



MEETING MINUTES

CUYAHOGA COUNTY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EQUITY

Monday, April 12, 2021

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

I. Call to Order

Nailah K. Byrd called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

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, India Pierce Lee, Marsha Mockabee, Sheila Wright, Habeebah Rasheed Grimes, Yanela Sims. Quorum present.

Excused absence – Rabbi Joshua Caruso

Absent – Jenice Contreras

III. Moment of Silence and Reflection

During the moment of silence Clerk Byrd reflected upon the life of Dr. Susan Moore. In late 2020, Susan Moore, a Black medical doctor, died of complications from COVID-19. Two weeks prior, she had posted a video while hospitalized detailing her disappointment regarding the treatment she received as a patient at Indiana University Health Hospital System in Indianapolis, Indiana. She explained she had to beg the physician treating her for an antiviral drug. The doctor denied she was short of breath after she told him she was. She was also initially refused pain medication despite her complaints of discomfort. The doctor told her he could not justify giving her narcotic painkillers. Eventually after a scan detected pulmonary problems, she was provided painkillers.

COVID-19 has had a particularly devastating impact on the Black and Latinx communities. Black people have died at 3.6 times the rate of White people, and Latinx people at 2.5 times the rate of White people according to an analysis by the Brookings Institution. According to the COVID Racial Data Tracker hosted by the Atlantic, a collaboration between the COVID Tracking Project and the Boston University Center for Antiracism Research, as of March 7, 2021, the nation had lost at least 73,462 Black lives to COVID-19.



IV. Public Comment

Since the CACE February Meeting, two public comments were received. The public comments were shared with the CACE members prior to meeting and read into the record. As previously done, a Clerk of Courts' staff person responded to each comment acknowledging receipt and thanking them for their correspondence. Clerk Byrd also acknowledged an email sent directly to Laura Black and read it into the record.

V. Message from County Executive

County Executive Budish discussed the mass vaccination site at the Wolstein Center and shared statistics regarding the number of vaccinations provided to minority residents. He also provided an overview of the County's efforts to ensure minority residents are provided access to the vaccination.

The Executive also discussed the County's efforts to address the digital divide and highlighted a recent initiative in East Cleveland to extend low cost internet service to 1,000 homes.

The County Executive shared County Communication Chief Eliza Wing is departing the County and thanked her for the support she provided the CACE.

VI. Update/Message from Chair

Chair Taylor shared with the CACE's members the resignation of Member Phyllis Harris. He thanked Member Harris for her work with the CACE.

VII. New Business

a. Approval of Minutes

Prior to the meeting the minutes for the 2/9/2021 meeting were distributed for the CACE's review and comment.

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



b. RFP for County-Wide Employee Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training

The County issued an RFP to provide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training to all Cuyahoga County employees.

The purpose of the RFP is to develop and execute a training and education strategy to increase the awareness, knowledge, and skills of Cuyahoga County staff, boards and commissions as it pertains to diversity, equity and inclusion. Through this training, policies and programs can be implemented and executed to better achieve equity.

The RFP is open until Wednesday, April 14th at 11:00 AM and can be found on the Cuyahoga County website. Included on the panel to review responses are Clerk Nailah K. Byrd, Assistant Director of HHS Leon Harris, Chief Economic Growth and Opportunity Officer Matt Carroll, Department of Diversity Director Lenora Lockett, Human Resources Talent Management Director Deborah Johnson, and Planning and Programming Administrator Nichole English.

The press release and further information regarding the RFP was distributed to all members on March 17th.

Chair Taylor suggested one or two members of the CACE be included on the RFP review panel. The County Executive and Clerk Byrd will review the feasibility of the suggestion.

Member McShepard requested information regarding the number of responses to the RFP received to date. Clerk Byrd indicated she would research and follow up with the information requested.

c. Equity Fund Budget

The County Executive and County Council allocated \$500,000 in the 2021 budget to fund equity related initiatives.

