

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting  
 May 16, 2024, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM  
 Cuyahoga County Administrative Building – Room 5-006  
 2079 East Ninth Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Cleveland, OH 44115

<b>Cuyahoga County Equity Commission</b>		
<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Johnson	Vaughn	Economic Development
Lockett	Lenora	Department of Equity and Inclusion
Merriman	David	Health and Human Services
Nemastil	Sarah	Human Resources
Smialek	Jill	Public Safety and Justice Service
<b>Guests</b>		
Bean	Jacob	Economic Development (Intern)
Coleman	Kimberly	Human Resources
Denton	Cheryl	Clerk of Courts
Duckworth	Shashonna	Urban League
Huth	Gregory	Law Department
Kotsinyan	Sona	Economic Development (Fellow)
Murdock	Jamillah	Department of Equity and Inclusion
Pacheco Moreira	Raphael	Economic Development (Fellow)
Slayton	Shaunna	Department of Equity and Inclusion
Vion	Martin	Economic Development (Fellow)
Woodard	Kelly	Communications

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order (10:04 am) – David Merriman, Chairman
  - i. Roll call completed; previous minutes reviewed and approved.
  - ii. Call for Review & Approval of Minutes made by David Merriman.
    - 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. Jill Smialek- Public Safety and Justice Services have a local match program for federal funding, which is the assistance for firefighter’s grant (AFG). Many communities apply for

the funding, they are required to produce the local match. Traditionally, the county assisted communities with the local match, we were unsure whether we would have money this year, but we are happy that we were able to announce to Fire Chiefs, we do have the money. When determining which communities we will accept for assistance, we are looking at the communities that are specifically within the previously identified DEI equity zones. Also, we have what we are calling our critical unmet needs plan. This is through our office of Emergency Management (our division that assists communities when they are dealing with a public safety emergency). This plan came out of a large fire in East Cleveland last summer, a large apartment building had to be evacuated for several months. The residents living in that apartment building were struggling with mental illness, substance use, and other social service situations. If this were to happen again, we would have a specific supplemental plan. We have a program called equity and advocacy, it is a ten-week course, and it is specifically for victim advocates. Each week is a different topic.

- ii. Vaughn Johnson- Introduced the Department of Development Fellows. We have several initiatives that support MBEs, also we are attending and participating in many entrepreneurial events. We are going to have a resource table at the Small Business Expo, an event put on by congress woman; Shontel Brown. Jacob continues to reach out to the stimulus grant winners and pitch day event participants. Also, he follows up with them on products and services initiatives that the county can assist with. Our RFQ awardees have been determined, \$4 million will be going to these organizations.
- iii. Sarah Nemastil- HR is in the process of procuring text analyzer software, this software will help us review our job postings, position descriptions, the language used, help us make sure that we are using inclusive language, free of bias. This is to help ensure we are not discouraging diverse applicants from applying. We are continuing to collaborate with our consultant, who is conducting a pay equity study to identify and provide recommendations regarding peer equity issues and compression amongst all our non-bargaining employees. We are pleased to report the rollout of our civil treatment training program. It is a program that provides methods for leaders and employees to work together and correct unprofessional or uncivil behavior in the workplace. We expect to make the training available to non-supervisor employees in the third quarter. It is important that we complete this training as part of the successful implementation of the county's equity initiatives and diversity initiatives. If we do not have that foundational level of civility and respect, it will be difficult to advance DEI. We plan to continue to work strategically with Director Lockett and her team, Clerk Byrd and Citizens Advisory (CACE), and persons with disabilities.
- iv. Kimberly Coleman- Most recently, our group attended a DEI leadership panel, sponsored by the Cleveland chapter of the Society of Human Resource Management. We had a discussion led by diversity champions from Metro Hospital, The Cleveland Orchestra and Jacks Casino. These events give our team the ability to network with fellow HR and DEI practitioners and allow us to collaborate, so we can always bring the best practices and leadership goals back to Cuyahoga County. to help support our employees. We are still excited about our panel discussion series that we have titled "Can We Talk". In April, we had the pleasure of Director Lockett collaborating with us on the panel discussion called "Dispelling the Myth of the Demise of DEI". Our panel included our chief of staff, Erik Janas and they led an enlightening discussion that spotlighted all the positive and impactful effects that DEI continues to have within the workplace. Stay tuned for our next event in June, our panel is planning to discuss Pride Month.

