



CUYAHOGA COUNTY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EQUITY

Monday, December 13, 2021

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

I. Call to Order

Nailah K. Byrd called the meeting to order at 1:38 PM.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was present.

In Attendance- Eddie Taylor, Heidi Gullett, Marsha Mockabee, Habeebah Grimes, Glen Shumate, Randall McShepard, Victor Ruiz, Rev. Kenneth Chalker, India Pierce Lee, Levine Ross and Mayor Annette Blackwell

Excused Absence- Rabbi Joshua Caruso, Stephen Caviness, Sheila Wright and Jenice Contreras

Absent- Yanela Sims

Since our last meeting, County Executive Budish selected Maple Heights Mayor Annette Blackwell to serve as a member of the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity (CACE). Mayor Blackwell was confirmed by the Cuyahoga County Council and was present for this meeting.

Clerk Byrd and Chair Taylor congratulated and welcomed Mayor Annette Blackwell.

Mayor Blackwell introduced herself and thanked County Executive Budish for his nomination and the opportunity to serve in the capacity as a CACE member.



III. Moment of Silence and Reflection

During the moment of silence and reflection, Clerk Byrd shared some thoughts on this challenging year.

Clerk Byrd encouraged us to reflect on the blessings of our health and yet be mindful of all the people we know, as well as those we don't, who are victims of Covid, illness and health issues.

She requested we be thankful for our homes, food, and other comforts we take for granted while so many in our community are seemingly invisible, homeless and hungry; to reflect and pray for health, safety protection and peace for all lives.

Clerk Byrd also shared how the Massai people of Northern, Central and Southern Tanzania greet each other by asking "how are the children?" They believe if a community is prosperous, safe, and healthy, then the children must be cared for at all times.

Clerk Byrd encouraged us reflect on our children and how all children are really our children. They are confronting the most challenging times in the history of this country. They need our love and support.

Also, we must reflect on the injustices perpetuated against so many without cause or reason. And we must reflect upon those who have died at the hands of others because of racism, hatred, carelessness and malice.

She reminds us that the work of CACE must continue. It must be urgent, meaningful, and deliberate now as we move forward.



IV. Public Comment

Since the last meeting, one public comment was submitted via email to equity@cuyahogacounty.us on November 3rd.

Clerk Byrd forwarded the email which included links to a data brief containing the findings of a study related to Food Security within Cuyahoga County to the CACE's members on November 4th. Clerk Byrd read the comment into the record, and the attachment was forwarded to the CACE members after the meeting.

There were no requests for in person comments.

V. Message from County Executive

Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish made a plea for all to continue to take Covid very seriously.

The Executive further discussed The Civil Rights Trail and The Equity Zones.

The Cleveland Restoration Society has been working on a Civil Rights Trail within the County. It is designed to honor those who have brought legislative and social change. The Executive shared the example of the Ludlow area where an association formed and became a national model for integration to counteract prejudice against black buyers in white neighborhoods. The County is provided a historical marker at 13601 Corby and the County is very pleased to be involved in this program.

Executive Budish discussed the County's new initiative to establish equity zones. The Executive issued an Executive Order to establish equity zones around the County. These zones were created in response to historic disinvestment and redlining throughout the County. Criteria for these equity zones are not based on race, but property values, red lining maps and life expectancy, and poverty.



Executive Budish touched briefly on ARPA funds. He has met with County Council members and will make a decision on how to spend the money over the next few weeks. More information will be available after January 1, 2022.

VI. Update/Message from Chair

Chair Taylor shared since the last CACE meeting, County Executive Budish announced he will not seek re-election. Executive Budish briefly shared, while he will not seek re-election, he does plan to continue equity and inclusion efforts throughout the remainder of his term.

