens was a Rockefeller
11 Foundation next generation leadership fellow. Most
12 recently, he received an ethics projects inaugural
13 ambassador Andrew Young Award for outstanding
14 leadership.

15 To guide us in the presentation on creating
16 a community of equity, I invite you to welcome --
17 since you all are a clapping crowd -- Mr. Rudy
18 Nickens.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. NICKENS: Commissioners, director,
21 audience members, it is a pleasure to be here to share
22 this evening with you. Rich, if you thought it was
23 hard following those young people think about what
24 it's like following Starsky, the pontificating
25 preacher. But of all the things -- the very kind

1 things that Starsky said about me, and I appreciate
2 them all, the one I value the most is the word
3 "friend". That's what matters most to me.

4 So, as Starsky said, my name is Rudy
5 Nickens. I am volunteering with Ferguson Commission
6 for this year, with the support of Missouri Department
7 of Transportation to allow me to spend time away from
8 my desk in Jefferson City, and to be in St. Louis and
9 to help think about these issues and to work very
10 closely with Bethany and the staff of the Ferguson
11 Commission. It was a real treat to get to work with.
12 This is meant to be a conversation tonight. It is
13 meant to be a chance for the Commissioners to think
14 about some common language that Starsky and Rich said.
15 This is meant for us to move into small groups and
16 have dialog with skilled volunteer facilitators who
17 have lent their time this evening to come.

18 So I'm going to just walk through some of
19 the key concepts that we put together for the
20 community and for the Commissioners to think about and
21 lead us to where we hope to go. This evening the
22 overview includes why is the Commission doing this at
23 all; why is this important. Remembering to have some
24 common language about definitions of racial equity,
25 and the pieces that underlie it. Thinking about a few

1 very strategic goals that the Commissioners and
2 Commission and the community might take on, and some
3 recommendations that are emerging from the working
4 group. This group, like all the other areas of the
5 Commission's work, have put together teams of people
6 who are volunteering their time and talents to help
7 think about what it is that helps satisfy the issues
8 of the executive order, but really moves our community
9 forward in meaningful ways. Now we are here because
10 disparity associated with race continues to be a
11 significant part of our life experience. That you can
12 -- that Starsky talked about zip codes and life
13 expectancy circumstances. There is no area of our
14 lives that we can't look at the differences that race
15 plays in the outcomes of our lives from health to
16 wealth to education to incarceration, to involvement
17 with the criminal justice system. To ever aspect of
18 having a good life there is a measure that our racial
19 identify plays in those outcomes. And the Commission
20 in its work was charged to look at what are the root
21 causes, what happened in Ferguson last August, and
22 what happened in the community that set it off in the
23 way that it happened. And one of the things that we
24 have to look at all the dimensions is the way that
25 race plays out in that. If you were here for the last

1 Ferguson Commission meeting we had a representative
2 from the W. H. Kellogg Foundation who began to
3 introduce language around racial equity. It's really
4 important that we look at not just feelings and
5 attitudes, but really looking at bigger picture and
6 goal of understanding what racial equity means. What
7 does it mean to move toward a community with fairness
8 and justice are the hallmarks of what our work is. It
9 describes the work and actions that are designed to
10 address the historic burdens that people have carried.

11 Racial equity is accomplished by
12 identifying the systemic discriminatory policies and
13 actions and behaviors that have lead to some of the
14 disparities that we speak of today. And then the
15 community that embraces racial equity also looks at
16 systemic remedies. It's not just identifying the
17 problem, but it's also like what do you do about it.
18 How do you look at it in a deep and meaningful way and
19 introduce actions that address changes in that
20 formula.

21 Again, I want to build on to call out the
22 work of the wonderful Kellogg Foundation presentation
23 from last month because it gave us some language that
24 I think we need to hold on to. So, racial equity
25 isn't something that people talk about a lot. Note

1 these differences between diversity and inclusion and
2 equality, and then what racial equity is. You know
3 diversity is what we got. We have always had it. We
4 have always been in any room we're a diverse group of
5 people. In every room we're a diverse group of people
6 because diversity measures all the ways that
7 human-ness shows up; our age, our gender, our sexual
8 orientation, our color, our religion, and our family
9 background. All that makes us diverse. And it's just
10 about noticing dimensions of human-ness. And racial
11 equity is not the same as inclusion. Diversity is
12 kind of a noun. Inclusion is a bit of a verb, where
13 you start to think about what do you do with diversity
14 around you and how do you harness diversity into
15 making organizations function better and using
16 different backgrounds and talents that people have to
17 come up with stronger solutions in your organization.

18 And racial equity is not the same as
19 talking about equality of -- it's not been treating
20 everybody the same or wanting everybody to be the
21 same. In fact, difference is a value. It's an asset.
22 It's not a deficit. So we're not just looking at
23 doing the sameness or giving everyone the same thing.
24 Because what might work for you might not be the same
25 that works for your neighbor and everyone has to have

1 solutions that are unique and address who were they
2 are along this line. So racial equity, the thing that
3 we're moving toward in this project, are looking at
4 what does it mean to have a community where fairness
5 and justice are the outcomes that we're going after.
6 That's a big, big thing. That's the goal we want
7 people to wrap their minds around. What does it mean
8 to have a totally just society. Not one that
9 everybody is same or just counting the ways that we
10 vary from each other.

11 So we talk about race all the time. We
12 talk about it and we talk about it. And one of things
13 that we should note is that -- and I'm not asking for
14 your agreement on any of this, just so you know. This
15 is not about saying I want everybody to think the
16 same, but the Commission deserves and desires to be
17 transparent; to let you know what they think and what
18 they are operating under, and what the belief system
19 that they carry. And so one of the things we talk
20 about when we talk about race, we wholly subscribe to
21 the idea that there is but one race. We wholly
22 subscribe to the reality that we are all of us 99.9
23 percent identical in our DNA, in our genetic makeup.
24 That there is no basis -- there is no scientific
25 basis for race as we understand it these days. What

1 we're talking about is race in our world as a social
2 construct. Something that got created for the
3 purposes of originally a benign concept just for
4 classification, that has evolved into something that
5 has a power dynamic, equity, and disequity associated
6 with it. And as I said earlier, race is unfortunately
7 far too reliable a predictor of the outcomes of a
8 person's life in our society. We don't want to think
9 that it is, but it is still quite accurate in many
10 ways. It doesn't just talk about every one single
11 outcome, but it's -- it is a big factor.

12 Now, what's the difference between race and
13 racism. So, racism is the belief that some races are
14 inherently superior to each other, but not exclusively
15 that. That's the first part of the definition of
16 racism. Because does anyone believe that we don't all
17 have some biases? Of course, we do. Nobody -- not
18 one of us grew up in a society where we got treated or
19 taught to believe that all people were valuable and
20 that there was not some better or worse, more
21 important, more valuable, more intelligent, more good,
22 more powerful, less good. So all of us got some bias.
23 It would be impossible to not have gotten something.
24 So racism isn't just about having bias. It's bias
25 coupled with the systemic. And that's the most

1 important part of it. Institutional policies and
2 practices that have authorized those biases and
3 enforced that belief system into systems that allow
4 for disparate outcomes in our lives.

