

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting

May 18, 2023, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Cuyahoga County Administrative Building –Room 5-006

2079 East Ninth Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Cleveland, OH 44115

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission		
Last Name	First Name	Agency
Lockett	Lenora	Equity & Inclusion
Herdeg	Paul	Development
Marshall	Sheba	Human Resources
Merriman	David	Health and Human Services
Smialek	Jill	Public Safety and Justice Services
Nemastil	Sarah	Human Resources
Guests		
Lyons	La Quisha	Equity & Inclusion
Fulton	Cassandra	Equity & Inclusion
Calovini	Daune	Communications

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order (10:01 am) – Director David Merriman
  - a. Roll call and stated we have a quorum.
  - b. Review & Approval of Minutes
    - Minutes approved: Motion to approve made by Jill Smialek, seconded by David Second.
- III. Public Comment
  - There was no public comment.
- IV. Opening Remarks from Equity Commission Members
  1. David announced staff changes. Sheba Marshall is leaving Cuyahoga County and thanked her for her service.
  2. Sheba stated she will be going to Kent State University and was thankful for her time here.
  3. Sarah stated that she is now the Director of Human Resources and is excited to work with everyone. She thanked Sheba for her service.
  4. Paul stated that Development held their semi- annual partners meeting. They had a good turn out and had good updates. County financial support partners have served 3000 businesses with a focus on SBE/MBEs. They have new programs coming and would like some agenda time to discuss more information on these programs at a future

session. County Executive Chris Ronayne did the welcome and announced plans to form an Office of Small Business that will be housed in development under Vaughn Johnson as the Director. They are working through the process to have extra resources. This office will be a connector and identify any gaps for small business needs. This is not to duplicate any work that is already being done. Director Herdeg also provided details on a RFQ to continue county funding for small businesses and allowing time to have a next round of funding for March of 2024. Vaughn was a panelist at a President's Council Event focused on doing business with government. They are excited about future potential collaborations with a major health care with over 1 billion dollars of supplier needs.

5. Lenora stated they are updating the purchasing /forecast and it will be posted by July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. It is a combination of all purchases planned by departments and agencies from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023-June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
6. David stated some recent policy changes and they have made the decision to change the call center structure. The new hours are 8am-1pm. This will help cut down the wait times. Additionally, DCFS will hold a pride event in celebration of pride month. DCFS will walk in the pride parade and there will be opportunities for staff to join the walk. They try to do outreach engagement with the LGBTQ2+ community.
7. Jill states their department equity team met in April and they had a good creative conversation on how to Improve DEI. They want to create a focus group to help them get more qualified applicants. Also, their potential goals include: encouraging one on one interactions with employees so they can feel included and to enhance outreach efforts, implementing ideas about employee engagement and moral, helping people understand the meaning of Juneteenth, supporting pride week like HHS and displaying work of diverse artists for internal and external people. They will prioritize ideas at their next meeting to get these activities underway.

#### V. Equity Commission Duties

1. Lenora stated this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> full year having the meetings of the Equity Commission and wanted everyone to reacquaint themselves with the county code requirements for the Equity Commission. She provided everyone with a copy of the County Code. The County Code details the County Directors that are to serve as Commissioners. It details the requirements of the Annual Equity Report. Furthermore, it details the

overall goal of the Equity Commission is to advocate for the advancement of equity in Cuyahoga County.

2. David thanks Lenora for addressing this issue. He stated that it is timely and worthwhile that we spend some time on this issue. This is the first half of the year for the new Administration and this is an opportunity for them to lay out a framework and a direction.
3. Lenora stated that more work on a unified implementation of collecting the baseline data is needed. Everyone is demonstrating their focus within their areas and working to move the needle by applying the equity lens to their operations. Also, the Equity Commission should be the model and find ways to push or encourage our peers.
4. Paul stated that before the state of the county there will be an announcement of the Chief of Integrated Development. There will be coordinated work among Development, the new Department of Housing and Community Development, the Planning Commission, Public Works, Senior Advisor on Transportation and Sustainability. Of all these entities, Development is the only one that is a member of the Equity Commission. He views it as Development's responsibility to elevate equity work within the group.
5. Lenora agreed and stated that it is important to continue elevating equity work to our peers.
6. David stated that his team had some really active discussion about how do you find balance. A good example where a strategic action plan was produced to end homelessness through housing with equitable pathways to housing. In many ways, it reflects on what the federal government has laid out for its strategic plan. At the same time, he doesn't think it shows up in the baseline data because it's new and it's responsive to the federal government.
7. Lenora agreed and stated that when changes are made you may not immediately have that external result. We still need to find a balance on documenting and doing the work today for the future and realizing results today.
8. Paul had two additional comments. He stated it is important that we stay in sync and advocate for the performance data collection to be done. His

second point was that the Equity Commission has an obligation to coordinate with CACE. He understands that Chief Byrd is one of the key people and is back with the Clerk of Courts, but it is important that we keep in touch.

9. Lenore stated that we do keep in touch, and they are moving to quarterly meeting and can discuss on how we can give updates and see if there is an opportunity for further coordination.
10. Paul thinks it is important as an internal team to make sure that we are informed on the direction that CACE is going so there can be a report to the executive as needed.
11. Lenora stated she will reach out about meetings and further collaboration.
12. David supports that decision as well and his department is always ready to step up and can join this meeting.

#### VI. Mid-Year Summit

1. Lenora stated that last year's training was provided by Tri-C. It included different coaching sessions by Dr. Moore who was part of the Tri-C team. One of his recommendations was for Cuyahoga County to do a mid-year equity summit. The summit will be a meeting with peers that provides an opportunity to share and learn from others. The summit will be held on June 15, 2023, from 8:30 am-12:00 pm. The County Executive will be doing the welcome. The invitations have been sent. We are seeking representation from each area.
2. David states he has a big meeting that day and will send representation.

#### VII. County Pitch Day

1. Lenora stated that this is an initiative whose target audience is businesses especially small businesses, minority businesses and woman businesses. We would like county procurements staff from each department to be represented. It will be held on July 13, 2023, 9:00 am-12:00 pm. Departments that have procurements on the forecast should be available. This is an opportunity for vendors to pitch ideas and see what opportunities are coming up on the forecast. It will also be a fair

offering face to face hands on assistance to business. They will get assistance on how to register in Infor and how to complete standard county forms, and submitting a bid.

2. David asked for marketing materials for the event that he could share and stated that he can assist with the event.

#### VIII. Closing Remarks

1. Jill stated that she received the invitation to Mid-Year Summit and looks forward to it.
2. Paul asked commissioners to share information on Juneteenth events and Development will share the information with their network.
3. Sarah thanked everyone and stated that she is excited to be working with everyone. She also stated that she's looking forward to the mid-year summit.
4. Daune suggested making invitations to departments that are not part of the Equity Commission to provide updates on how they are applying the equity lens in their work.
5. David states that HHS has an outreach team called Comet that does eligibility applications at events and can go out with laptops and walk people through applications. With the change in hours from our contact center, HHS is trying to balance the change in hours by going out in the community more to service their needs.

Meeting adjourned 10:47am

