

## 8/4 Memorial Committee Minutes

Sandy Gudorf, President, Downtown Dayton Partnership and Committee Co-Chair made brief welcoming remarks. As part of her comments, she apologized for a subcommittee miscommunication. She also stated that she takes responsibility for the misunderstanding and hopes that we can move forward, working together and focusing on the vision for the memorial and the work ahead of us.

Sandy Hunt, Director of Witness Division, Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office and Committee Co-Chair, also made welcoming remarks and asked committee member to introduce themselves by using one word that starts with the letter of their first names.

Committee members present included:

Dana Graham, ODBA Board Member, Community Manager, Genuine Work

Kevin Gray, Westchester Education Services

Natalie Skilliter, Owner of Corner Kitchen, ODBA President

Austin Smith (on phone) Owner, Ned Peppers

Holly Hornbeak, City of Dayton

Linda Ashworth, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce

Samantha Elder, Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug, Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS)

Michelle Lovely, The Dayton Foundation

Chris Shaw, Dayton City Commission

Bethany Ramsey, Owner of Puff Apothecary, Oregon District Resident/Business Owner

Rob Jones, Ferncliff Funeral Director, Oregon District Resident

Brian Zamostny, City of Dayton

Lasandra James, Director Miami Valley Community Action Partnership, Victim's mother

Sandra Gudorf, President, Downtown Dayton Partnership

Torey Hollingsworth and Dion Greene, not present

Staff:

Beth Whelley, Fahlgren Mortine, Facilitator

Elizabeth Mills, DDP

Laura Woeste, DDP

### **Suggested Ground Rules (full outline attached to email)**

Sandy Hunt began the meeting by outlining some suggested Committee Ground Rules for discussion. Input is valued and welcomed and the purpose is to listen and respect each other. We all experienced some type of trauma that we need to deal with. It is important to remember this is not a support group, but if you need additional support, please reach out to myself or Samantha Elder from ADAMHS. We will make sure that you get the assistance you need.

We want to make sure we are on a meeting schedule. Once we agree as a group, dates will be communicated in advance and timelines will be given. Does the committee agree?

Bethany Ramsey requested that public survey results are shared from the three groups before moving forward with timelines and other subcommittee work.

Sandy Hunt suggested that the Committee meet monthly for the next six months. Committee agreed. DDP will send out several meeting options with virtual options.

Committee agreed there should be a chair for each subcommittee and agrees that co-chairs will select/appoint sub-committee leads. DDP will send agendas and reminders. Specific timelines will be determined later. It is important to ensure the Steering Committee's work reflect the desires of the community.

Sandy Hunt added that the co-chairs will make themselves available for any questions or concerns throughout this process. She added that it is important that we respect everyone's privacy as well. We will also specifically define decisions the group will make and how they will be made.

**Suggested Committee Ground Rules:**

1. Recognize that our committee's diversity is a strength and each person's input is equally valued.
2. Make a commitment to attend all scheduled meetings and be an active participant. *If you cannot attend a meeting notify one of the chairpersons in advance.*
3. Respect each committee member and allow everyone a chance to be heard.
4. Information discussed during meetings will be kept confidential until it is made public.
5. Names of committee members will not be shared without permission from that member.
6. All media inquiries will be directed to the chairpersons.
7. Agree to disagree; discourse is healthy, and not every decision will be unanimous.
8. Once a consensus has been reached, support group decisions and actions.

Sandy Hunt asked if there are other ground rules.

Dana Graham asked what decisions or expectations will the committee be part of and what they will be tasked with deciding? Sandy Hunt responded that everyone will have the opportunity to give input.

The guidelines will be sent out to the committee for comment.

Beth Whelley introduced an exercise for individual reflection and sharing:

What is your hope for the memorial? What is your concern?

Beth Whelley spoke on the phone with Austin to get his concern and hope. Beth Whelley collected hopes and concerns from all meeting attendees.

Beth Whelley then asked that, given what you've written, make a pledge to yourself and fellow participants, how you will orient yourself and address yourself to those thoughts. This pledge will not be collected or shared with the other committee members.

Beth Whelley then shared concerns and hopes after shuffling cards. Below are all of the concerns and hopes shared by all committee members.