5 So the formula people always will give you
6 is racism equals prejudice plus power. It's not just
7 prejudice. Anybody can be prejudice and all of us
8 probably are. It is that prejudice, which is endowed
9 by the system that we live in that says the identities
10 on this side of it are more valuable, more important,
11 more intelligent, more beautiful, more good, more
12 deserving than others. And given the power by the
13 institutions, by the society to enforce those
14 differences.

15 There are many, many dimensions of racism,
16 but the one I want to make sure that I speak to is
17 racism is not about an individual set of feelings.
18 Many people get confused. So if I say let's talk
19 about racism, and you say I called you a racist.
20 That's not what it's about. It's not about looking at
21 what your feelings or my feelings or attitude is
22 about. When we want to talk about racism in the ways
23 it shows up in systemic and institutional manners, not
24 just feelings and attitudes. It's not just looking at
25 the individual ways that we got hurt or we got trained

1 or our minds got conditioned to believe things about
2 each other. But what are the ways, the institutional,
3 systemic, structural, cultural and environmental
4 dimensions of racism. Institutional -- any system of
5 inequity based on race can occur. You know, you got
6 to look at what the what we've endowed our systems
7 with. What policies and practices are in our
8 environment that cause racist outcomes from where we
9 locate hazardous materials in a community and
10 neighborhoods; why is it that we are more familiar
11 with and value some cultural practice beliefs and
12 attitudes than other. Why is it that we're familiar
13 with some and not of other, and deem some correct and
14 some incorrect, or some good and some not good. There
15 is a whole set of those things that we have to wrap
16 our minds around to understand the many dimensions
17 that racism is. And not so much thinking just about
18 how I feel about you or you feel about me. That's
19 interesting, and, of course, it's really better when
20 we treat each other as great, as the young people
21 said, when we treat each other well. That song they
22 sang today was awesome. And that was really good and
23 getting in our hearts and minds is critical work for
24 doing this. I wholly appreciate that, but this work
25 and work of the commission isn't just about making

1 sure we like each other. And making sure that we can
2 do -- what's the term -- the Kumbaya thing. It's
3 about making sure that we are working checking the
4 policies and systems that we are endowed with in our
5 community that affect the people's lives.

6 There was one of the questions that Bethany
7 spoke with earlier from the last presentation about
8 should this Commission's work strive for color blind
9 society. I don't remember how it was phrased. And
10 there was overwhelming response that said no, that's
11 not a good goal to have. And that's a great process,
12 I just want to say. At least in the room of the
13 people who showed up last month and, hopefully, beyond
14 in or community. People no longer hold out that a
15 color blind society is a good goal to have. Because
16 what we have learned what people have done with that
17 belief that color blindness a goal is that trivializes
18 it. It makes us invisible who we are as people. And
19 it's also rooted in when you say color blind it really
20 means can't we all about the same, right? And when we
21 say that, we don't use the word, but "Can't we all be
22 the same?", means "Can't we all be white?" "Can't we
23 all act like the white people act because they have
24 defined what good behavior is. Can't we'll all do
25 that. And a color blind society is one that doesn't

1 recognize -- it's rigid. And it doesn't have any
2 positive belief that race is really important. Can
3 any of you leave your race outside this room? If I
4 asked you to go outside and come back in here and be
5 your gender, be your age, but leave your race behind.
6 You can't do that; right? You can't separate yourself
7 like that. Nobody can. And so when we treat people
8 like well, I didn't notice that you have color, that
9 is not a truthful thing to say to anybody. And to
10 minimize the effect of the dailyness of having a lived
11 experience around race makes it different to engage
12 with people around this work. Are you with me?

13 So I'm going to move into this next slide.
14 I already moved to it. So that's micro-aggression. I
15 want to say a little bit about it. Well, the
16 definition is up there, but what's most important
17 around putting this in this presentation is it's not
18 just -- our work isn't just the policy, the de jure
19 and de facto policies of our society. Those are
20 important, and those are continue to be corrective --
21 be corrected. Things that we're looking A) we have
22 done a tremendous job of most of the -- at least the
23 legal remedies that we can do for the civil rights
24 era. Some work on the de facto behavior that we need
25 to work on. Still lot more to do there because

1 dejourret policies that we corrected didn't line up to
2 all of sudden everything goes well.

3 One of the ways that things stay in place
4 right now, though, the disparity stays in place or the
5 racism is experienced these days is, those little
6 things. It's the daily little things that people
7 endure. It's the daily assaults on their
8 intelligence, on their beauty, on their goodness, on
9 their value, on their culture, on their family, on
10 their identity. None of it is the stuff that's
11 against law. It's not against the law to treat
12 someone like they don't matter. You can't arrest
13 someone for setting up an institution where people
14 don't feel wanted or welcome or they don't see
15 themselves reflected in leadership, or where their
16 heritage or their culture isn't identifiable as
17 important. That's not illegal, is it? But it does
18 send the message and it does train people to believe
19 that "I don't matter". And micro-aggression is the
20 probably the most one of the biggest pieces of work
21 that we get to do right now is to look at what are all
22 the little pieces in my world, the little pieces in my
23 office, the pieces in my school, the pieces in my
24 neighborhood that I send message to you that suggest
25 that you are less than. That suggestion that you're

1 not as valuable. Where you don't even see yourself
2 represented. One of the greatest micro-aggressions
3 that we have is just leaving people out all together.
4 So if you don't see people who look like you, who
5 share your identity, who have your background, who
6 have your experience at every level of the
7 organization. The message gets in that I really don't
8 matter in this place. There are many kind of
9 micro-aggressions, micro-assaults. There are many
10 dimensions of them, but some of them are intentional
11 and most of them are unintentional. Almost -- and
12 what's really hardest to deal with is the ones -- it's
13 easy to identify the racist behavior where people
14 actually called it out, named it ugly things. It's
15 those things that look sweet, that sound kind, the
16 language. I don't know if white people know this, but
17 I'll say this one right now. So, one of the
18 micro-aggressions that many African heritage people
19 are sensitive about is, "Wow, you are so articulate."
20 Yeah, you know, that's not a compliment. You know --
21 do you know that's not a compliment. Because what
22 that suggests is that I looked at you and I expected
23 you to be stupid. And you opened your mouth and you
24 were smart. I can't believe it. Right, Felicia?

25 MS. PULLIAM: Absolutely.

1 MR. NICKENS: Now, most white people when
2 they say, "Wow, you are so articulate.", didn't think
3 they were being thoughtless or insensitive, did they?
4 They thought they were being complimentary and unless
5 you understand the weight and the background that goes
6 with certain parts of language and behavior, you
7 wouldn't even know. And most people won't bother to
8 tell you. And there are millions of daily little
9 things like that, little things like that. None of
10 which in and of themselves you would consider a cause
11 for discrimination. But the accumulation of them has
12 a serious effect on people, on their psyche, on their
13 health, on their attention, on their ability to
14 perform, on their willingness to participate and show
15 up. It's the daily little things that we also have to
16 be vigilant about.

17 So we've -- I skipped over.
18 Discrimination, you all know what that is; right? I
19 mean we've been dealing with that one for a long time
20 and much of the Ferguson Commission's work is about,
21 as Starsky put it earlier, you know what happened.
22 There was some discriminatory behavior that led to the
23 outcome that brought this team together. We have to
24 always understand that as well. And some of the
25 discrimination has a racial component to it; not all,

1 but some. Okay. So now we're going to talk through a
2 couple concepts, a couple minutes we're going to talk
3 about what we're doing tonight in our small groups.

