

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting
September 21, 2023, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Cuyahoga County Administrative Building – Room 5-006
2079 East Ninth Street, 5th Floor
Cleveland, OH 44115

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission		
Last Name	First Name	Agency
Lockett	Lenora	Equity & Inclusion
Murray	Christopher	Health and Human Services
Nemastil	Sarah	Human Resources
Smialek	Jill	Public Safety and Justice Services
Johnson	Vaughn	Development
Calovini	Daune	Communications
Guests		
Coleman	Kimberly	Human Resources
Denton	Cheryl	Clerk of Courts
Murdock	Jamillah	Equity & Inclusion
Slayton	Shaunna	Equity & Inclusion

- I. Welcome

- II. Call to Order (10:03 am) – Christopher Murray, Chairman
 - i. Roll call completed; previous minutes reviewed.
 - ii. Call for Review & Approval of Minutes made by Christopher Murray.
 - Minutes approved: Motion to approve made by Sarah Nemastil, seconded by Vaughn Johnson.

- III. Public Comment
 - There was no public comment.

- IV. Opening Remarks from Equity Commission Members
 - i. Sarah Nemastil- Working toward changing job postings and qualification equivalencies. Historically, equivalencies have not been included in the job postings. We are expecting more applicants due to including the equivalencies in the postings. PRC Director, Director Lockett and Director Nemastil are looking into procuring test analyzers software to ensure job postings and their language are inclusive. Reviewing personnel and promoting a diverse workforce. HR Equity and Inclusion Committee will attend a conference on October 25, 2023, at the Cleveland Museum of Art to explore the importance of DEI, provide insight for supporting DEI, and offer tools to foster inclusivity. Planning the third panel

discussion in our “Can We Talk, Conversations That Matter”. This discussion will be centered around food equity. We will continue to spotlight diversity that expands throughout our county by exploring our county’s civil rights trail, touring Asia Town, and returning to the Maltz Museum. Also, we plan on increasing our upcoming outreach projects. Working with Director Lockett on upcoming events.

- ii. Lenora Lockett- There’s upcoming Fiscal Office Refresher training for staff planned for mid-October. There will be several Fiscal Departments providing the content. Details should be sent soon.
- iii. Vaughn Johnson- Internally, several staff are taking classes on equitable lending training. It is to provide in-depth instruction to business lenders on our loan policies and advancing economic justices. It is a series of five-six classes. Externally, the County had a grant program that provided grant dollars to small and minority businesses. It was called the Stimulus Small Business Grant. It sunset last December. We are now in phase two, which is the follow-up phase. A lot of the businesses who benefited from the grant have expanded and grown. There are several nice stories that came out of that grant program. Cuyahoga County won a national award for that program because of the way it was put together. Lenora Lockett put together the County Pitch Day event, which was outstanding. We received a sign-in list of 100 businesses that attended that event. We have already started outreach to those minority enterprises to support them and connect them with our capital partners that provide other products and services to help them continue to grow. I have been working with some major employers in the county to create a buyers form and a procurement form. In my efforts in working with a major healthcare provider, (which is Cleveland Clinic) and the Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council, there is an event that's taking place right now. It is at Cleveland Clinic (Beachwood Campus), and it focuses on how minority businesses can do business with some of the largest employers in the county. I have a team there; they are going to talk about how to do business with Cuyahoga County. Thanks to Lenora and her staff, they gave us a ton of information we can use at the event. We will continue our work in this area, this is the first of a series that we are going to do.
- iv. Jill Smialek- At our last meeting, I talked about how we were using the budget process to further our initiatives and our programs that touch on the DEI space. We completed our structure for using equity zones to determine which communities we assist in their applications for our public grant program; it’s called Assistance to Firefighters Grant. The grants are state and federal dollars. They require a local match. The City apply to replace their fire trucks, ambulances, and equipment for first responders. You need a local match and the communities that have more resources can provide more match funds. We finished our structure (just awaiting Director signature) to distribute funds to

assist communities with meeting their local match. In other words, it would be money from public safety and justice services that we are providing to the community. We are considering the equity zones in the process. This is being finalized and we are proud of that. We are also working on an internship and workforce enhancement program. We have paused it because it is dependent on our budget for 2024. However, it is something that we want to move forward with as soon as we can and know exactly what our funding will be. Our interest there is twofold. First, we want to increase the pipeline of employees or future employees who might want to get into the public safety field, whether it's emergency management or emergency communications. Second, we want to make sure we have a paid internship available for people who may not otherwise be able to work in an internship field or role. We would also like to add on parts of it to make sure that we are working with Tri-C and other training programs throughout the county to increase the pipeline of people who may want to enter a public safety career. That is something that we hope to move forward in 2024. At our last meeting, I did talk to you a little bit about Camp Hope, which is a program for kids who are exposed to violence, ran through our witness victim service center. We had 40 kids at camp at the end of July/beginning of August. We know that people of color are disproportionately impacted by violence and so we view this program as a hopeful and impactful way to help address the needs of people who have been traumatized because of violence. Hopefully, this will reduce violence in the future. It was very successful. We had about 30 law enforcement officers throughout the county come and hang out with the kids for the day. A big shout out to the Metro Parks Police, they brought their dive team who did swimming and kayaking with the kids, they brought a horse out, they were just the most popular. It was a great day and we are seeing those kids again this weekend to take them fishing and kayaking at the park. Since our last update, we have an increased focus on outreach. We recently brought on an additional team member who has great skill in outreach. Daune (Communications) was able to take part in a resource fair for minority, female business owners. They made a ton of connections and they've been invited to more outreach events.

