

Date: March 19th, 2026, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

PARTICIPANTS:

TASK FORCE MEMBERS:

Co-Chair Nykia Clemonts (NC)

Record Keeper Secretary Jocelyn Medallo (JM)

Christopher Koya (CK)

STAFF:

Race & Equity Officer Shakira Louimarre (SL)

Council Member Edouard Haba (EH)

Council Member Michelle Lee (ML)

Council Member Kelson Nisbett (KN)

COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Brian B.

Cammie.

Viviana L.

John.

6:21 pm - Welcome & Call to Order – Co-chair Clemonts

6:21 pm – 6:22pm – Roll Call – Co-chair Clemonts

6:22 pm - 6:35 pm – Acknowledgement of Guests and Public Comment– Co-chair Clemonts

- Brian Banks: The Emergency Fund. I spent the last day talking to colleagues from CASA and other non-profits doing great work with the immigrant community. Based on data, they estimate that in this first year of increased enforcement we have lost as many residents to detention as we did in the first year – the deadliest year – of COVID. People cannot leave their homes, threatening security of the community. We know that there are detention centers coming. This budget season is our only budget opportunity to protect our community over the coming year. The mechanism of the fund proposed by CM Haba – it gives community access of funds to spend it on what they need. My daughter goes to an elementary school where orphaned children are in school – people need the funds to survive. There is not question that we can do is prepare by putting at least 100K.

This is going to be the most important issue in the year and this is the biggest change we should see in the budget.

- Cammie: I agree with everything that was just said. My motivation here is more emotional. At one time, HVL was very white. I have been pleasantly enthralled by the changes that have happened since 1956 and that we are a diverse and inclusive community. We are kind and caring community. My heart has been broken seeing the damage to our children and families because of the deportation that has been happening now. I feel strongly that we need to support our neighbors at a very trying time. This is out of our control, and they need our help. We have had many informal groups that have risen over the last decades, like HY-Swap, Aging in Place, Route 1 Mutual Aid to provide a food bank. I really value the heart that is Hyattsville. It is why I love living here. We are good people. We are caring people. I want my tax money go to supporting these families who are in very dire situations. I would hope that we would prioritize these emergency funds. I urge the Council to rely on groups who know these communities well. Even teachers are reaching out to families to see how they can help. It is right that HVL offer the help that these families need. These families are hard-working and honest. It is up to us as their neighbors to protect them at this very vulnerable time. Hyattsville is special because we are so diverse, and we are inclusive, and we are caring. I want our City Council to live up to those values.
- Viviana Lozano: I am Deputy Director for organizing department for CASA. I am here to express strong support for families affected by ICE. When a family is detained, family income disappears overnight. But the bills do not stop. Children need food, transportation and care. Families are forced to navigate legal process and cover emotional fear cause by separation. Many of these families do not have savings to fall back on. They are already working multiple jobs to stay afloat. It puts these families in deeper hardship. This funding helps keep families stable at a difficult moment. It provides some sense of normalcy at a difficult time. Immigration enforcement does not affect communities equally. Immigrant communities are the backbone of this city – they are our students, neighbors, and they contribute to this city in many ways. When families are hurting, Hyattsville will not look away; we will show up. CASA urges City of Hyattsville to support this funding.
- John: I value Hyattsville and its values. That's why I came here 21 years ago. I live in Ward 1 and I value my time living here. I live 4 blocks from an intersection where someone has been kidnapped, and that has happened twice. This is the situation that we are in. I am supporting the Haba bill to appropriate the money in the budget to supply a relief fund. I have been volunteering with Prince George's Immigrant Rights Collective and Route 1 Indivisible. Both groups have been raising money and raising funds – we are doing this tomorrow – to bring to families to eat, for legal services, etc. We are overwhelmed. We have raised a lot of money. People are great and they are showing up. We are right at the edge. It is one of the horrible things we are witnessing from this fascist regime. They have transformed it where they want to have a country without Black and Brown people – that

is what they say. People don't want to believe it – but maybe we should believe it. People with power are behaving badly, but they don't have all the power. This is a concrete step to push back to push back in a real crisis.

6:35 pm – 6:37 pm – Approval of February Meeting Minutes– Recorder Medallo

- No corrections to February meeting minutes. JM moves to approve; CK seconds. All approved.

6:37 pm – 7:44 pm – Committee Work Session- Commentary on FY27 Budget Initiative /

Proposing \$100,000 for a Relief Fund for Immigrant Families

- [SLIDES]: [RETF Slides for Minute 3.19 .pptx](#)
- Process/Next steps
 - Establish a subcommittee (of 2 or fewer members) to draft a letter based on consensus from today's meeting by Friday afternoon.
 - This proposal may be brought to Council meeting on March 23rd or at a later date.
 - We are at an early point in the budget process. The proposal may be brought back to the Council meeting beyond the 23rd.
- SL: As written, the budgetary amount is 100,000. The who it will impact: those families who are affected by immigration enforcement action and those who are unable to work. The second part of this motion is that two local non-profit partners will be in charge of the administration of these funds.
 - The purpose is to address drastic income loss and the economic ripple effect.
 - Allocation oversight: 90 percent of 100K should go to direct assistance, with 10K allocated for administration of the fund. Reporting: will provide a quarterly report.
 - Alignment with Equity Plan: It is both a process and an outcome. How will it be developed, distributed, and also equity as an outcome.
 - Equity Plan References to Immigrants of links to HVL Equity Plan (housing, community engagement, etc)
- NC: This proposal is relevant to the work of the RETF.
- CK: Approaching from a zero-sum standpoint is not the right way. It is very important to be part of a community that is setting this example. That is what policy is, that is what community is for. At the very base level, it is very much aligned and speaks to work that we are trying to do.
- JM: Definitely in our wheelhouse. In drafting the HVL Equity Plan, immigrant communities – making sure they are recognized, valued, held and supported in our community- was

front of mind. Maybe because we knew moments like this were coming. It was heartening to hear the testimony from community members and organizations on the call who are standing with communities affected by immigration enforcement.