4 So, most people have at least heard this
5 concept of white privilege; right? It's not a new
6 concept anymore. And we're saying white privilege,
7 but we're talking about race, but you know there is
8 privilege for all your identities depending what
9 conversation you have. So I understand as a man I
10 have no privilege. I understand that I live in a
11 society where Christian degeneracy exists, so as a
12 Christian person I get a lot of privilege for my life
13 as a Christian man. And I get that there is privilege
14 that I have as a person who is living without any
15 obvious disabilities. I understand that all parts of
16 your identity we have certain sets of privileges. And
17 in fact, all of us have both of experience of being
18 targeted by some form of discrimination as well as
19 receiving privileges of some form of it. And it's
20 really important that we look at that comprehensively
21 because if we're going to look at identifying key
22 pieces of white privilege, we also get to own that
23 there is more than just that kind of privilege and
24 that we go back and forth between nothing what
25 privilege looks like and not knowing what it looks

1 like depending on which conversation that we're in.
2 So we're focusing on white privilege because this is
3 conversation about race, but I want to continue to
4 translate this throughout your life experience about
5 where -- what other kinds of privileges do you have.
6 What other kinds of privilege do you have based on
7 sexual orientation, age, economic background, your
8 religion. All of it, it matters in understanding this
9 part of the conversation. So, white privilege,
10 though, for the sake of this meeting is about the
11 societal privileges that white people receive that
12 people of global majority do not. I use the term
13 people of the global majority in place of the term
14 minority as a way to remind people that people of
15 color are the super majority of the occupants of the
16 planet. That we get call minorities in certain
17 communities, but the reality is 85 percent of the
18 world is people of color. And to use the word
19 minority is actually a mistake. So, white people
20 receive a lot of benefits and privileges, access to
21 organizations, access to institutions, historical
22 advantages, inherited wealth, all sorts of things that
23 they weren't -- they didn't ask for, and they didn't
24 earn, and sometimes didn't even want, but they still
25 are invisible net of support that makes life easier in

1 many ways. It's that unearned part of it -- and it's
2 not that anything you have you shouldn't have. It's
3 just that how you think about it is what's important.
4 We're not asking people not to have good lives. We're
5 not saying to be -- not to think that everything you
6 got you got just because of your own effort. It's
7 part of, you know, the myth of meritocracy that we
8 grew up with the in United States, those of us who
9 lived in the United States, stories you got told in
10 the third grade, the one if you work hard, if you try
11 hard, if you apply yourself you, too, can have it all.
12 And that everything you got you got because of your
13 hard work. That does not include analysis of the
14 benefits and privileges that were allowed to you that
15 other people didn't get to have. It doesn't mean that
16 you haven't worked hard your whole life. I'm sure you
17 have. But do you know how many doors you got in just
18 because of your skin color. How many board rooms you
19 got accepted into just because of your skin color.
20 How many admissions to schools that you got in that
21 your skin color wasn't used against you. It's a whole
22 range of things that includes privilege. And we get
23 to look at that. Similarly, for people of the global
24 majority, we also get to look at what are the messages
25 that got into our minds about ourselves and people

1 like us that we have bought into, and what are the
2 behaviors and patterns and practices that we have
3 developed that actually work against our own best
4 interest. What are the bases that we have bought into
5 the myth of white supremacy. Some people call
6 internalized racism internalized white supremacy.
7 What are the ways we believe white people are better,
8 smarter, stronger, more important, more valuable, more
9 intelligent, more good than people of color are. What
10 are the ways we can look at our people of color and
11 not think that they are capable of success,
12 leadership, trustworthy. What are the images that we
13 have about who we are as people, individually and as a
14 group of people, that have gotten into our minds.

15 And I guarantee you that nobody lives in
16 this society without having bought some of it. It's
17 impossible not to have bought at least some of it.
18 The believe that racism has defined who we are and
19 that some people are better than others including that
20 about ourselves. And so the work for white people is
21 look at what are those things that I don't even pay
22 attention to that I get every day in my life that can
23 be associated with my racial identity. And the work
24 for people of color is what are the things, what are
25 behaviors that I engage in every day of my life that

1 are not in my own best interest. What are the ways
2 that I am doing things from -- yeah -- so, yeah. So
3 every time I choose chitlins over tofu. If I actually
4 know that one of the things that will contribute to
5 my illness, to my early death are things that I
6 ingest, but I ingest those things because I believe
7 they define authentic blackness, then I will do those
8 things. If I believe that this is a part of my
9 culture, and I have to do it regardless of the fact
10 that I know hypertension kills and this contributes to
11 that. That is one of the ways you can look at what am
12 I doing that's not in my own best interest. What are
13 the ways that if I believe that I am not very smart
14 because I went to a school that said I'm not very
15 smart, and I started to believe it. If every day I
16 went some place and they said little black child, you
17 can't do these things and I say yes, I can. And I do
18 them the best I can, but one day I buy it, and I give
19 up. And I say you're right. So the system of racism
20 gets at you, and then some of the stuff sticks to you.
21 And if enough of it sticks to you then you develop
22 patterns and behaviors that are against you having the
23 life that you deserve and want to have. So we get to
24 look at without blame because that's really important,
25 the insidiousness of it is that these things happen to

1 us not once not twice, but daily. And every
2 institution that we interact with, the information
3 comes at us about who we are and what we are. So it's
4 never helpful to blame people for their difficulties.
5 What we want to do is understand what those
6 difficulties are and figure out how we give the other
7 hand that we do to step outside of behavior, but never
8 to criticize or blame each other for the places where
9 we have gotten hurt and acted out certain things.

10 Some of the definitions that you will see
11 in here, there is a lot of research about the negative
12 effect of the mental and physical wellness,
13 addictions. Probably one of the key aspects of what
14 you see because of internalized racism. And I think
15 in the last decade or so you start seeing more
16 language around classifying it as trauma. I think it
17 was Joy Degree that called it traumatic post-slavery
18 syndrome for instance. So we're starting to see more
19 of mental health consequences in definitions of it.

20 And so now we're talking about our work
21 tonight. And because we had to have -- because we've
22 had some different experiences in the dailyness of
23 racism, though we've all experienced racism, but the
24 ways we've experienced it have been different.
25 Sometimes we have to have time together in different

1 groups to be able to dialogue about that. And so the
2 data that the commission needs to capture is data that
3 can only be captured from these breakout groups that
4 organize somewhat around racial lines. You know the
5 truth is, almost all groups -- almost any group we
6 have is going to be a mixed heritage group; right?
7 It's kind of impossible not to think that we all have
8 many lineages within us. And so, when we doing these
9 caucuses and we separate around race, we're doing race
10 the social construct. We're doing race, what is your
11 daily lived experience around this, recognizing the
12 similarities and humanness that makes us all
13 connected. But for the sake of gathering information
14 and really understanding racism, sometimes we have to
15 have conversations separately. Separation is never
16 the goal, it's a strategy. Building diverse,
17 connected communities is what we want, but from time
18 to time we have to break into small groups because
19 there are some things that people of the global
20 majority are just not going to say in front of white
21 people. But this needs to be captured in the records
22 as well. And there is some things that white people
23 are not going to say around people of color either.
24 And it's also needs to be captured. No movement can
25 be complete unless everybody's voice gets in there.