Conflict, disagreement, continuance of pain, all voices have a chance to be heard, emotion, pleasing everyone is impossible, community acceptance, emotional, political and other distractions of goal, with passage of time, memorial will be forgotten and not kept up. Disappointment from the Greater Dayton Region, diversity of writer's home, negative, perpetuation of fear, find joy and peace of a group that we accomplished, lack of transparency, separate meetings, lack of community healing, accountability of those who have a voice to the community, lack of trust, healing and sensitively, lack of accountability of those leading this project, will my emotions stay intact

Beth Whelley shared hopes after shuffling cards

Meaningful, healing, people feeling left out, for a meaningful process that creates significance, healing and place of comfort, open and need to move forward stronger, community openness and healing that this process is the memorial and not necessarily an object, my hope is to have a voice input in the memorial, peace for the community, something special for those who were impacted by the tragedy, strength, a place to remember, this process will focus on the task at hand and trauma, peace and unity, finding peace, resolution, healing, remembrance, unity, create something meaningful that creates healing

### **Concerns**

People Feeling Left Out

Will my emotions stay intact?

The starting focus on community healing, cultural impact from tragedy, and the sensitivity needed to navigate those spaces and conversations.

Lack of accountability and transparency from those who are leading this project

Lack of trust

Lack of transparency on past meetings that have occurred. Separate meetings being had that involve planning. A lack of community healing and building with in person discussions. Accountability with community stake holders that have a voice & responsibility to the community

Negative reminder and perpetuation of fear

That this process is reflective of the diversity needed to achieve my "hope."

Disappointment w/in the Greater Dayton region that the memorial 'missed the mark!

With passage of time, memorial will be forgotten and not be kept up.

Distractions (emotional, political, etc.) from ultimate goal

Community Acceptance

Pleasing everyone=impossible

Emotion

That all voices have a chance to be heard

Conflict, disagreement

Continuance of pain

**HOPES:**

We find joy and peace as a group that we accomplish what we set out to do.

Create something meaningful that supports healing

Healing

Remembrance

Unity

Resolution

(finding peace)

this process will focus on the task at hand BUT also focus on the real aspect of trauma

A piece/memorial that unifies the community

A place to remember

Hope, Strength

Something special that makes people remember and honor those who were impacted by the tragedy.

Peace for our community

My hope is to have a voice/input on the memorial (hope)

Provide inspiration for better future—forward looking

Open to be organic and hear what community is feeling & need to move forward stronger. Community healing & openness that this process is the memorial not necessarily an object. Open to be organic and hear what community is feeling & need to move forward stronger

End product place of healing + comfort

Hope: for a meaningful process that creates an everlasting memorial of significance.

Positive, Healing,

Beth Whelley: Please remember to be gentle and respectful of each other. What themes did you hear?

Samantha Elder: Healing is a theme, transparency and public disappointment.

Dana Graham: Input must be put into the process. We don't want to live in the trauma, but need to understand what that did to the community and different cultural groups that have been left out.

Bethany Ramsey: I've been waiting for us to talk to each other. This is the first opportunity to discuss what happened because of 2020. While we have something in mind, there is a human element. We are going to have to facilitate conversations. There will be a lot of expectations from diverse stakeholders in the community.

Beth Whelley: What I am hearing from you, through no one's fault of the pandemic, it happened to everyone. It hijacked the time after.

Sandy Hunt: 2020 changed plans from their perspective for outreach.

Linda Ashworth: In our purpose, there is the tangible goal of creating visible and long lasting memorial. Defining what our expectations of what we want to accomplish, the healing process is very different. Are we doing both or one or the other?

Bethany Ramsey: There is a symbiotic relationship that we need to draw upon one another and what does Dayton want? Is it an object? Do they want this process? If it's truly about healing? We owe it to the people we serve in this community. What does Dayton need? I feel very isolated because of the need to build community and the cultural perspectives and conversations. The conversations we have in the salon are different even then those in the district. We have to give space to that.

Beth Whelley: For our next exercise, we are going to break into two groups to get to know each other a bit.

Small groups

Group 1

Sandy Hunt

Bethany Ramsey

Natalie Skilliter (w/Austin Smith on phone)

Lasandra James

Brian Zomostny

Linda Ashworth

Group 2

Sandy Gudorf

Dana Graham

Michelle Lovely

Holly Hornbeak  
Rob Jones  
Kevin Gray  
Samantha Elder

Linda Ashworth (Group 1): Chatty group, that doesn't necessarily follow the task, because we prefer to chat. Tempt us with cookies. None of us intend to participate in TikTok.

Holly (Group 2): Team foodie, baby goat

Vegan options that have a good cheeseburger, all like animals, split on dogs or cats, near baby goats and that's the best.