- v. David Merriman – Tuesday, County Council appropriated funding from the county's social impact fund to a program that we are managing. We are contracting with a national nonprofit to help Ohio national guardsmen get into, stay in, and complete a college or training program. Unlike other workforce initiatives, we are funding the outcomes we are not funding the services. The organization serving these individuals provides coaching to existing guardsmen to help them better utilize the scholarships they have available to them, identify a program that meets their professional needs, and stay engaged with that program. One of the components of it is recognition that black guardsmen performed at a lower level in terms of college entry, college matriculation, and degree attainment. We are paying a priority payment to have guardsmen that are minorities complete those outcomes. We have not gotten the report yet as to how many from any group have achieved any of the payment points, I believe this will be the first time that we have done a performance-based/payment-based program, upon recognizing the disparity of outcomes. Next month there will be a presentation on this project at County Councils Health and Human services Aging Committee. Recently, we closed an extremely sensitive procurement for our providers that offer high quality universal pre-kindergarten services (UPK). This is one of the top priorities of the county to fund early childhood education that goes beyond minimum expectations. We have seen over the past couple of years, the staff that serve families in these early childhood education centers tend to be very low paid. These low wages have made the positions unattractive and, in many cases, are requiring families to potentially work multiple jobs to make ends meet. The office of early childhood made the decision to increase the amount of reimbursement or scholarships they offer to address a workforce issue that is heavily focused on women, many of whom are minorities, many of whom live in high poverty communities. Our welcome center continues to grow, there is a newcomer's event today. The event is targeting Spanish speaking residents that are having a challenging time accessing public assistance benefits. In the past we have talked a bit about the placement crisis and how that has affected our programs and services, especially with our ability to serve young adults. Our primary response to this placement crisis is to create shelter and service partnerships with a local organization. This will stop children awaiting placement from being in our office building. We should make sure that our services are quality, and they meet people's needs. We want to ensure after services are provided, our residents are better off than they were before. Let us point out our Department of Children and Family Services great work.
- vi. Lenora Lockett - Since our last meeting, we had the annual kickoff of our "What's Next" program in March. In April, we followed it up with partnerships with Development and various departments with the Vendor Fair. It was the first of three that are planned this year. This is an opportunity for vendors to get face to face personal assistance with registering in our Infor system, learning about what the county plans to purchase, and assistance with certification. In April, we also did a Kaizen event, as part of our plan is to continue to embed equity into our operations. Part of the Kaizen event is the intense review and out-of-the-box concentrated review in a process or workflow, remove waste and look at ways to make it more efficient and equitable. The second half of today, the partners have committed, we have more than 80 county personnel that will be participating in the Tri-C Community Action Poverty Simulation. June will follow up with our annual midyear equity summit, it will be virtual. We are looking at it as a more intense workshop and that we can invite more leadership and we are looking at a

workshop to revisit the DEI scorecard, this is an opportunity where we can get input from various departments leadership.

- V. Department of Development – Office of Small Business
  - i. Vaughn Johnson - Power Point attached.
- VI. Urban League-Programs & Services to Support MBEs
  - i. Shashonna Duckworth – Power Point attached.
- VII. Closing Remarks
- VIII. Adjourn (11:02 am)

*Next Scheduled Meeting: August 15, 2024, at 10:00am*



Cuyahoga County  
Development



## Office of Small Business

Vaughn P. Johnson  
Deputy Director for Economic Development  
Department of Development

### How the County Supports Small Business

- **Small Business Support through our Capital Partners**
- **New Office of Small Business**

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development

Cuyahoga County | Development





# Support for Businesses

## Capital and Ecosystem Partners

Provide Services to Small Business

\$7,000,000 in two RFQs

\$2,000,000 in STIMulus Grant

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development

Cuyahoga County | Development



## Office of Small Business



Get help starting and growing your business, finding financial support, or winning contracts.