1 So you have to create safe, workable scenarios where
2 that can happen. So we're going to move in a minute
3 into these race groups, these racial caucuses. But I
4 want to remind you that when you go to yours, it's
5 about your lived experience as a white person or your
6 lived experience as a person of global majority. The
7 psychological and psychosocial effects of racism on
8 white people are really important to look at because
9 did anybody think that white people aren't hurt by
10 racism? Absolutely, white people are hurt by racism.
11 Even though the system allows for certain
12 opportunities and advantages, systemic, economic
13 advantages and stuff, the damage on people's humanness
14 is really important. So all of us, people of color
15 and white people have all been badly hurt because of
16 the presence of racism, all of us. The hurts look
17 different and manifestations look different. And we
18 get to come together in our different groups to
19 examine those.

20 So I'm going to move -- so finally, part
21 of this is to look for the Commission about what we're
22 trying to accomplish. For the Commission, I ask that
23 the Commission make sure that people leading this are
24 educated about the issues. It is really, really
25 important that the Commissioners stand on so the

1 legitimate platform, we are people who do this work as
2 we lead this work. And there has to be ongoing
3 opportunities for the Commissioners to dialogue about
4 it, to learn from each other, learn from the
5 community, to be engaged in community to understand
6 the depth of racism. That even though there is this
7 working group on racial equity that has been
8 developed, it's not just the racial equity work
9 group's job to think about the outcomes of racism.
10 Every one of the working groups needs to have a lens
11 and analysis to identify what effects of racism have
12 had in its work, not just leave it to a task force on
13 race to do this, but every single dimension of the
14 work has to include how does racism play out among
15 that. And modelling, what does it say, it's ten
16 percent of what you say and 90 percent what you do
17 that people pay attention to. You got to live it, not
18 just at the Commission meeting, but you got to live
19 it. You have to internalize these principles. You
20 have to show up at public meeting, of course. But you
21 have to live and model this all the time. So we're
22 trying to find and identify resources for the
23 Commissioners to have ongoing educational
24 opportunities around the topics. And we are also
25 trying to help make sure that the Commission is

1 thinking about public meetings and how language and
2 representations show up, and what behavior that we do
3 to suggest openness and inclusion and valuing
4 differences among people, and not just staying this is
5 all we care about.

6 The working groups -- we have a couple
7 specific questions for each of the working groups to
8 delve into. Who does this recommendation benefit.
9 That's one of the question that each working group
10 should look at in the recommendation they are
11 proffering to the executive order. And does this
12 recommendation differentially impact racial groups.
13 Because sometimes it will look like race neutral
14 policy, but the policy will have different outcomes
15 for different communities. So you want to look at is
16 there differential impact on different communities
17 that this seemingly neutral policy offers. And we as
18 the working group, is cultural competence a core part
19 of the institution involved. And if not, what
20 training or partnerships are needed to ensure that it
21 is so. And in what ways are we looking at historical
22 wealth gap as it plays out around this topic.

23 Some of our visions for the community
24 include communities where every citizen has equal
25 access to all benefits and privileges of society.

1 Increase diverse community engagement and
2 participation at all levels. And finally, a focus on
3 healing needs to be adopted.

4 So you heard, those of you who were here
5 before or paid attention to the writings on
6 stlpositivechange website, seen the work of the
7 Kellogg Foundation and American Heals work. One of
8 the things that I say in there that we're trying to
9 suggest is unless people do the necessary work to heal
10 the hurts of racism, the actions that we engage in
11 don't actually take root. We've had many strategies,
12 many, many strategies to try to and do and redress
13 some of the outcomes of racism, but sometimes we fall
14 short apparently because we haven't had a chance to do
15 the work that we need to do as individuals to heal
16 from the place we got hurt. And we end up acting out
17 on each other or within a group that those painful
18 things. And so we have to do a strategy and
19 techniques and tools to address healing the hurts of
20 racism as a part of a successful outcome. If you
21 don't, if you just work from a place of being hurt and
22 just working from pain, it doesn't actually get the
23 results that we're going for. A few recommendations
24 that's we've started with are to build the capacity
25 of regional organizations who focus on social justice

1 as in the letter that Renee Jack Carroll read earlier.
2 There are some really great modelling leaderships in
3 our community who have been at this for decades. Most
4 of them don't have the kind infrastructure or capacity
5 to have the real impact that the community needs in
6 order to make this happen in a really big way.

7 So one of the things that needs to happen
8 is what can we do to back and support and build
9 capacity of those organizations to do the work that
10 they are doing so that we really see the kind of
11 outcomes that they envision. Establish community-wide
12 activities that focus on accomplishments. Because you
13 know from time to time you, you know, it always looks
14 like, God, we got so far to go. Oh, we have so, so
15 far to go. But we have done some things, too. We
16 have figured out some things and we have to stop from
17 time to time and note those so that we have -- it
18 actually fortifies us to continue to do the work where
19 we can stop and note the progress that we have made
20 and accomplishments that are out there. And the
21 Commission is only commissioned for a minute or two
22 right in the long thing, but the Kellogg presentation
23 last week was a great reminder that if you're not in
24 this for a generation you may as well go home. If
25 you're not willing to commit resources and time and

1 talent for -- they define a generation as 25 years, I
2 believe. If you're not in this for a complete
3 generation, the changes that we envision will not have
4 a chance to be successful. And so, the Commission
5 while it's the Commission needs to also develop a plan
6 of sustainability. So that the resources that are
7 needed, the leadership that's required, whatever
8 infrastructure it is going to take to make this a
9 buy-in by the community that is here not just for
10 until the -- until September when you give your work
11 to the legislature at the end of this calendar year,
12 but for the long haul. And so part of what the
13 Commission gets to do is to work on how to make that
14 happen. So sustainability or not. Because if you're
15 not looking for that, we can go home. We can be at
16 baseball game tonight, this afternoon with the other
17 people who didn't want to be here today. That's why
18 they are not here, Starsky, just because it's the home
19 opener. That's all. Come one, it's Cardinal Nation.
20 What did you expect? That's only reason. It's not
21 the topic. It's not anything else but that. I'm
22 trying because I'm the hopeful guy, you know, that;
23 right? At all times.

24 So those are some of the recommendations
25 that we're moving for. So I thank you, and if the

1 Commissioners have any questions I'm happy to try to
2 answer them.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. MONIQUE: We want to limit it to two if
5 possible, if we can.

6 MR. NICKENS: None is fine with me. I got
7 no problem with that. Great. Thank you.

8 MR. MCCLURE: Thank you, Rudy. If you
9 could talk a little bit about the progression from
10 racial caucus groups to further discussions might
11 occur. Because I think we've had some questions about
12 is this the right strategy; how do we do this; why
13 are we doing this. I think talking about a strategy,
14 not the goal, and talking about progress just a moment
15 might be helpful.