Member McShepard asked for an update regarding Cuyahoga County and the pending source of income protection legislation. Law Director Huth shared there had been preliminary conversations with County Council staff who expressed concerns surrounding the strength of the language in the draft legislation and the need to make it stronger. Director Huth also mentioned he is working with the Housing Unit of the Development Department to hopefully develop a program to assist landlords with an expedited recuperation of funds when utilizing the voucher process. Additionally, there will be provisions built into the County's loan and grant agreements for housing. These provisions would require any landlord who requests a loan or grant with the county to commit to not discriminate based on a tenant's source of income. Executive Budish added the preliminary plans for the ARPA money included the allocation of some funds being dedicated to source of income efforts. Clerk Byrd also shared that Cuyahoga County Department of Development employee Sarah Parks Jackson is preparing to issue an RFP for someone to take responsibility for dispersing the federal funds.

Member McShepard expressed his concern regarding the County's inability to mandate a municipality to participate in source of income protections. Executive Budish explained any municipality that wishes to "opt out" of the use of source of



income protections can do so. However, if the municipality does not “opt out”, they are required to follow the source of income protections outlined in the legislation.

Member Blackwell referenced there is cross-over between the equity work of the CACE and the equity work of County Council’s Economic Development Committee. She specifically referenced bias in appraisals, red lining, and bank lending. Chair Taylor shared the CACE is open to hearing from outside panels and/or boards who would like to talk through these issues.

VII. New Business

a. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Chair Eddie Taylor and seconded by Member Mockabee to approve the previously distributed minutes. There was no discussion, and no one opposed the motion. The motion was carried, and the minutes were approved.

b. Update regarding the Cuyahoga County Law Department

On November 2, 2021 former Assistant Law Director Andrea Nelson Moore was elected to serve as a Judge for the Cleveland Municipal Court and will no longer serve as the Law Department contact for CACE.

County Law Director Huth introduced two of his staff to the CACE; Victor Manolache and Reid Stephan. Collectively, they will both assist the CACE on legal matters going forward.

c. Update on Tuition Reimbursement

Cuyahoga County is in the process of developing a tuition reimbursement program for County employees.



The goal, according to Interim Chief Marshall is to have the program in effect by summer 2022.

d. Update on RFP for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training

The RFP process for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training is continuing to move forward. A vendor has been identified and the details of the agreement are proceeding through the contracting process with the Law Department. Clerk Byrd will provide updated information once the details are publicly available.

Chair Taylor expressed some concerns regarding the speed of this process and requested the process to move faster if possible. Clerk Byrd added there had been some delays in identifying a vendor, but the process is continuing to move forward.

Member McShepard asked if the pending critical race theory legislation applied to all levels of government or for schools. Director Lockett responded confirming there is a section of the legislation that speaks to political subdivisions, which would include Cuyahoga County.

Member Ruiz shared his thoughts about the critical race theory bills and how he understands why the bills can cause hesitancy when moving contracts forward. He added there could be a clause added to a contract stating if the bills pass and we are no longer able to continue, then the contract is null and void.

e. Update from Department of Equity and Inclusion

Director Lockett shared, on November 9, 2021 County Council approved the updated policies and procedures for Small Business Enterprise, Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise. The policies were updated based on the 2020 Disparity Study recommendation.



The procurement procedures were finalized, and vendor training was conducted via webinar on November 23, 2021. In addition, county-wide procurement staff were trained on December 1st and 7th.

Currently, the Department of Equity and Inclusion is working to update the 2nd posting for the 24-month contracting forecast due by January 1, 2022. The forecast was referenced in the 2020 Disparity Study, as well as in the January 2021 Executive Order signed by County Executive Budish. The department is also working with the County Communications Department to complete the equity report due January 31, 2022.

The Department of Equity and Inclusion currently has a total of nine people on staff, which is the total number they were budgeted to hire.

Chair Taylor invited Director Lockett to share the physical structure of her department and to also bring senior level staff to present at a future meeting. Director Lockett shared she has a senior staff member named Edwin Nunez who serves as Senior Contract Compliance Officer and he provides direct supervision for six of her staff. She also stated she would invite her staff to a future CACE meeting.

