



COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

May 7, 2019, 11:00 a.m.
 VUU, Living & Learning Center
 Richmond, VA

Members present:

Will Palmquist, Chair	Doug Dunlap	Reggie Gordon
Bill Harrison	Dr. Catherine Howard	Mark Olinger
Karla Ramos	Steven Wilborn	

Members absent:

Andreas Addison	Danny Avula	Scott Blackwell
Dr. Allia Carter	Dr. Michael Jones	Dr. Cynthia Newbille
Ellen Robertson	Dr. Leo Whitaker	Michel Zajur

Other Attendees:

Ron Brown, U.S. Census Bureau	Shirley Gilliam, U.S. Census Bureau
Ida Jones (Designee for Dr. Allia Carter)	Marianne Pitts, City of Richmond

Mr. Palmquist called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

1. Committee and Subcommittee Updates

Mr. Will Palmquist gave an update on some of the work that he and the Committee have been undertaking since the last meeting. He began by displaying some updates to the RVACounts2020.com website, which included posting all meeting materials (agendas, summaries, presentations, etc.), as well as updates to the following pages: [RVA Counts in the News](#), [Publications & Articles](#), and [Census Jobs](#).

Mr. Palmquist discussed his recent involvement in Census-related discussions including a roundtable discussion which included other Committee members hosted by Governor Ralph Northam and Secretary of the Commonwealth Kelly Thomasson on April 1st (Census Day) 2019, and a panel discussion with staff from the Complete Count Committees of the cities of Norfolk and Alexandria hosted by the Virginia State Complete Count Commission where participants were asked questions and shared their experiences and efforts thus far. Mr. Palmquist summarized the last meeting of the Committee on April 2nd, which was a training led by Census Bureau staff that provided information on the roles of the Committee and its subcommittees.

Mr. Palmquist noted that Monica Callahan, formerly with ChamberRVA, is changing jobs and has decided she will no longer be able to participate on the Committee. Dr. Catherine Howard suggested reaching out to Kelley McCall of ChamberRVA to see if she would be interested in participating on the Committee or the Business Subcommittee.

Mr. Palmquist reminded the Committee that at the March 2019 meeting there was the suggestion to form a Philanthropy Committee, however no Committee members volunteered to chair it. He suggested that the Business Committee might be able to serve that role and could be renamed the “Business & Philanthropy Committee.” Committee members agreed that would be a good approach, as did the chair of that subcommittee, Mr. Douglas Dunlap.

Mr. Palmquist also noted that there were vice-chair positions available on a number of subcommittees, including Special Housing, Communications, Vocational & Rehabilitative, Faith-Based, and Business & Philanthropy. He asked for any volunteers to serve as the vice-chair for those committees, though noted that most of the Committee members in attendance were already chairing a subcommittee.

Mr. Steve Wilborn asked if there was an archive on the efforts of the City’s 2010 Complete Count Committee and suggested that the work being done now should be archived in an effort to help inform future efforts, such as a 2030 Complete Count Committee. Mr. Ron Brown of the U.S. Census Bureau stated that Complete Count Committees in 2010 had an opportunity to submit a final report to the Census Bureau. He stated that a number of committees did so but was not sure if Richmond was one of them. He noted that he would check to see and provide whatever he could find to the Committee so they could pull any past best practices. Mr. Reggie Gordon noted that the City’s Clerks Office may have the 2010 report.

Mr. Palmquist asked the subcommittee chairs if they would like to provide any updates on their efforts. The Education Committee chairs (Mr. Wilborn and Ms. Catherine Howard) noted that they met last month to discuss strategies to promote the Census through the schools and universities. Ms. Howard stated that they have created a mission statement for the subcommittee but would like input from the Communications Committee on messaging, branding, and outreach materials before finalizing their outreach strategy. She noted that they have discussed ways to involve the student government leadership from the various Richmond-based colleges and universities in a competition to increase Census participation rates among students. Mr. Brown commented that in 2010, the Greek and service organizations were key partners in this effort as well.