16 MR. NICKENS: I'm happy to. So I don't
17 know how many groups there will be, or who the
18 facilitators are for groups. And there are questions
19 that the facilitators will guide conversation around.
20 It's about creating a space -- as safe a space as
21 possible for people to be able to be honest and open
22 about their thoughts and feelings around this.
23 Everyone has to decided to take a risk, if they will.
24 And participate at their own level. But it's just one
25 of the things that we do. It's just one. Last month

1 when we introduced the topic of racial equity, the
2 groups were mixed race groups. And that gets you some
3 data in that way. We try to find as many different
4 ways to capture information and capture data so that
5 we could have a comprehensive a picture as possible.
6 I don't think that anybody on this team is trying to
7 set up a divided St. Louis. We already have
8 hyper-segregated enough communities. In many ways
9 having racial caucus is not unfamiliar to any of us.
10 It's something that happens almost every day in every
11 workplace, in every school, and in most churches.
12 It's not so unfamiliar to us. It's just we don't
13 hardly ever say it. We don't hardly ever use it as an
14 intentional strategy. We just say well, my
15 neighborhood is all white, my neighbors all white, my
16 family is all white, my faith community is all white,
17 my school is all white, and it's just so. But when we
18 name it all of sudden, it's scary or it's divisive or
19 it's challenging. It's just for this purpose. It's
20 information gathering. And it's important information
21 to gather and hopefully for the people of the global
22 majority and white people who are here it will create
23 an atmosphere for people to have for a short time a
24 dialogue around this where we don't have to be as
25 careful. Because we know there are white people who

1 want to think out loud, but are afraid of coming off
2 as bigoted or bias or racist or offensive, it violates
3 them. And I know there are people of global majority
4 who are afraid to show their anger or rage or fear or
5 their grief because they don't want to be perceived
6 the way that shows up. So it's helpful to have a
7 strategy where you can control for that for a little
8 bit and we always come back together as a group. It's
9 not the goal. It's just a temporary strategy that we
10 use, but always the goal it to come back as a unified
11 group and unified team. Does that answer?

12 MS. MONIQUE: One other -- we'll take one
13 more.

14 MS. PULLIAM: Yes. A question, Rudy, are
15 we working on the policies and practices that show up
16 in institutional systemic during these breakouts or
17 are we working on individual experience and hurt part?
18 It seems like there is two things.

19 MR. NICKEN: There are two things, I think,
20 tonight's conversation is individual. I should have
21 had Keira Banks -- Dr. Keira Banks who is in the
22 house somewhere, who has been my partner along with
23 Bethany and working on this process for all along.
24 And Keira has taken the lead in developing the
25 breakout questions. This is about in this breakout

1 tonight, it is about individual attitude, behavior,
2 and feeling. It's not about the institution tonight.
3 We will certainly have to do more of that, but tonight
4 it's personal and it should always be the personal. I
5 should say that. You can't do institutional change
6 unless you first do critical self examination of who
7 you are and what you think and how you show up. It's
8 always about me first and then me in the community and
9 then me in the society. So first you got to get an
10 honest and thoughtful perspective on who you are and
11 what you bring to this process.

12 MS. MONIQUE: That is the last. If any
13 Commissioners have any other questions -- that would
14 be the last one. All right. Thank you so much.

15 (Applause.)

16 REVEREND WILSON: Dr. Keira Banks is going
17 to give us guidance as we transition into our caucus
18 groups. I want to make one comment. Rudy referenced
19 working groups. One of the things that Rich and I
20 kind of determined was that this would not be an area
21 where we silo'd out working group in the same way we
22 have some others, but we would honor this is something
23 that cuts across all groups. So those who have noted
24 before the staff has been in conversation with folks
25 from NCCJ, Diversity Awareness Partners, YWCA, and

1 others with Dr. Banks and with Rudy to put together
2 some things for to us think about. Some of those
3 theories you are already heard, and they will continue
4 to help and sort of guide us as we apply racial equity
5 to all our working groups. We thought this so
6 universally important a topic that would cut across
7 all areas. So where he says working group in one
8 sentence, he is talking about that group of
9 professionals that do this work on a daily basis are
10 forming the work of the Commission, not that there is
11 another standing working group as we have with
12 economic inequity and opportunities and the like. I
13 wanted to clarify that for folks and have that
14 affirmation. But with that, Dr. Keira Banks will come
15 and give us guidance on our racial caucus groups.

16 DR. BANKS: Good evening. I want to first
17 thank you all for allowing me to be a part of this
18 process and also thank the skilled facilitators. So
19 one of the things that was mentioned that was needed
20 was skilled facilitation around this conversation. I
21 want to say we have some of the best facilitators in
22 the town, in the city, that are here with us that have
23 been this month and last month. So thank you all for
24 giving your time. I also want to commend the
25 Commission really for doing the bold work of modelling

1 what this work can look like. So last month we did
2 integrated, mixed race groups. This month we're doing
3 caucus groups. And you heard a little bit from Rudy
4 about the thought process behind that. And I
5 encourage those of you who are curious about some more
6 of the theory, you can google same race caucusing.
7 There are some articles written on it, but from the
8 research perspective on it, I want to let you know
9 that research suggests that those sorts of safe spaces
10 or what we might call brave spaces can actually
11 increase people's confidence and competence for having
12 the a cross group interaction. Right. We also have
13 research to suggest that they do not increase
14 prejudice. Sometimes people worry about that. Well,
15 if we get in our own groups, we increase divisiveness.
16 Actually, we have research to suggest it doesn't
17 increase prejudice, it increases people's confidence
18 and competence to have the intergroup interaction that
19 we hope that they will have and we create a space for
20 them to have. So just to say, it really should be
21 commended that you will be willing to take that bold
22 step. With that I just want to suggest that we move
23 to our spaces with that in mind that both within group
24 and cross group space can move our dialog forward, and
25 heal some of those divisions that we've spent a lot of

1 time talking about. I think the way we have set it up
2 is that -- let me make sure I'm saying this correctly.
3 That we have white caucus groups at blue and orange
4 spaces. And, as Rudy would say, people of global
5 majority or people of color, who identify as people of
6 color, at purple and green boards. And so, if can you
7 move to those spaces, your facilitator will lead you
8 through a number of exercises. And then we will come
9 back together.

10 (Whereupon, a break was taken.)

11 DR. BANKS: While you're coming back to the
12 groups I want to name the facilitators that you had in
13 your space. So as you're moving back to the large
14 group. Yes, we're moving back to the large group,
15 David, Tanya. All right. As we're coming back, we'd
16 like to ask the facilitator that's going to do the two
17 minute record back to come up front. And while we're
18 getting in our seats I want to name the facilitators
19 that you had in your sessions. Tonight we had Dewitt
20 Campbell and Billie Mayo in the purple group. We had
21 Kenneth Pruitt, Mary Ferguson in the blue group. David
22 Martineau and Tanya Edmund back in the orange group.
23 And Anthony Beasley and Amy Hunter up here in the
24 green group. So, if you had facilitation in your
25 group, please thank your facilitators.

1 I want to reiterate these are some of the
2 best facilitators in town. Amy Hunter was integral in
3 us getting everyone in the room. So thank you, Amy.
4 Facilitators who are going to give reports back,
5 please come up.