Beth Whelley shared the hopes and concern cards will remain confidential.

Dana Graham would like them to be included in the minutes and requested that Beth Whelley give the cards to Elizabeth to transcribe and include in the minutes, and committee agreed. All listed above.

Beth Whelley: Now as a group in the long term direction, what are we trying to create, what is the overall objective, not a goal, but a vision statement. Speaks to future state, when we have concluded our activities, this will be the result, a vision statement, not a goal. For purposes of our work here today, those are the questions we would like to address.

No decisions will be made between now and the next time we meet.

What are we trying to create? When this is all said and done what will we have achieved?

Kevin Gray: Linda mentioned we have an opportunity to think about a space and a process. A process that leads to something the community has that they can interact with but also the process of getting there.

Dana Graham: Whatever the memorial is, it has to reflect how you start: if you are not going to start with awareness and community, to truly represent what our community. Peace that doesn't incite fear. That doesn't incite all of those things. Get into the grit of the emotions of why they are there and distill to what is created.

Kevin and Dana: Agree place and the space.

Something that is Dayton, if someone walks down the street and doesn't think it fits with who we are as a community. We did look at some examples that helped to understand their process but we have to keep Dayton at the forefront. If we are charged to do this as a committee and community representatives, it is special to us.

Holly Hornbeak: Trying to make a physical representation of the intangible of what the community needs and the memory and symbol and reflection and manifest it into something physical. Doesn't have to be a statue, something you interact with. Hard thing of distilling it all.

Linda Ashworth: Vision - we will create some theme that allows the community to feel the healing and perpetuates that for the community at large. Perpetuates the feeling of healing.

Rob Jones: In my position, you hear there will be a celebration of life. Soon after the death the funeral occurs. When we look at what the result will be, we need to remember a celebration aspect. Washington Monument doesn't represent sadness that George Washington is deceased. People experience happiness. I am hesitant to use the word celebration, many families had a ceremony that was respectful of their loved one if they lost someone and while those were important, more about why those lives were in the Oregon District.

Beth Whelley: As we talked about a vision, the word memorial has been used but nothing has been set. Is that word troubling?

Rob Jones: Not troubling to me, it is descriptive. Anyone who reads the newspaper will identify with the word. Depending on what this becomes, might be helpful to look at what of the examples that have been shared in the past.

Sandy Hunt: I have Pulse's Vision Statement Here. Sandy Hunt read Pulse vision statement, Pulse's legacy of love lives on forever.

Likes the energy that Dana said, such a unique space, would like to capture that too.

Dana Graham: I would like to clarify what energy, what is the energy of the roots and what is important to them and the communities they come from. Not doing that investigative work and fusing that together with wherever it will be located. Brings unification together factor to clarification.

Bethany Ramsey: I appreciate you reading the Pulse statement but we need to go back to Dayton. I work in a salon, black owned, six black people died, I am a business owner and Austin refers to the darkness in his space and people who are dealing with it and his business was hit by a car. This is not data collection and this needs to be about community healing and showing Dayton we care about them. We don't need to prove anything to the rest of the country, let the community feel they have been heard. Let's give them a space to do that and be intentional and who feels comfortable sharing that. Not putting them in a box and what is going on in this community. We need to process that with the neighborhood, what we went through in the neighborhood.

Natalie Skilliter: I completely agree. It is data collection but it is about our processes we put in place, who we share the survey with and how they function. That is part of the process. But then there is a process with what we do with what we hear, before we do the call to the artist. When I was taking the survey, what's important to you with seven options seems challenging. Are we going to get consensus or is going to be completely spread across the board of what people want? It's equally important to hear all the voices and that we accurately represent what we hear.

Beth Whelley: what does it look like if we are and if we are not?

Natalie Skilliter: That there is disappointment within the community. People will be disappointed with what happens and everyone has a strong opinion. We're never going to please everyone.