Member Chalker asked Director Lockett if the work of the CACE affects the work of her department in any tangible way. Director Lockett responded by sharing there is collaboration between the CACE and the Internal Equity Commission through Clerk Byrd. She further described some similarities in the reports both the CACE and the Internal Equity Commission released, including the recommendation for Equity and Inclusion to have a seat in the Executive's Cabinet.

Member Chalker also asked if Director Lockett's department reviews the program ideas suggested by this committee. Director Lockett responded by sharing each department would examine areas that are specifically in their purview. Some of the areas where suggestions may have been made are not in her departmental purview, such as programs for the Prosecutor's office and/or the Courts. She referenced a



meeting she recently attended where representatives from the Sheriff's Department, the Personnel Review Commission, Human Resources, and her department met to begin a review to determine if law enforcement demographics and discuss their thoughts on what can be done to improve the status.

f. Update Cuyahoga County Equity Commission

The Cuyahoga Equity Commission met October 21, 2021, and November 18, 2021. We have not received updates on either meeting.

g. Update on County Statement on Diversity

Clerk Byrd previously spoke with then Chief Human Resources Officer Jesse Drucker about the County's value statement. As reported during the last CACE meeting, Chief Drucker had reviewed the statement with an internal Human Resource Committee and the final version was forthcoming.

Chief Drucker resigned from the County on October 28, 2021. Sheba Marshall who was Director of Benefits and Compensation is now the Interim Chief of Human Resources.

When Clerk Byrd requested an update from Interim Chief Marshall, she responded that she is unaware of a new updated value statement. Instead, she referred Clerk Byrd to section 3.01 of the Cuyahoga County Employee Handbook.

Recognizing the transition in leadership, Chair Taylor suggested the CACE invite Interim Chief Marshall to attend the next meeting to discuss a County Diversity Statement that is both relatable to the community and endorsed by the CACE.

Member Mockabee believes the CACE should also have input on the statement because the group was created as a result of the resolution that declared racism a public health crisis.



Member Gullet also expressed her concerns regarding the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee being heavily tied to the Human Resource Department.

Clerk Byrd will contact Chief Marshall and request she attend the next meeting in person.

h. Resolution Opposing House Bills 322 and 327

The Resolution was finalized, signed, and distributed to all public officials named in the document. In addition, the resolution was posted on the Board and Commissions webpage for CACE.

Member Grimes reiterated the CACE's focus when creating the resolution against the two bills was on education and the impact the changes would have on grades K- 12 and higher education. She continued by sharing these bills have become even more concerning given the impact for political subdivisions. Member Grimes asked what the County plans regarding a response to the bills if passed. Clerk Byrd will follow-up with the Executive regarding the county's plans if these two bills are passed.

Member McShepard asked for the status of House Bills 322 and 327. Clerk Byrd shared there has been proponent and opponent testimony, but no committee votes yet. She will continue to monitor the activity of these bills and share updates with the CACE.

Chair Taylor suggested CACE consider strengthening their resolution by arranging phone call(s) with sponsors, local representatives, or the Governor of Ohio. The call would offer an opportunity to share why the CACE has concerns. Member Chalker offered to assist with these calls.

Member Gullett shared her thoughts regarding the CACE possibly considering a renewed focus on situational awareness regarding racism and navigating the associated challenges. Since the last CACE meeting, Member Gullett shared there have been resolutions amended and the word "racism" has been removed from some legislative text. Further, when coordinating calls, Member Gullett suggested the CACE



consider working with partners from the City of Cleveland group as a first step to a coordinated approach and apply pressure where it is needed to make changes on the local, state, and national level.

Member Grimes wondered if the CACE could partner with municipalities or others around the state who have also declared racism a public health crisis when arranging phone calls to strengthen their opposition.

Chair Taylor asked the CACE to think about how the group can re-start these important conversations.