6 MR. RICE: Good evening, everyone. What we
7 decided was as we wrapped up was that we needed for
8 black people to focus on systems oppressing them long
9 enough to stop marching on themselves. We also looked
10 at stop thinking that we have arrived. For white
11 people to stop thinking because they have arrived
12 because they have one black friend or know one black
13 person. We need for uncomfortable space at more
14 uncomfortable places to really feel what we're
15 actually talking about. Less self-censoring. We also
16 need for our darker skinned people to stop thinking
17 that because of light -- because a person is light
18 skinned that they are better than who they are. We
19 also need for the youth to start -- stop ignoring the
20 problem. And we need more people of color to
21 represent -- now people of color also represent other
22 than African-Americans, more people who don't identify
23 with just our global majority as black. Last two
24 things is that we need for black men to really start
25 talking to each other and with each other versus at

1 each other.

2 DR. BANKS: Now, if we can have a
3 representative from the green team.

4 MS. HUNTER: Amy Hunter with the YWCA. We
5 spent a lot of time with strengths. And there were so
6 many good strengths that we came up with. Being
7 strong and resilient and adaptable. And then we spent
8 time calling out the lies. So there are at least 13
9 lies from lazy, criminal, shiftless, welfare,
10 over-sexed to how the lies are spread, which is really
11 interesting. A lot of the institutions were named
12 like schools, politics, home, house of worship,
13 friends, advertising media. And then how it affects
14 lives of people of color. Depression, feeling used,
15 angry, giving up, sick, stressed, territorial. And
16 then telling the truth, that we are diverse,
17 adaptable, brilliant, living with a lot of pain, and
18 our generation are selected to do better each
19 generation. So really a wonderful group. I think
20 what was helpful and useful, we asked a question at
21 the end about what it felt like to be in that space.
22 And one of my favorite comments was that we didn't
23 have to do a lot of explaining about what we were
24 going to say. So that was brilliant. Thank you.

25 MS. FRANKS: Thank you so much. And now we

1 will have someone from the orange team. If you guys
2 kind of twist your bodies so they are able to read off
3 of their own notation. And could you also state your
4 name before speaking?

5 MS. DAVIS: Sure. I'm Margaret Davis, and
6 I have no idea if I'm holding my own where I should
7 be. And I work for Wash U and I have private
8 practice, but I'm here because I'm a concerned
9 citizen. And I turned to our facilitator just a
10 moment ago and said did we have different questions.
11 Because I had very different answers. So, what we
12 talked about at first was how the unpacking the
13 backpack made us feel. And most of the feelings were
14 uncomfortable feelings, embarrassment, discomfort,
15 help me out here guys, shame, guilt. And then we
16 talked about what do we need to do personally in order
17 to continue the reflection and conversation. And what
18 our group kind of all said was that we need more
19 opportunities for us as minority white, culture to be
20 involved with people of color and to have fun
21 together, and to have opportunities to do things other
22 than sit in a room and talk about words. Although
23 that's something we need to do as well. We need
24 structure to support the connection across social
25 diversity. Gathering in homes and talking. More

1 awareness of meetings. Two of us in the group said,
2 "Oh, I heard about this meeting just because I
3 happened to be somewhere else and someone talked about
4 it." So, I'm not sure how aware the community was
5 that the meeting was here tonight. We should have
6 been, but we weren't. Just more opportunities for
7 open dialogue, more opportunities to practice.
8 Anybody else in the group have anything you want to
9 add? Okay.

10 MS. FRANKS: Last but not least, can we
11 have someone from the blue team. And please state
12 your name.

13 MR. PRUITT: I'm Kenneth Pruitt. This is
14 Mary Ferguson. And I'm not sure why we took it off
15 the thing, but now it's going to be a whole
16 demonstration so we get to incorporate other people.
17 So these are our notes. Also, that last question what
18 do we need personally to continue to have this
19 conversation and reflect on these things. So first of
20 all, we said I think over and over again it needs to
21 be ongoing, consistent, regular. It can't be a one
22 shot thing. It needs to be something that is
23 ingrained in what we do as a region. We need to be
24 reminded over and over again of concrete examples of
25 white privilege, which is what that list of unpacking

1 nap sack is all about. And that they are specific and
2 personal. We need to be having more cross racial
3 conversations, ones that make us uncomfortable and
4 ones that make your squirm a little bit. Those are
5 very important. We also need to have -- we talked a
6 little about awareness and education and use of
7 language. Language is always changing, always
8 evolving. So being able to be on top of that and be
9 culturally aware about how we speak about ourselves
10 and others is incredibly important, and it is
11 approachable by people of different ages. That we're
12 aware are how different age groups consume information
13 and connect with media. We need a way to recognize
14 those multiple cultural competency. And I believe
15 that was, if I'm not mistaken, closely tied to the
16 next comment. Accountability for local politicians
17 and leaders to be multi-culturally competent. If
18 someone is running for office, we don't just know
19 where they stand on particular economic or social
20 issues, but we are grading them on multi-cultural
21 competency and know where they stand. And, therefore,
22 hold them accountable to that. Again, we mentioned
23 ability to hear from all age groups in each of how
24 they feel about these issues. We need to make sure
25 these conversations go deeper and that we have time to

1 contextualize (sic) and talk about definitions of
2 systems of privilege. I can't read the other -- it
3 says ability for those who don't self select to come
4 to Ferguson Commission meetings. All of us are here
5 because we want to be here so how to we take this
6 conversation who have not self-selected to be here in
7 ways that does not push them away further but engages
8 and pulls them in and magnifies them to this
9 conversation. Thank you.

10 MS. FRANKS: Thank you so much.

11 (Applause).

12 MS. FRANKS: Well, that wraps up our small
13 group discussion. Thank you. I hope you all enjoyed
14 it, kind of ignited some type of thought and helpful
15 conversation that you will have in the future. I will
16 now pass it along to Bethany.

17 MS. JOHNSON-JAVOIS: Thank you again to
18 Jerrica and thank you to particularly Dr. Banks and to
19 Rudy for setting great context for tonight to all the
20 facilitators and leadership that have helped to us be
21 thoughtful about this process. I'll ask all the
22 Commissioners here please if you would take your seats
23 back to the front as the Commission begins its
24 planning and administration portion of the agenda.
25 It's a bad idea for you to leave now because the

1 content of what the Commission has been working on
2 since the prior meetings is really important for you
3 to report out publicly for accountability purposes.

4 So the first thing on the Commission's
5 planning agenda is the managing director's report that
6 I'd like to report out on three different topics or
7 four different topics for this evening. The first one
8 is to denote, again, on the record that racial equity
9 and reconciliation is not a one or two or three night
10 thing; that the Commissioners will continue to working
11 racial and ethnic reconciliation extending beyond
12 tonight. Commissioners have been and will continue to
13 be provided with opportunities for deeper engagement
14 and self-reflection in this area, particularly as
15 related to how we think about policy change within our
16 areas of priority. Second thing, just to give you a
17 quick update now where we're now headed. Health and
18 well-being is part of the specific charge the way that
19 it said within the executive order around names,
20 disparities. So, the next part of content in addition
21 to the work of working groups is we elevate issues and
22 calls to action will be looking at health and
23 well-being specifically in three different areas.
24 Number one, there will be overview of health policy in
25 Missouri that impacts health access as well as health

1 disparities to our most vulnerable population. Second,
2 we want to examine regional data. We got ten years of
3 data coming from St. Louis Regional Health Commission
4 on health and health disparities. In addition to
5 that, we have additional best practice here in St.
6 Louis that was formed in a time of crisis, although
7 health care that we can learn some lessons as we think
8 about model in the future. And third area that has
9 come up throughout our work, we're going to
10 operationalize this term of trauma; advancing the
11 healing process through addressing community trauma.
12 So identifying definition is important; what is
13 trauma; what is mental health and wellness, and
14 leveraging other communities that have experienced
15 like trauma on a community level. And how we can
16 begin to build infrastructure to create
17 trauma-informed community. So we look forward to that
18 particular content that's up coming on our agenda
19 meeting in the future.

