



MEETING MINUTES

CUYAHOGA COUNTY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EQUITY

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Nailah K. Byrd called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

II. Roll Call

Present – Eddie Taylor, Stephen Caviness, Heidi Gullett, Randell McShepard, Phyllis Harris, Rev. Kenneth Chalker, LeVine Ross, Danielle Sydnor, Cordell Stokes, Victor Ruiz, Jenice Contreras. Quorum present.

India Pierce Lee, Marsha Mockabee, Sheila Wright, Rabbi Joshua Caruso, and Yanela Sims also joined.

Excused absence – Habeebah Rasheed Grimes

III. Moment of Silence and Reflection

During the moment of silence Clerk Byrd reflected upon the life of Andre Hill. Mr. Hill was an unarmed 47-year-old Black man shot and killed on December 22, 2020 by a 19 year white veteran Columbus Police Officer named Adam Coy. On December 22, 2020, the police were dispatched on a non-emergency disturbance call in response to someone “continuously restarting a gray SUV”. The body camera footage released shows a Columbus Police Officer entering the garage of the residence where Mr. Hill was a guest. The police officer walks towards Mr. Hill, who is clearly holding a cell phone, and fires multiple shots. The heartbreaking video also shows Mr. Hill did not receive medical aid for at least 5 minutes following the shooting and instead laid in the garage gasping for breath without any of the responding officers administering care.

The autopsy report released by the Franklin County Coroner states the cause of Mr. Hill’s death as homicide and to quote the Columbus Police Chief “Andre Hill should be alive today”. Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther called for the immediate termination of Officer Coy saying he was “outraged” by the shooting. “I am also disturbed about what I don’t see next in the body-worn camera footage,” Ginther said. “From what we can see, none of the officers initially at the scene provide medical assistance to Mr. Hill. No compression on the wounds to stop the bleeding. No



attempts at CPR. Not even a hand on the shoulder and an encouraging word that medics were en route.”

Adam Coy was fired from the Columbus Division of Police. Last week the former officer was indicted on one count of murder in commission of a felony, one count of felonious assault, and two counts of dereliction of duty.

IV. Public Comment

Since the CACE meeting in December, two public comments were received. The public comments were shared with the CACE members on December 21st and January 15th. As previously done, a Clerk of Courts’ staff person responded to each comment acknowledging receipt and thanking them for their correspondence.

V. Message from County Executive

County Executive Budish thanked the CACE for their work and provided positive feedback regarding the CACE’s report.

The County Executive shared Cuyahoga County is creating a Department of Diversity and the department will soon be discussed before County Council. The Executive will recommend the current Director of the Office of Procurement and Diversity, Lenora Lockett, to serve as Director of the newly created department.

County Executive Budish indicated the County will introduce a resolution for departments to consider projects with an equity lens.

The County Executive also discussed the release of an RFP for diversity and inclusion training.

VI. Update/Message from Chair

Chair Taylor thanked the County Executive for his coordination with the CACE. Chair Taylor provided an update on actions since the release of the report. On January 14th, four members of the CACE participated in a virtual forum hosted by the City Club to discuss the CACE’s report and to



answer questions from community members. The panel members included Chair Taylor, Subcommittee Chairs Heidi Gullett and Stephen Caviness and Member Habeebah Grimes. Chair Taylor opened the floor for comment.

Member Chalker stated he received positive feedback regarding the report. He also commented the recommendation for uniformed training for all county employees was well received.

Member Contreras sought clarification regarding the process for public comment and discussion followed. The public comments were read to the CACE members.

Chair Taylor asked Member McShepard to provide information regarding his work with the organization Policy Bridge.

Member McShepard explained the organization is an African American led think tank responding to minority issues. Some of the work includes urban farming projects and legislative priorities including legislation regarding education for the public regarding traffic stops.

Law Director Huth joined the meeting and indicated there is no prohibition to placing public comment on the website. He recommended the CACE create parameters and guidelines.

VII. Message from County Councilman Dale Miller

County Councilman Dale Miller, representative for County Council District 2 and Chair of the Finance and Budgeting Committee, addressed the CACE.

He thanked the CACE for their report and the roadmap to move forward.

Councilman Miller provided a presentation on “collective impact” and how the strategy may serve as a means to coordinate efforts to address systemic racism and achieve the goals outlined in the CACE’s report. He discussed five essential elements: 1) common vision, 2) shared systems of measurement, 3) mutually reinforcing efforts, 4) continuous communication, and 5) backbone support. He also discussed an alternative model presented by Tom Wolff in 2017 incorporating community organizing and policy, systems, and structural change.



VIII. New Business

a. Approval of Minutes

Prior to the meeting, the minutes from the December 17, 2020 meeting were distributed for the CACE's review.

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Chair Eddie Taylor. The motion was seconded by Member Pierce Lee. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Report Release Update

The CACE's first status report was released to the County Executive, County Council, and the community. The public can access the report by visiting the County's website at the following page: www.cuyahogacounty.us/fightracism

If you were unable to watch the City Club event it can be viewed at: www.cityclub.org

c. Executive Orders re Disparity Study

Following the release of the CACE's Status Report, Executive Budish issued four executive orders aimed at instituting a more robust race conscious program within Cuyahoga County's procurement procedures.

The Executive Orders are designed to increase visibility and transparency of the availability of contracts, ensure the Office of Procurement and Diversity establishes set goals for minority owned businesses, and expand the County's Small Business Enterprise Set Aside Program, which allows for reserving some bids, RFPs, and RFQs, solely for SBEs.

