



MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**Racial Equity and Social
Justice Advisory
Committee (RESJAC)**

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION:

RESJAC advises the County Council, the County Executive, and County agencies about racial equity and social justice in the County, and recommends policies, programs, legislation, or regulations necessary to reduce racial and social justice inequity; develops and distributes information and promotes educational activities and recommends strategies.

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December 1, 2020

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LETTER FROM THE RESJAC COMMITTEE

December 1, 2020

Dear Montgomery County Council and the Office of the County Executive:

It is our honor and privilege to serve on the Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee (RESJAC) in Montgomery County. In December 2019, the County Council voted unanimously to create the RESJAC as part of its [Racial Equity and Social Justice Act, 27-19](#). Today as our county deals with the effects of the global pandemic COVID-19, we face a historic challenge ahead as our most diverse and vulnerable communities disproportionately face the wrath of this very dangerous disease. RESJAC, through this landmark legislation, is tasked to not only address disparate inequities among County residents, but also to focus on structural and historical inequities involving wealth distribution, housing policies, criminal justice issues, education and the achievement gap, and health disparities. RESJAC recognizes that inequitable outcomes linked to race and social justice issues will continue to persist in the County without intentional intervention.

It is the hope of RESJAC to address and bring light to these important issues and work tirelessly to dismantle racial inequities and achieve social justice while recognizing that change must occur on an individual, institutional, and structural basis. *Equity* means fair and just opportunities and outcomes for all people and in order to achieve that level of equity, RESJAC has taken on the arduous task of creating a systematic process of identifying policies and practices that may be implemented to identify and redress these particular disparate outcomes on the basis of race or social justice issues. As we work to effectuate long-term changes to achieve racial equity, we look forward to working very closely with the Montgomery County community members who, through their labor and activism, set the conditions for this landmark legislation and the committee.

The attached report is a summary finding of our work since July 2020. It is our hope and belief that we will be able to implement these priorities in the form of specific recommendations, advisory committees and subcommittee findings, educational outreach, keynotes and additional work product as we begin this large and historic undertaking.

Sincerely,

Racial Equity
and
Social Justice
Advisory Committee

RESJAC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Partap Verma
CHAIR, Racial Equity and Social Justice
Committee
COMMISSIONER, Montgomery County
Planning Board

Sylvia Hernandez
Montgomery County
Dept. of Corrections

James Stowe
Office of
Human Rights

Willie Parker-Loan
Montgomery County
Police Department

Jared Hautamaki
Silver Spring, MD
Public Member

Izola Shaw
Rockville, MD
Public Member

Katherine Culliton- Gonzalez
Silver Spring, MD
Public Member

Sonia Canzater
Derwood, MD
Public Member

Shane Lloyd
VICE-CHAIR,
Racial Equity and
Social Justice Committee
Public Member

Selena Mendy Singleton
Montgomery County
Council

Betty Lam
Department of Health and
Human Services

Troy Boddy
Montgomery County
Public Schools

Gustavo Torres
Silver Spring
CASA
Executive Director
Public Member

Pat Grant
Silver Spring, MD
Public Member

Shuo Huang
Silver Spring, MD
Public Member

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

TERM OF SERVICE

There are fifteen voting members of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee (RESJAC). The group is comprised of seven government members and eight public members.¹ Government representatives on the committee include: the County Office of Human Rights, a designee of the County Council, an employee of the County Department of Health and Human Services, an employee of the County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, an officer of the County Police Department, and a designee of the Chair of the County Planning Board. All public members have experience in redressing disparate impacts based on race and social justice issues and reside in Montgomery County. Each member serves a 3-year term and cannot serve more than 2 consecutive full terms. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy serves the rest of the unexpired term and members continue in office until their qualified successors are nominated and appointed. The Committee is supported by the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice. Shortly after its creation, the entire RESJAC participated in a 2-day Racial Equity training by the Racial Equity Institute.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

RESJAC is required to meet at least 6 times a year and has met three times since its creation in July 2020. RESJAC has decided to hold monthly meetings and all meetings are open to the public.²

LEADERSHIP

The RESJAC Chair and Vice Chair are elected by members via majority vote and serve a one-year term. In November 2020, RESJAC elected Partap Verma, Commissioner on the Montgomery Planning Board as Chair and Shane Lloyd, Public Member, as Vice Chair. RESJAC is administered and supported by Tiffany Ward, Director – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice.

¹ As of December 1, 2020, the County Council has introduced an amendment that will add potentially two more

² Since the global pandemic COVID-19, RESJAC has been conducting its meetings online, which are accessible to the general public.

DUTIES OF RESJAC

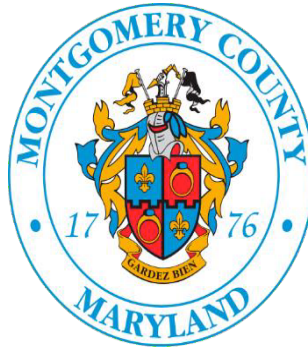
- Develop and distribute information about racial equity and social justice in the County;
- Promote educational activities that increase the understanding of racial equity and social justice in the County;
- Recommend coordinated strategies for reducing racial and social justice inequity in the County;
- Advise the Council, the Executive, and County agencies about racial equity and social justice in the County and recommend policies, programs, legislation, or regulations necessary to reduce racial and social justice inequity;
- Meet periodically with the racial equity and social justice lead for each department and office;
- And submit an annual report by December 1 of each year to the Executive and Council on the activities of the Committee.

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

- On July 21, 2020, the RESJAC was confirmed by the County Council.
- On September 9, 2020, the RESJAC committee convened to finalize their orientation and set the meeting schedule.
- On October 28, the RESJAC committee met to begin initial conversations about committee priorities and elected a Chair and Vice Chair.
- On November 18, the RESJAC committee began preliminary conversations about priorities and agreed on setting up subcommittees to explore critical issues areas. Suggestions for further consideration and deliberation include, but are not limited to, COVID-19, Affordable Housing, Montgomery County Public School System, Economy Equity, Systemic/Institutional/Structural Historical Remediation, and Data and Public Communication. The committee also agreed to meet on a monthly schedule.

SUMMARY

RESJAC through its committee members is committed to effectuating change in 2021 as our County hopefully begins the recovery process from the global pandemic COVID-19. We are committed to playing a major role in addressing structural inequities and address systemic inequality and social justice issues throughout the County and work with department heads, government agencies and leaders to bring the change our residents seek. In the coming year, RESJAC will continue to engage with the public in these critical areas of need and plan to advise the County Council and County Executive as we promote our subcommittee and committee findings and as we explore new, innovative strategies to address racial equity and social justice issues in Montgomery County.



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