20 Second area of report is to think about
21 translation. So for the audience and just to reaffirm
22 this with the Commissioners, the Commission is
23 committed to ensuring that our work exists beyond the
24 report submission September 15th. And the strategy to
25 design implementation including the funding strategy

1 and accountability around our recommendation is what
2 we're defining as our translation strategy. Those are
3 the words. So the types of questions that we're
4 beginning to ask now in terms of translation are, what
5 are the steps needed to create the right authorizing
6 environment for these recommendations to leave. What
7 should be the guiding principles of the Commission's
8 translation strategy. What are the challenges to
9 effective translation, and what cities and communities
10 have done it well or lessons to learn. How should we
11 track progress and evaluate our efforts over time;
12 what are the characteristics or criteria for anger
13 orientation for where none exists, what do we need to
14 create metrics or mechanism. All of these are
15 questions that we are asking now so that this report
16 becomes a catalyst to additional movement beyond our
17 existence.

18 So I wanted to put that on record as well.
19 And I look forward to engaging with Commissioners and
20 thought leaders from a spectrum of community members
21 on this top particular starting this month.

22 Lastly, I just wanted to highlight some key
23 activity of the Commission. Although we'll get an
24 update from two of the working groups, Ferguson
25 Commission to date has held 20 public meetings, over

1 2000 attendees have come. Nine including tonight's
2 open comments section, and we have together
3 facilitated and listened to 19 smaller breakout
4 discussions. The Commission has collected and made
5 public over 23, not including tonight's, informational
6 and research documents that are on our website and
7 transcripts and video. P. S. Thank you so much for
8 coming tonight to do very hard work. We appreciate
9 you're coming. To make sure that this is publicly
10 accessible and usable for our audience. At any point
11 the public can go to stlpositivechange.org to access
12 this.

13 And lastly, I'd like to personally applaud
14 the work of each of the Commissioners in each of your
15 -- in your seats whether you're a co-chair, whether
16 you have become an advocate participating in public
17 discourse nationally and locally. Some have created
18 learning opportunities in whatever way you are showing
19 up in this work, you are showing up strong. So for
20 that we are beginning to see working group content and
21 participation be elevated. So if you haven't been to
22 the working group meeting, we engage and invite you to
23 join us. And now, at this time, as we transition from
24 the managing director's report, we're going to hear
25 some specific information from the citizen law

1 enforcement relation working group as well as child
2 well-being and education equity working group. Thank
3 you.

4 MR. ISOM: Citizen law enforcement group
5 met April 6th. In your previous commission meeting
6 the Commission agreed on several priority areas and at
7 the April 6 meeting we focused basically on training.
8 This had been a discussion we had for quite a while
9 sometime, but we wanted to really get to the work of
10 narrowing down what our recommendations will be in
11 that area. So we had a significant amount of input
12 from the public in various meetings. We have experts
13 engaging in what that training should look like in
14 working group meetings. And we've actually reached
15 out to police departments and police academy. At
16 least I have to get a sense of whether or not they
17 could deliver these items. And although we're not
18 going to focus on whether or not they can specifically
19 deliver it now, but that they do have the capacity to
20 deliver it at some point in time. So we've had those
21 discussions. So our next meeting will be April 20th
22 working group meeting. In that meeting we are really
23 going to think about, first of all, writing out why
24 it's important that we have training in this area.
25 What that training should look like. Who should be

1 involved in the development and delivery of that
2 training, and how much training should be delivered on
3 a yearly annual basis. And we hope to come back here
4 at the next Commission meeting and have some concrete
5 recommendations on this training piece. Then we hope
6 to move forward with the other priority areas that
7 start to develop concrete recommendations that we can
8 present to the full Commission. Any questions?
9 Great.

10 MS. HATTER: On behalf of Dr. Tobias and
11 myself, I'm very happy to report out that our working
12 group, just so that you know, is made up in addition
13 to the two of us, there are nine other members of our
14 working group. I wish they were all here so we could
15 say a big "thank you" to our working group. They have
16 each taken either as one person or as two to lead a
17 different section of our work. We have been blessed
18 to have so much participation from the community and
19 certainly want more. I think that we are experiencing
20 somewhere between 40 plus at each one of our meetings,
21 highly engaged. We will also have been reaching out
22 to experts in all of these different fields and have a
23 pretty good line up, but certainly can use more. So
24 as you listen to this list, who else can be there.
25 And we also have been given some additional support

1 through Dr. Carol Basile, who is the Dean of School of
2 Education. We have about seven doctoral students that
3 have been assigned to us to help us research things as
4 we need them. So that we're in a better place to
5 bring information to all of you. So, right now the
6 topics that are currently being considered have been
7 in work groups. Recommendations are being made on all
8 four platforms; public policy, systems practice, and
9 individual distribution, college access and
10 affordability, food stability, coordination of social
11 services with schools, human capital in education
12 including looking at the quality and readiness and
13 mastery of teacher, administration, superintendent,
14 and school boards. The current transfer log. You
15 know, we already brought in recommendations there and
16 then last two that are currently in motion are the
17 system of district and school accreditation, and also
18 funding for public education. And then at the last
19 meeting, which most recently happened on April 8th,
20 the community that was there voted on five more topics
21 for the next round; early childhood education, parent
22 education and engagement, high school graduation,
23 childhood mental health, which will give us some
24 coaching how we interface with that, and last one was
25 caring adult mentoring and coaches. So all of those

1 top ones are in play, and we'll pick up these starting
2 on April 21st. So full plate. Hopefully, we'll give
3 you some information back soon, thanks. Sorry.

4 Questions?

5 MR. MCCLURE: Thank you, Becky, and thank
6 you, Dan, and Brittany. On behalf of Starsky and
7 myself, I want to thank you all the working group
8 chairs and other Commissioners who are participating
9 actively meeting and lots of folks who come both from
10 the community and from subject matter perspectives.
11 As you can tell from these two very brief reports and
12 if you've been on the website or had sent to you as
13 has the public a great deal of detail behind the hard
14 work of the working groups. And we really are into, I
15 think, the meat of many of these topics of very
16 substantial and deep level. And we're learning, we're
17 listening. Priorities as Becky said continue to come
18 to the top as we hear from folks that come to
19 participate and raise their voice. We're very
20 thankful and pleased with the hard work of working
21 groups. They are now beginning to meet very
22 regularly. We have the municipal court working group
23 tomorrow. We have economic inequity and opportunities
24 on Wednesday afternoon. And those are the ones just
25 this week and ones that were mentioned for next week.