- v. Christopher Murray- On September 29th at the Cleveland Marriott East from 9:30 to 4:30 PM, there is a 2023 Northeast Ohio Aging and Disability Summit and it is presented by our own Department of Senior and Adult Services, as well as Metro Health and the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging. The summit will provide an opportunity to dialogue, share innovations and best practices on issues impacting older adults and adults with disabilities. There will be speakers and some of the topics will include, of course, advancing health, equity, diversity, inclusion and aging. Our own County Executive: Chris Ronayne will be speaking. The conference will be available virtually. There is a QR code on the county

website for registration. Within our own HHS REI Committee, we have conducted two of our four crucial conversations sessions. Enthusiasm has been spectacular, we had upwards of 60-65 plus participants. This work is timely and important, and we will continue. You will see this in our equity report at the end of the year and our next endeavor is to create a repository of historical achievements of underrepresented populations in America. We know some of the challenges that schools have in terms of getting this information into the hands of our students. We are going to continue the education process, we are excited about that.

V. DEI Trainings

- i. Lenora-I want to thank everyone for all the wonderful work you are doing. It is inspiring to hear all the different ways that each of our areas are finding ways to apply that equity lens to our work. We have a team meeting that occurs weekly. There is representation from HR, Clerk of Courts, Tri-C (who is the vendor providing the training/departement of IT), and the Department of Equity and Inclusion. This team is focused on the makeup sessions that are occurring as a supplement to last year's training by Tri-C. We are doing four town hall sessions. The final town hall makeup session will be on October 11th from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. I want to thank Communications for getting the word out with the In the Know publication. We also have information on registering available on the County Intranet site and My Time. Soon, there will be management make-up sessions. Those details will be available shortly. In 2024, HR's training team and DEI will be trained by Tri C to provide those training services going forward. Once DEI and HR complete the train the trainer classes, we will work together to provide additional for the town hall makeup sessions and the management makeup sessions. As a result of a survey provided by Communications, we got feedback on what equity topics employees wanted to have more information. Based on the results of the survey, we put together the training on Microaggressions and Mental Health. We are trying to increase awareness and build capacity by giving our employees access to information about our unconscious biases and the ways that we can make our work workplace and our world more inclusive.

VI. 2024 Equity Commission Meeting Schedule

- i. Christopher asked are there any new recommendations? Lenora stated we have been bi-monthly for two years and that expires in November. Lenora asked if members prefer bi-monthly or quarterly? Vaughn stated a lot of his department's measures are measured quarterly, so he votes for quarterly.

Christopher pointed out that it aligns with the budgeting. Jill agreed and stated, if ad hoc is okay, she agrees with quarterly. Lenora stated the Equity Commission Working Group can also switch to quarterly. Lenora suggested meeting the second month of each quarter; Feb, May, August, November. Chris called for a motion, Lenora moved (to a quarterly meeting beginning February 2024), Jill seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. 2024 meetings will still be held the third Thursday of the chosen month.

VII. Annual Equity Report

- i. Lenora – It is a heavy load and must be published by January 31 each year (details in the County Code). The report template includes a department overview and a year in review that provides the summary of 2023 from each department. The last section details the goals/commitments for the upcoming year. Jill stated that there are a lot of new Directors and it may be a good idea to do a training. Lenora stated that the equity report was mentioned at the Mid-year Equity Summit. Chris asked if there is a specific person who they should reach out to for questions? Lenora stated, Jennifer or herself, but we are building capacity internally. Lenora stated she is looking into conducting virtual meetings.
- ii. Daune stated she believes the virtual workshops are a great idea and that Communications will assist in any way needed.

VIII. Closing Remarks

- i. Jill Smialek – Good and helpful organizational meeting.
- ii. Vaughn Johnson- Continues to be encouraged. Looking forward to ending 2023 well and a great start to 2024.
- iii. Lenora Lockett- There will be a lot packed into the next few months. However, it can be done. Let's get ready.
- iv. Sarah Nemastil- It is remarkable to hear the great things the County is doing. October is national disability month. Review the fall newsletter.
- v. Christopher Murray- Commended everyone for the work they are doing. Do not get weary! What we are doing goes beyond our buildings and organizations. Next meeting is November 16, 2023.
- vi. Adjourn (10:49 am)

Next Scheduled Meeting: November 16, 2023 @ 10:00am