Member McShepard asked if the County has a dedicated lobbyist? Clerk Byrd confirmed the county does have state and federal lobbyist who work on behalf of the County's Interest. Mike Culp from Kegler Brown is the county's state lobbyist. Member McShepard then suggested the CACE also speak with the President of the House, President of the Senate and Speaker of the House.

Clerk Byrd will work with Chair Taylor to schedule a call for the subcommittee chairs to discuss further.

i. Ohio's New Congressional Districts

On November 20, 2021, Ohio Governor Mike Dewine signed Senate Bill 258 into law, creating Ohio's new congressional districts.

Additionally, during our last meeting, the group received an update about the Ohio Supreme Court case filed by the League of Women Voters of Ohio against the Ohio Redistricting Committee. The lawsuit alleges the maps violate provisions in the Ohio Constitution against maps being drawn to favor or disfavor a political party as well as require seats be drawn to correspond with state work preferences of voters over the previous decade. If the Ohio Supreme Court find violations, the Justices will ask the Commission to amend the maps. Oral arguments were held Wednesday, December 8, 2021.



Clerk Byrd will continue to monitor and update and the CACE.

j. Systems Mapping Update

Dr. Hovmand did not provide an update. However, it was explained he met with the CACE Communications Subcommittee to further his contributions to the creation and public distribution of systems mapping.

Dr. Hovmand plans to provide an update at the January CACE meeting.

k. Subcommittee Chair Reports

Prior to the subcommittee reports, Clerk Byrd reminded everyone to contact Tobey Hanna or La'Tia Adams for assistance with scheduling interviews.

i. Criminal Justice Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Pierce Lee stated determining who has jurisdiction over Prosecutors, Courts and County does is very complex. The subcommittee wants to know what they can break ground in. The subcommittee wants answers to the following questions: What resources are available? How can we leverage each other? What do we have jurisdiction over? The subcommittee believes they are spending a lot of time, and they want to make an impact. They still want to interview people to gather information.

ii. Health and Healthcare Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Gullett added to Chair Pierce Lee's point. She discussed system mapping. Racism is very complex when it comes to mapping. Subcommittee Chair Gullett asked: What are our leverage points? What are the outcomes we are driving



for? Additional work needs to be done. She also spoke about Racial trauma and healing. Which will be a big focus in 2022.

iii. Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair McShepard updated the committee regarding the efforts on income source protection and pay to stay legislation. He also added that there is focus on acquiring vacant land and repurposing. There is good strategy to add pocket parks etc. He would like to spend some time first quarter to focus on spaces for recreation and do some assessment of green spaces.

iv. Economic Opportunity Subcommittee

Unfortunately, Subcommittee Chair Caviness was not able to attend today's meeting. Committee member Marsha Mockabee reported in his absence. She reported that the committee provided feedback on the CACE Community Survey. They asked that demographic and anecdotal information to be included in the survey. The committee also was asked to be involved in a meeting with discussion regarding The Work Force Development Board becoming a separate 501 (c) 3. More information about that effort will be forthcoming.

v. Communications Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Grimes updated there is a date and facilitator for the Youth Toolkit. She also added that there was conversation with Dr. Hovmand and how we can engage the community around system mapping.

I. GARE Update

Clerk Byrd was unable to provide an update due to time constraints. Instead, the update was sent to members electronically on December 14, 2021.



VIII. Next meeting

CACE meetings will be held on the second Monday of the month from 1:30 -3:30 PM. Our next meeting will be held on January 10, 2022 at 1:30 PM. Subsequent to this meeting, it was decided that the next full body meeting of the CACE would be held on February 14, 2022 at 1:30 PM. The January meeting was canceled.

Due to open meetings law, the meetings must continue to be held in person. The meetings continue to be held in Room 5-006 located on the 5th floor of the County Administrative Headquarters.

If you are unable to attend any meetings, please contact Clerk Byrd for purposes of ensuring there is a quorum.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 PM.