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development

Cuyahoga County | Development





# New Office of Small Business



- One-Stop for everything Small Business
- Serve as a Connector and Hub for Small Business Resource Ecosystem
- Navigate County Internal Resources
- Small Business Advocate – Listen
- Develop New Programs/Products

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development



MANUFACTURING WORKS

HFLA OF NORTHEAST OHIO

Greater Cleveland Partnership

MSDC | OHIO MINORITY SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Ohio Minority Business Assistance Centers Cleveland at the Urban League of Greater Cleveland

MAGNET

U-BIZ VENTURE CAPITAL

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

NORTHEAST OHIO HISPANIC BUSINESS CENTER

OHIO AEROSPACE INSTITUTE

ARCTARIS IMPACT INVESTORS

jumpstart

FUND FOR OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE

The PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL AN ENGINE FOR BLACK BUSINESS GROWTH

Team neo NETWORK PARTNER

LLSC CLEVELAND

Greater Cleveland Partnership COSE

ECDI Investing in the growth of small business

GREATER CLEVELAND CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

APEX ACCELERATORS

Village Capital

Grow America Formerly NDC | Partners in Community Development

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development

Cuyahoga County | Development



# “Your Business is Our Business”



I need help...



Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development



# “Your Business is Our Business”



**Office of Small Business**

The new office within the Department of Development offers personalized assistance and guidance to small business owners, ensuring they receive the support needed to navigate the business landscape seamlessly.



Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development







### Start Your Business

We are here to turn your brightest idea into a radiant reality.



### Access to Capital

We are here to guide you through the difficult choices in finding your best-match lender.



### Grow Your Business

We have a network of resource opportunities to take your business to the next stage.



### Procurement & Contracting

We can help you identify contracting opportunities in both public and private sectors.

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development



## “Your Business is Our Business”



Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development



# Office of Small Business

Department of Development  
2079 E. 9th Street - 7th Floor  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
Phone: (216) 698-2272  
smallbusiness@cuyahogacounty.us



Office of Small Business

Vaughn P. Johnson – Deputy Director for Economic Development

Cuyahoga County | Development



## Programs & Services to Support MBEs

Shashonna Duckworth  
Regional Director  
Minority Business Assistance Center



# OUR CENTERS

## Entrepreneurship Center at ULGC

The Entrepreneurship Center focuses on helping all businesses at every stage, small to large, ten employees or just one.

The Entrepreneurship Center consists of :

- Small Business Development Center
- UBIZ Venture Capital
- Minority Business Assistance Center

### SBDC

No-cost business counseling and assistance to individuals who are either starting or growing a business. (Ideation Phase)

### MBAC

Operating on Four Pillars: Access to Capital, Contract Procurement, Certifications and Technical Assistance

### UBIZ

Make access to capital more readily available to African American & minority owned businesses with high growth potential.



## MBAC SERVICES

### Our Four Pillars

One

Technical Assistance

Two

Access To Capital



Three

Business Certifications

Four

Contract Procurement

# BUSINESS CERTIFICATIONS



<p>Designed to assist minority businesses in obtaining state government contracts.</p> <p><b>Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be a "for profit" entity, must be in business for 1 year &amp; the minority business owner must own 51% of the company for at least one year prior to applying for certification.</li> <li>• Minority groups:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ African Americans or Blacks</li> <li>◦ American Indian</li> <li>◦ Asians</li> <li>◦ Hispanics or Latinos</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Designed to help increase the visibility of small business owners that are women on a corporate level.</p> <p><b>Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owned and controlled by a woman who is a U.S. citizen and: Has an established residency in the state of Ohio or a reciprocal state.</li> <li>• 51% of the company must be owned by a woman.</li> <li>• Opened &amp; operating for at least 1 year</li> </ul>	<p>Designed to assist socially and economically disadvantaged business in receiving state contracts in areas such as: construction, engineering or technology services.</p> <p><b>Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owned and controlled by a U.S. citizen and Ohio resident who is both socially and economically disadvantaged:</li> <li>• Social disadvantage</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> <li>• Female gender</li> <li>• Chronic, physical or mental disability</li> <li>• Business owner's long-term residence in an environment isolated from the mainstream of American society (i.e., HUBZone)</li> <li>• Additionally, must employ 35 percent of workforce from within a HUBZone</li> <li>• Economic disadvantage</li> <li>• Personal net worth of less than \$750,000 at time of application;</li> </ul>	<p>Provides preference or bonus points to certified companies that compete to contract with the state to supply the goods or services it needs, including eligible construction services.</p> <p><b>Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least fifty-one percent of the business is owned by veterans or persons on active service;</li> <li>• Business is certified by U.S. Dept. of Vet Affairs as Service-Disabled Vet.- Owned Small Business or Vet.-Owned Small Business &amp; owners meets the definition of veteran; or</li> <li>• At least fifty-one percent of the board of directors are veterans or persons on active service;</li> <li>• At least ten percent of the business employees are veterans or on active service</li> </ul>
---	---	--	---