1 So we appreciate the extra work. I would say we
2 didn't have a report from the municipal courts group
3 tonight because they haven't met since the last
4 meeting, but there is legislation moving in the
5 general assembly on the house side. There was a press
6 conference that the speaker and a number of
7 representatives, including representatives of the
8 black caucus had, and they announced their reforms
9 that they intended to add to Senate Bill 5. We've had
10 reviews done of those reforms by the co-chairs and by
11 our subject matter experts and they respond very
12 positively and comprehensively based on what we have
13 seen so far to the calls for action that the working
14 group established based on input from the community.
15 And so, as the Commissioners know, Starsky and I
16 issued a statement that it was a step in the right
17 direction -- a strong step, I believe we said, and we
18 wait the hearing and work of the house this week and n
19 next on that bill. So, positive movement on the
20 municipal court reform side of the equation. We are
21 close to our midway point in our commission's work.
22 And I want to commend Bethany and our staff team for
23 the aggressiveness with which they have approached
24 both the working groups, the broader work of racial
25 equity and reconciliation that we have now spent two

1 very thorough and thoughtful meetings on, and that we
2 are here not yet halfway through and we are now
3 seriously and comprehensively working at staff level
4 on implementation and translation. That is very
5 simply what happens after we file our report. Because
6 we have, from the beginning, all of us committed
7 together that what happens after we complete our
8 recommendation and we have not waited to make our
9 recommendation. And in fact, have moved very
10 aggressively to put many on the table and to call for
11 action already. But what happens after our report is
12 finally filed and what is in place and what
13 implementation structures and accountability for a
14 number of years is in place is critical in our view of
15 the work of this Commission. So thank you, Bethany
16 for leading that work. And we look forward to
17 learning more about that.

18 The final thing I would say would just be
19 to reinforce two slides that were in the presentation.
20 We won't take time to put them back on the screen, but
21 pull out particularly working group co-chairs or those
22 participating in working group page 11, two slides
23 entitled working groups. And it lists tests that we
24 are asking you to put each call for action or each
25 recommendation through. To reinforce the comment that

1 Starsky made earlier that racial equity and
2 reconciliation tests are crosscutting across all our
3 work. So we want each working group to ask who does
4 this recommendation benefit. Does this recommendation
5 differentially impact racial and ethnic groups, is
6 cultural competence part of the institution involved.
7 If not, what are the training or partnerships that are
8 needed, and in what we are we addressing intersection
9 of the wealth gap and race. So we ask you to keep
10 these in mind as each of our working groups put our
11 recommendation in. Because these are tests and
12 filters that we will collectively need to do. So, we
13 have used this meeting to do a number of very
14 thoughtful things, and we have a lot of activity
15 moving. So we appreciate the pace at which the
16 Commission is moving, the pace at which the work
17 groups are moving, and most of all we appreciate the
18 energy and pace which our staff brings the commitment
19 and passion to this work. So thank you all very much
20 and I'll turn the podium over to my co-chair Starsky.

21 REVEREND WILSON: Thanks, Rich. I'll be
22 quite brief here. As we have reached an hour where we
23 may actually complete before the time we have
24 scheduled, I have got a brand new seven-year-old at
25 home who won't be upset with that. Because we will

1 share a cupcake before he goes to bed. That being
2 said, I want to do a couple things. I want to thank
3 you, Commissioners, today for engaging in a different
4 manner in our meeting. We usually invite
5 Commissioners to step back and to pay attention in the
6 small groups . Today we invited you to fully
7 participate in the small groups and I want to thank
8 all the Commissioners who fully participated in the
9 small groups, who engaged in the kind of accessibility
10 and vulnerability that we're inviting the community to
11 engage with as well. I also reinforce particularly
12 for those who did not take that opportunity on
13 tonight, I'll reinforce a call that we made via email
14 to all Commissioners, things that we're making
15 available to all Commissioners. And so the public
16 knows, we are seeking to be serious about this
17 modelling that we have noted in the presentation today
18 that we were called to do. All Commissioners have
19 been asked and encouraged, of course, all to engage in
20 the kinds of emersion experiences around racial
21 equity, racial inclusion, reflection on these issues
22 of privilege and discomfort that we've talked about in
23 the last two meetings.

24 And so we invite all of you to take
25 advantage as a community. We'll continue to share

1 over the course of our e-mail with each and every one
2 of you. And we know there are good opportunities in
3 the community. We invite the community to share with
4 us and continue to contact at stlpositivechange.org
5 opportunities for our Commissioners to engage in
6 diversity work and inclusion work so we may model and
7 we may experience, so we have deeper understanding on
8 these issues that we have explored over the course of
9 the last two meetings.

10 The last thing that I will note is a thanks
11 to the community not just for engaging here, but we
12 noted on March 2nd when we gave our 100 day report
13 that we will be reaching out and seeking to invite the
14 entire region into this narrative. And since that
15 time we have extended invitations to present, to
16 community groups, regional groups, faith-based groups
17 about the work of the Commission. And that is really
18 important that those folks have the opportunity to
19 hear what's going on in these spaces, and have a
20 chance to hear the outcomes of the Commissioner's
21 work. We also want to say thank you to Commissioners
22 because we know this has been additional strain on
23 your schedules and time; that people have called upon
24 to you do this. You didn't know this was going to be
25 a part of the scope of work necessarily. You have

1 received that graciously and generously giving of
2 yourself to bring more people into the work. So while
3 we thank you, the organizations that have invited us
4 in. We also thank you for giving your time to share
5 with this community the very critical and far-reaching
6 work that we are called to do. I will -- because that
7 was just two things and every preacher needs to close
8 three times. I'll close with this.

9 A really clear invitation to everyone
10 tonight to go to stlpositivechange.org. Go there, look
11 specifically for the 100 day report and there have
12 been different iterations of that, that have those
13 calls to action in it. Share it, whether that means
14 downloading and printing it out to people, whether it
15 means forwarding it to people in your workplace,
16 whether it means sending it out or forwarding it over
17 social media. We really want people to know these
18 calls to action had have been made based upon the hard
19 work that more than 1200 citizens have engaged in and
20 given voice to over the course of these nine meetings.
21 Share this information with those in the community.
22 It will help us to billed the kind of responsibility,
23 the public will that will be necessary to assure that
24 we get the kind of change that we see moving right now
25 on municipal courts and kind of things that we see

1 moving around; child well-being and education equity
2 in our community. There is much more for you to do.
3 We thank you for the time you have spent with us doing
4 it and we invite you to share even more so that we can
5 reach and impact the lives of all of the 2.8 million
6 in our metropolitan St. Louis region.

7 That being said, if there being nothing
8 else, one of the things we seek to you we invite you
9 to stand with us. We recognize that sometimes we can
10 deal with heavy, hefty and/or heady information, and
11 so before we go forth, these things, conversations to
12 those in our community and in our homes, we just like
13 to take some time, a silent centering as we
14 transition. So we invite you just to center your
15 energies and your strengths. Find the place of peace
16 as we seek to transition. Thank you very much. Good
17 night.

18 (WHEREIN, the hearing was concluded at
19 8:19.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF MISSOURI)

) ss.

CITY OF ST. LOUIS)

I, Jeanne M. Pedrotty, a Certified Court Reporter (MO) and Certified Shorthand Reporter (IL), do hereby certify that the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing deposition was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of said witness was taken by me to the best of my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this deposition was taken, and further that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

Jeanne M. Pedrotty

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