Austin Smith:

Something that should be on top of my radar and of all the subcommittees, my opinion is that we need to know that we are not going to make everyone happy. Some will relive the moment. This is not going to step back and don't want to keep bringing up but my staff that were involved and held hands and did

triage before the first responders arrived, held wounds, held their hands as they passed away. There is a real aspect of this that a lot of people of you guys outside understand. In talking to my staff about the survey, it was cool of Dayton to do a massive event but they threw my staff right back into an environment they just got out of. It was another moment when we were tearing it down. My staff is so done with it...they want to move on. Two years later, hole in the brick, people are pointing at it and saying, "I bet that's a gunshot." Right here is where that person died. The lack of compassion and callousness is something I am unsure everyone understands. The families that lost people are they going to be happy with this if my staff, I'm not opposed but I don't want to keep living this. People need to understand what this is doing. I know it is meant in good faith. I don't think the masses understand and the trauma this did. I had to do things hours after and cleaning up to make things presentable, to error on the side of caution. We are not going to make everyone happy. We need to agree that is how it is going to be but also have compassion to every level they have been involved. A lot that goes unnoticed that the media played out is a different story. No one got recognized for doing the first aid and dealing with all of that. My staff is as strong as it gets. Different level of what we are talking about. People woke up to the news, every level of that it's mind boggling how much. We as a group are being compassionate.

Beth Whelley: The key things I heard are, that you are not opposed to the creation of something through whatever process makes sense, and in the creation of that thing we have to keep in mind the real experiences and expectations of certain audiences and individuals that may not appear and that almost regardless to the process there will be people who will not feel healed.

Austin Smith: Yeah I think that's right. I think there's a bigger thing. You can have everything in the world and everyone walk away and everyone is going to say this amazing. Hope is that majority of those are accepting and those that don't are at least accepting of it.

Beth Whelley: Other thoughts about what we are here to do. This is an opportunity for anyone who hasn't spoken to speak up. What will it say about the Oregon District and the community?

Linda Ashworth: I hope that it shows there is community and we are supportive of one another and that coming together. That when we come together and we are a supportive community.

Bethany Ramsey: Agree with compassion. I am concerned about compassion in this process. There needs to be some accountability to the community. There needs to be checks and balances. There are organizations like the ODBA, we can go and talk all day long but there needs to be accountability from diverse stakeholders.

Beth Whelley: Is that part of the process of the process?

Bethany: How did this committee get selected? That's what I am concerned about. Sometimes this committee, the closed door sessions, there's been phone calls and things communicated behind closed doors. If we need to do the work. If you trust your process, let's have someone else look. ODBA has talked about diversity and inclusion. They have to work with the neighbors. Whatever we do here, we need someone else. I am concerned.

Holly Hornbeak: What I liked about the artist call, different focus groups, who is the judge and who gets to see? I can't generate a focus group but I know we can ask the people who matter and are accountable to the community.



Beth Whelley: We have a few minutes left. Any final thoughts?

Dana Graham: I am unsure how to word it but it is about the views and feelings expressed in this meeting. I know we are trying to decide on the month and day and time of gathering. What is the next step? We need to know the last meeting wasn't in vain. Are we going to continue to grow in this next meeting? This is exactly what we heard from the meeting minutes and that this all important work.

Beth Whelley: Thank you for honesty and energy. I think that's a good place to end. I hope everyone can be as compassionate to yourselves and each other.

Sandy Hunt: We will wrap up the notes. I would like us to create a vision statement at our next meeting. We will have our survey results from the first part of the survey and we'll go from there.

Sandy Gudorf: We thank you and we will put out the notes. We heard the next steps. We'll outline some specific next steps. At some point it might be a good idea for the subcommittees to regroup. Some of these recommendations come from these groups and will be presented to the steering committee for final review.

Bethany Ramsey: I am concerned. We had a discussion in our subcommittee then a unilateral decision was made. Is there going to be unilateral decisions made with one person or the chairs? I am unclear and who gets to make those decisions?

Sandy Hunt: The subcommittee will bring their decisions to full committee.

Bethany Ramsey: I am very concerned and do you make unilateral decisions while the subcommittees are meeting? This is what happened in the subcommittee I was in.

Sandy Gudorf: I acknowledged that. I made a mistake and I own that and I am hopeful we can move forward. There's a lot of work that needs to be done. I am hopeful we can do some of this work in the subcommittees and I am hopeful each subcommittee at any time anyone on the steering committee can see what's happening. We're going to need some help from all of you. We're going to meet once a month as a steering committee to work through these issues. I don't know what else I can say. I hope you can accept that I made a mistake and move forward.

Bethany Ramsey: You still agreed to send the proposals and you did not share that with anyone in the public input subcommittee. You did commit that, are you willing to share those proposals with the subcommittee. Are you willing to send those?

Sandy Gudorf: Yes, I will but need to get permission to do so.

Note: Agendas were distributed, printed copies of the survey and subcommittees were available at the meeting.