## Benefits of Certification



Access To Contracts



Increased Revenue



Financial & Bonding Assistance



Competitive Advantage



# SERVICES TO SUPPORT MBES



## State of Ohio Minority Business Development Division Financial Assistance Programs

A frequent obstacle to minority and small business expansion and growth is the lack of capital. The Minority Business Development Division administers loan and bond programs that promote the growth and establishment of minority and small businesses in Ohio.



**Ohio Micro-Loan Program** – Helps stimulate the growth of new (at least one-year-old businesses generating revenue and positive cash flow) and existing state-certified MBE and WBE businesses with micro-loans at 0% interest. The minimum loan is \$10,000 up to a maximum of \$45,000.



**Women's Business Enterprise Loan Program** – Provides loans to certified and non-certified women-owned businesses at or below market rate, currently up to 3%. The minimum loan is \$45,000 up to a maximum of \$500,000.



**Minority Direct Loan Program** Provides funding up to \$1.5 million for eligible projects such as land, building, machinery, or equipment purchases at rates 1.5% interest for the state's portion of the loan.



**Minority Business Bonding Program** Provides surety bonds up to \$1 million to approved state-certified minority businesses.



**Collateral Enhancement Program** Provides lending institutions with cash collateral deposits to use as additional collateral support for loans made to eligible small businesses.



**Ohio Capital Access Program** Provides lending institutions with cash deposits to secure bank loans of up to \$350,000 for land, building, machinery, or equipment, or it can also support working capital needs, such as inventory or payroll, up to \$250,000.

# PROCUREMENT

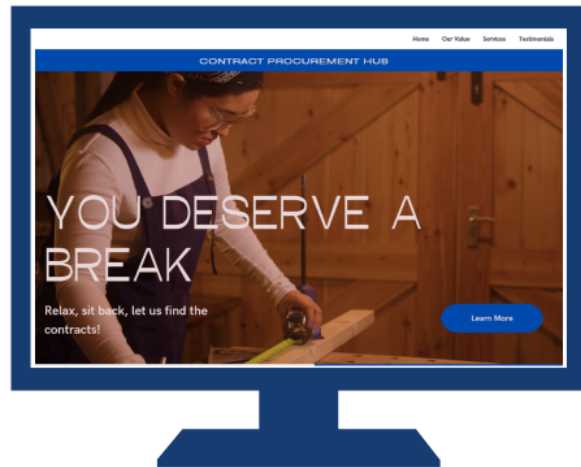


OhioBuys, operated by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, is the State of Ohio's online purchasing solution that empowers both government buyers and interested suppliers. It leverages innovative technologies to increase efficiency, opportunities, and participation with businesses in Ohio.



# PROCUREMENT

Our RFP website serves as a valuable tool for small businesses seeking contract opportunities by providing easy access to a wide range of opportunities, tailored support, and a transparent bidding process.





## Stay Connected

Instagram:

UrbanLeagueOfGreaterCleveland  
ShashonnaD

Facebook:

UrbanLeagueOfGreaterCleveland  
Shashonna Duckworth

Twitter:

ULCleveland  
ShashonnaD

Linkedin: Shashonna Duckworth

216-535-1133 [mbacinfo@ulcleveland.org](mailto:mbacinfo@ulcleveland.org) [Ulcleveland.org](http://Ulcleveland.org)