- SL: Review GARE Equity Toolkit to help identify and reduce inequities and builds equity into decision-making from the start, and helps prevent unintended outcomes. The main takeaways we hope to get from this conversation:
 - What are the racial equity impacts of this particular decision?
 - Who will benefit from or be burdened by the particular decision?
 - Are there strategies to mitigate the unintended consequences?
- GARE STEP 1: What is your proposal and the desired results and outcomes? Answers (see slide), intended results in the community.
 - NC: This proposal will help keep people financially afloat. Is this short-term? Basic necessities? What is the definition of financially afloat and for how long?
 - JM: I support this proposal in concept and have questions on the process because the process must also be equitable. How will the amount be allocated? What if the need is greater than the amounts we have? How will would decision then be prioritized? Who makes those decisions?
 - Council Member EH: That is the part where we need the community partner who knows the community and has been working with the community to be able to implement. We went through this during COVID through COVID assistance. We have the qualifications – we may have to update some of those but we have a solid foundation. CASA did work with us in the COVID funds distribution. Prioritization will be done by CASA and our city staff to figure out how you want to layer the priorities – are we going to make housing the priority, legal, utilities? We will leave that to the experts who are already working on these issues.
 - Council Member KN: As written, the intended community members are those impacted by ICE enforcement. And I see that the intended impact is that there is an opportunity for funding to help in certain ways, but there is no guarantee that the money will create the intended impact. I cannot say for certain that there are enough guardrails to ensure that the intent will deliver the impact. As one of the Council Members brought up, is this support enough to provide support to a family? Will it be a drop in the bucket? Are we appeasing the problem?
 - SL: Pointing to ALICE report
 - Council Member ML: This was a tough discussion in the Council meeting so it was recommended in the RETF Committee. I will say that there was a fund during the

COVID funding — and it was open to a variety of people. I did not speak to all of you before this meeting because I wanted you to come in from your own perspective. I will say that I said in the meeting that the funding while it is great, we have so many people in our communities that are going through different things. In the City, we offer so many things that we offer to our community to affect a ray of individuals would be optimal. I want to give my perspective in a way – to make it equitable we have a need for everyday people.

- Council Member Redmond??: This is not slated to be on our agenda for Monday night for now. But it may give you some breathing room.
- STEP 2: What's the data? What does the data tell us?
 - SL: We heard potential questions about how many families can we impact and for what amount of time to make a difference?
 - Council Member KN: Data distribution of person removed, family make-up. How many families were impacted and what were the circumstances of those families being impacted? Many of us need help and when we do, we need help, and for some they were taken into custody for serious offense and should we support that. I understand that this doesn't impact the family, but I would like to know the delineation. And what is the threshold? If we were to add more support, I want to make sure individuals who have not received support should get support? And what is the data distribution to others who h—and what circumstances are
 - JM: How many families have been affected/detained? What is their makeup? What is the projected estimate of impacts as ICE enforcements ratchets up? Baseline data could also be useful if we are making grant applications for subsequent rounds.
- STEP 3: How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
 - Council Member Nesbitt: This was an issue that was deadlocked. Everyone wants to support the community and our neighbors but the question was whether this was the best way to do it. We can make a decision today but if we don't have the data points, it makes it harder to bring the additional insights.
 - NC: Were there any other ways to help our communities, like free daycare or other opportunities?
 - Council Member KN: Good question. 100,000 may put a band-aid on a gunshot wound. This problem won't slow down, so how do we really posture the

community and to understand their rights? We could explore free legal aid. If we implemented something like that in HVL, that would help people be prepared for those situations would happen and where to get legal assistance. And setting up a consolidated office in HVL and creating a center of excellence. That could be very effective for 100K. We could create an enduring capability here in HVL, instead of going to this community office. We could create something that is enduring in HVL. It's just not the right now solution.

- Council Member Redmond: The sense is that we all want to help but we want to help in a systems way. Money is always on time but just for context, this money won't be approved until June. This means that this may be only early Fall. Is there a way to have more enduring support in this community? There are budget constraints. We're willing to spend money in the way that matters – direct assistance or staffing.
- Council Member ML: The reason that there was this debate was equity versus equality, but we have a lot of need amongst our community all around. It's just a bad time all around. We have very good programs in the City. They are doing a great job, not with a huge staff. Outside diaper distribution, they may get calls for the City building for assistance. They all want to help but it can go a long way to have a sustained help.
- JM: Since we are talking about the step on community engagement in the GARE analysis, have we consulted with CASA and community providers and their beneficiaries to see what they want – is it money, legal aid, other support? Reluctant to prioritize one or the other without having heard directly from the non-profits and the communities they serve.
- STEP 4: Who benefits from or will be burdened by your proposal? What are the strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
 - Did not reach this question during the meeting
- Council Member ML: Although this won't be on the next Council meeting agenda, it will be soon. Will you meet in time? Next Council Meeting is April 13 – not saying it is on the agenda then.
- SL: We may have to meet ad hoc. Prince George County of Human Rights sent an invitation for a Spanish language ... fair– please share far and wide with our communities.

7:54 pm – Adjourn Meeting – Co-chair Clemonts

- JM moves to adjourn; CK seconds