



CUYAHOGA COUNTY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EQUITY

Friday, March 15, 2024

9 AM – 11 AM

I. Call to Order

Chair Grimes called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was present.

In Attendance- Habeebah Grimes, Annette Blackwell, Ronnie Cannon, Stephen Caviness, Rev. Kenneth Chalker, Colleen Cotter, Dr. Heidi Gullett, LeVine Ross, Glen Shumate, Yanela Sims, and Sheila Wright.

Excused Absence- Jenice Contreras, Dr. Charles Modlin, and Eddie Taylor.

Clerk Byrd introduced, congratulated, and welcomed CACE's newest member Mr. Ronnie Cannon.

III. Moment of Silence and Reflection

Clerk Byrd spoke briefly about the importance of voting and encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote.

IV. Message from County Executive

Executive Ronayne thanked Clerk Byrd for her continued work with CACE.



Executive Ronayne also thanked CACE Chair Habeebah Grimes and Subcommittee Chairs Dr. Heidi Gullett, Glen Shumate, and Stephen Caviness for meeting with him earlier this year to discuss future collaboration between the County and CACE.

Executive Ronayne congratulated Member Shumate on being featured in an article published by [Cleveland.com](https://www.cleveland.com) during Black History Month.

Executive Ronayne thanked the newest member of CACE Ronnie Cannon for his willingness to serve.

Executive Ronayne shared the County is excited about the new Women's Health Commission which originated from the June 2022 Dobbs decision to protect women's health. Executive Ronayne thanked Cuyahoga Councilwoman Yvonne Conwell, Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Meredith Turner, and MetroHealth Hospital President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Airica Steed for their work on launching the Women's Health Commission.

Executive Ronayne shared how important it is to care for children who have been housed at Jane Edna Hunter. The County is partnering with The Centers to launch a youth wellness center to help youth in need.

Executive Ronayne provided an update on the Justice Campus. Executive Ronayne believes the CACE is appropriately positioned to serve as a valuable resource on this project and hopes the body will consider serving as a resource to advise on this project.

Executive Ronayne discussed the visits he and his team recently made to jails in other counties. He hopes to incorporate best practices from those jails in the soon to be built Justice Campus.

Councilwoman Conwell shared the Director of the Franklin County Jail has been invited to attend a County Council Health and Human Service Committee meeting in April. Councilwoman Conwell or Member Ross will update the CACE once a date is confirmed.



Member Wright recommended the County invite representatives from the prosecutor's office, the City of Cleveland, Administrative Judges, to visit the other jails with the Executive Team.

Member Blackwell asked Executive Ronayne if there had been any consideration given to ending the use of municipal jails and integrating municipal inmates into the new justice system.

Executive Ronayne acknowledged the importance of the question and is open to the possibility of making the new justice campus a resource for other Mayors and municipalities, but this consideration will require more work and research.

Member Blackwell referenced the ongoing issue with youth bindovers and asked if there was discussion on separation of juveniles from adults on the new justice campus.

Executive Ronayne confirmed there has been discussion and the topic requires more discussion.

Member Blackwell reiterated the importance of establishing trust with residents and suggested inviting Brian Stephenson of the Equal Justice Institute (EJI) to work on the justice campus project.

Executive Ronayne thanked Member Blackwell and asked her to share her contacts.

Member Cannon stated he was concerned about the community buy in. He asked what were the challenges identified in the jails visited.

Executive Ronayne explained there are thoughts and discussions around how we can have impact from the inside-out and he discussed the Unbail Project.

Member Chalker asked about the Executive's perception of juvenile bindovers and if the County is making any progress with eliminating cash bail.



Clerk Byrd responded and shared she believes the County is making real progress as it relates to the elimination of cash bail. The County has been working with the Bail Project and is meeting with other justice partners to get their buy in, including the Administrative and Presiding Judges of the Common Pleas and Municipal Courts who are tasked with making bail decisions. There is a population of people who have to be there, but some do not. The County is also continuing to work on other upstream issues.

Councilwoman Conwell shared additional thoughts on the exceptional pre-jail program in Franklin County.

Clerk Byrd added Cuyahoga County is working to implement a new Central Booking system.

As it relates to juvenile bindovers, Executive Ronayne shared he is in a different place than others. He believes we need to see what is possible and implement better practices. Executive Ronayne also shared there is an effort to get public defenders more funding.

Member Grimes said CACE can help to create a community and culture around the transformative change we are experiencing in Cuyahoga County.

V. Update from Chair Grimes

Member Grimes thanked Councilwoman Conwell for attending and providing her feedback and tour experience. She asked Councilwoman Conwell to extend gratitude to the other members of Council for their active role in this effort.

Member Grimes shared an overview of the meeting the CACE Chairs held with County Executive Ronayne.

Member Grimes extended her gratitude to Member Cannon.



VI. Public Comment

There were no public comments submitted via email to equity@cuyahogacounty.us since the December 2023 meeting.

VII. Approval of the Minutes

The meeting minutes for the December 11, 2023 meeting were approved.

VIII. Presentation from the MetroHealth Medical Center

Unfortunately, Member Modlin was unable to attend the meeting. Executive Director of Health Equity and Community Engagement at MetroHealth Hospital, Michele Davis-Ishmel and Health Equity and Program Coordinator at MetroHealth, LaShon Carson provided an overview and brief presentation on the MetroHealth Minority Men’s Health Fair.

IX. Update from the Department of Equity and Inclusion

Director Lockett shared, the Department of Equity and Inclusion held an annual virtual employee training titled “What’s Next” to review what was learned about equity in past trainings and share how the County can move forward and continue to have impact.

Additionally, the mid-year Virtual Equity Summit will be held in June and the Vendor fair will be held on April 11th and again in July and October.

Clerk Byrd asked Director Lockett to share any plans for repeating the 2022 GARE employee survey.

Director Lockett responded the survey was originally completed in 2022 and will be conducted again next year in 2025.

Member Shumate asked if there was any update on the Disparity Study.



Director Lockett shared the Department of Equity and Inclusion plans to issue a request for proposal (“RFP”) for the Disparity Study.

Member Shumate also asked if there are procurement changes being considered in the County.

Director Lockett confirmed the recent change affects the required period of time to determine if the procurement type is defined as formal or informal.

X. Update from the Department of Human Resources

Cuyahoga County Human Resources Manager Kimberley Coleman provided the Human Resource updates. She stated legislation to expand the eligibility criteria for paid parental leave benefit was recently passed, and “Civil Treatment” training for County employees will be instituted in 2024.

Additionally, Ms. Coleman shared Human Resources is not only working with a consultant to conduct a pay equity study for non-bargaining employees, but is also compiling recruitment plans for each county department.

XI. GARE Update

The GARE update will be provided via email due to time constraints.

However, a motion passed to utilize CACE funding to send Clerk Byrd and one of her staff to the GARE Facing Race Conference in St. Louis, Missouri in November 2024.

XII. Adjournment

The CACE meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.