The Executive Orders address recommendations in the Cuyahoga County 2020 Disparity Study prepared by Griffin and Strong as well as recommendations from the CACE. The four Executive Orders specifically address goals for the MWBE Contracting Program, Forecasting of County bids, outreach to contractors and vendors regarding the MWBE program, and expanded use of the SBSA Program.



d. GARE Membership Update

Cuyahoga County's application to join the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) was recently approved and Cuyahoga County is now a GARE member.

GARE is a national network of government agencies working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. GARE "leads with race" and believes the creation and perpetuation of racial inequities has been built into government policies and practices. GARE provides tools to put theory around racial equity into practice at a local level through the use of national best practices.

Joining GARE provides Cuyahoga County with access to tools and a network of partners working to address issues of racial inequity in their communities. All County employees are now GARE members and as members have access to a number of different tools and meetings to support the County's equity work.

Cuyahoga County employees have access to a Members Only Portal which include a breadth of resources and tools regarding race and equity as well as discussion boards where questions can be asked and resources can be shared. The portal allows users to sign up for regular updates regarding equity news and topics.

GARE hosts Monthly Membership Calls on the 4th Monday of every month from 3:00 -4:30pm EST/12-1:30pm PST. Clerk Byrd attended the January Monthly Membership meeting on January 25th. During the meeting, the GARE staff provided updates regarding the Annual Membership conference planned for May 18 -21, 2021, recommended the book "Caste: The Origins of our Discontents" by Isabel Wilkerson, and provided a presentation on this month's "Emerging Topic" which was the COVID-19 Vaccine and Racial Equity. The presentation focused on general themes in prioritizing populations and communications around the vaccine and discussed do's and don'ts for distributing the vaccine in an equitable manner.

Additional information regarding GARE can be found on their website:

<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/>.

e. Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Report

Chair Taylor provided an update on the status of the Equity Commission's report which was distributed to the CACE prior to the meeting.



Cuyahoga County established an internal commission to examine equity issues. The Cuyahoga County Equity Commission which consists of the Directors of Development, Human Resources, Health and Human Services, Procurement & Diversity, and Public Safety and Justice Services is charged with bringing together leaders from various County agencies to examine current County policies and protocols, how they affect different populations, and how they can be improved and accessible for all.

Chair Taylor indicated the Equity Commission and CACE will work together to address recommendations. He encouraged the CACE members and the community to read the report.

f. Subcommittee Chair Reports

The subcommittee chairs provided updates regarding plans for the upcoming year.

i. Health and Healthcare Subcommittee

Member Dr. Heidi Gullett shared the Health and Healthcare Subcommittee is in the process of scheduling monthly meetings. The subcommittee plans to interview the hospital systems' CEOs and other health leaders identified. The subcommittee is continuing to work with Dr. Peter Hovmand regarding systems mapping. Dr. Gullett also recognized the collective effort of community regarding the Kellogg grant.

ii. Criminal Justice Subcommittee

Member India Pierce Lee indicated over the next 90 days the Criminal Justice Subcommittee will conduct additional interviews in the criminal justice space. They are evaluating and collecting additional data and examining national best practices regarding bail reform. The subcommittee is continuing to examine the County's practices and make recommendations. Member Pierce Lee and Member Caruso discussed the national conversation regarding bail reform.

Executive Budish thanked Prosecutor O'Malley and Judge Michelle Earley for their efforts regarding bail reform.

Member Sydnor asked for an update regarding juvenile criminal justice research. Member Pierce Lee and Member Caruso responded and indicated they may reach out to Member Sydnor in her role with the NAACP to further discuss the topic.



iii. Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee

Member McShepard explained his subcommittee delineated their work into quarters. The subcommittee will first focus on Housing, then Safe Places to Be Active, Healthy Food, and Transportation. The subcommittee provided a list of individuals to meet with regarding housing related issues. The subcommittee also intends to discuss where their work intersects with other subcommittees.

Member Pierce Lee mentioned the importance of examining the role of COVID on tenant rights and homelessness.

iv. Economic Opportunity Subcommittee

Member Caviness indicated the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee will conduct additional research and data gathering regarding procurement, partnerships, and education. The subcommittee will develop a vision of what success looks like long term. He discussed the subcommittee's plans to examine how the County can provide leadership to the community regarding equity policies.

Member Sydnor discussed how the County can serve as an example to drive change.

Member Contreras mentioned the impact of CARES Act funding and how the distributions can impact equity.

Executive Budish provided information regarding the CARES Act spending and the County's focus on equity when allocating the funds.

Member Caviness discussed the CACE's interest in assisting with messaging and communications to the community.

v. Communications Subcommittee

Chair Taylor provided an update on behalf of the Communications Subcommittee. He explained the subcommittee is continuing to meet with the County's Communication Team to develop next steps for communicating the CACE's work.



Member LeVine Ross provided a further update and discussed the subcommittee's plans to reach the community's youth. The subcommittee is also discussing topic related townhall events and further examining how the CACE can collaborate with the community.

g. Update from Dr. Peter Hovmand re Systems Mapping

Dr. Hovmand provided an update on his progress of system mapping and the work to be done in 2021. Dr. Hovmand is meeting individually with the Subcommittees to develop Subcommittee specific maps to assist in forming the CACE's recommendations and determine leverage points for change.

The CACE members discussed the value of the system maps and how the maps illustrate areas of influence and enforcement where the County can create change.

IX. Next meeting

The CACE is looking towards creating a more regular meeting schedule for 2021.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 AM.