The Committee discussed the opportunity of festivals and other events to promote the 2020 Census, both in terms of education/awareness and employment opportunities. Ms. Karla Ramos stated that the Office of Human Services already attends a number of events where the Census could be promoted. Mr. Brown stated that the Census Bureau could make staff available to attend these events as well. Ms. Ramos stated that other departments, including the Department of Public Utilities and the Department of Public Works, attend various events around the city which could be an opportunity for Census promotion as well. She noted that City staff who attend events need to be trained to answer questions that may come from community members. Mr. Wilborn noted that he would be like to attend such events. Back-to-School events were discussed as another opportunity to promote the 2020 Census, where the message could be centered in part on the Free and Reduced Meals program, which is supported by relying on Census data. Ms. Ramos suggested that the departments and organizations that benefit from a more accurate count of the Census should be the ones promoting the message too.

Other opportunities for outreach and engagement discussed included presenting to the Richmond City Council. Mr. Brown stated that he was working with Council staff and President Cynthia Newbille to get on a meeting agenda. The Committee also discussed targeting stores for outreach materials (flyers, posters, signage in windows) where immigrant and Spanish-speaking populations shopped. The outreach material would be in Spanish with a message targeted specifically to them.

A discussion of necessary promotional materials and information took place, and Mr. Brown stated that the Census had some of these materials already created that he could share with the Committee. The Committee discussed the creation of FAQ’s that could be helpful, and Mr. Brown stated the Census Bureau had some of these materials as well, including on topics such as “Why We Ask” and “Confidentiality.” Committee members noted some questions to be included on the FAQ could include why the Census would need to verify information provided on a Census form and why a name is required on the Census form. Mr. Wilborn asked if there could be some kind of official RVA Counts 2020 nametag or button that would identify Committee members when they are doing engagement work. Mr. Brown suggested getting in touch with Nancy Rodriguez, who is on the State Complete Count Commission, as she had recently purchased Census-related stickers. The Committee also

discussed promoting the Census on utility and property tax bills. The local property tax bills are sent out in the beginning of April which would be good timing with the 2020 Census.

The issue of funding was discussed; and while there is no money allocated in the City's FY2019-2020 budget, Mr. Mark Olinger suggested that the Department of Planning & Development Review could purchase some printing and promotional materials. However, the Committee should look to businesses and philanthropic groups to raise funds and procure in-kind resources and materials as well.

2. Census Bureau Update from Ron Brown

Mr. Brown gave a brief update on recent efforts by the Census Bureau and the Virginia State Complete Count Commission. He stated that the State Complete Count Commission has been inviting local Complete Count Committees to their meetings to share best practices and outreach ideas. They are also creating regional outreach efforts which would promote the Census across jurisdictional boundaries. Ms. Ramos commented that this approach made sense, especially considering some populations, such as immigrant communities, live across several municipalities and are not limited to one city or county.

Mr. Brown also stated that an Area Census Office is opening in Richmond in July and they are working on outfitting the office in terms of personnel and equipment. This office will be able to more directly assist local Complete Count Committees in the Richmond region, as well as hire the field representatives that will be part of the enumeration efforts in 2020.

3. Discussion of Predicted Low Response Areas

Mr. Palmquist provided a brief presentation of maps of Richmond that showed the concentration of populations that are at risk of being undercounted. These factors include, in part: children under 5 years old, non-white population, Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, poverty status, limited-English proficiency, foreign-born, renter-occupied housing, and crowded housing.

The series of maps demonstrated that some of these populations at risk of being undercounted are spread throughout the city and others are relatively limited in geography. However, some specific neighborhoods in the city have four or more of these factors together. Mr. Palmquist showed these areas in more detail and discussed them in terms of housing type and socioeconomic details. He suggested that outreach efforts should be targeted in these areas since they are most at risk of being undercounted.

Mr. Palmquist explained that he plans on making these maps available as interactive on-line maps that all Committee members could use to help target their outreach efforts going forward.

4. Next Steps

Mr. Palmquist described the next steps to be taken between now and the next Committee meetings. These include finalizing the rosters of the subcommittees and preparing outreach materials that could be provided to the various subcommittees as they begin their outreach efforts.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:25 p.m.

The next meeting of the Complete Count Committee is scheduled for June 4th at 11 a.m., location TBD.