Chair Taylor provided an update on discussions with the Cuyahoga County Equity Commission regarding the Equity Fund Budget.



d. Mass Vaccination Clinic at Wolstein Center

On March 17, 2021, the Wolstein Center at Cleveland State University began serving as a mass COVID-19 vaccination clinic. The site will be active until Mid-May and is operating seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

From March 17, 2021 through April 26th the mass vaccination center will offer only second doses of the Pfizer vaccine. From April 27 through May 10, patients can receive the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The United Way 2-1-1 is staffing special COVID operators who can assist people with registration and connect them with free transportation resources.

Registration is open at gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov.

The County is encouraging anyone who is eligible and interested in being vaccinated to take advantage of this opportunity.

The County is continuing to mobilize its resources to communicate with the public regarding the availability of vaccinations. The County has sent approximately 94,000 robocalls and text messages to HHS clients with information on how to register for an appointment and get free transportation via United Way of Greater Cleveland 211. HHS has also coordinated distribution of more than 6,000 bus passes to County residents for transportation to a vaccine appointment.

Members were asked to continue to get the word out to the Black and Brown community of the importance of getting vaccinated.

Members discussed successful communication efforts including partnerships with trusted community leaders such as faith leaders and community health centers. The County Executive shared successful outreach efforts with The Word Church, the Salvation Army, and the Pastor's Association.

The members also discussed challenges related to misinformation and efforts to address myths, misinformation, and hesitancy. Member Mockabee provided information regarding a radio campaign with Radio 1 to reach the Black and Latinx communities regarding the vaccine.



e. Key Themes from Community Conversations with Dean Anglin

The CACE received a preliminary draft of Cleveland State University's findings associated to the Community Conversations held in the fall. Chair Taylor, then Communications Subcommittee Chair Phyllis Harris, and Member Victor Ruiz met with Cleveland State University's Dean of the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Roland Anglin, and the students assigned to the project to discuss and provide initial feedback. A revised report was distributed to the CACE's members for feedback. The four-page report includes a summary of Key Themes discussed in the conversations.

A dominant theme throughout the report is the lack of access to critical resources, services, and amenities in Black and Brown neighborhoods.

The participants encouraged continued CACE facilitated discussions with youth and leaders of color.

Dean Anglin and his team also identified specific shared experiences from the conversations highlighting the inequities discussed. The stories describe interactions with law enforcement, healthcare providers, and educators. The findings will be incorporated into the CACE's next report to the Community.

Member Ruiz thanked Dean Anglin and his team for their work on the report.

f. Report on Youth Conversations

Clerk Byrd shared Cuyahoga County is continuing its efforts to engage youth in the County's equity work. Executive Budish, Communications Chief Eliza Wing, Director of Regional Collaboration Michele Pomerantz, and Clerk Byrd recently attended a Look Up to Cleveland zoom event where high school students reported out on their specific Racial Equity Projects.

Chief Wing provided additional details regarding the Look up to Cleveland event held March 24, 2021. Ms. Wing also discussed the creation of a youth toolkit to facilitate youth conversations on structural racism. This toolkit is currently being edited and will be distributed to the full body once finalized.

Member Grimes thanked the team and reiterated the need for curriculum materials.

Member McShepard mentioned it is important to make sure the youth recommendations are considered and implemented.



Chair Taylor indicated the youth feedback would be incorporated into the next report.

Member McShepard asked if Member Harris' replacement as Chair of the Communications Subcommittee had been selected. Chair Taylor shared outreach was made regarding a replacement. Member Grimes indicated she was considering a request to serve as Chair of the subcommittee and would request support in the role. Clerk Byrd ensured Member Grimes would receive the support of Clerk Byrd's team and the County Department of Communication staff.

Member McShepard also asked about the appointment process for a new CACE member and the status of the CACE members' terms. Clerk Byrd explained the appointment process. She also explained 5 members recently went before Council and were reappointed to serve additional three-year terms with the CACE.

g. Subcommittee Chair Reports

i. Criminal Justice Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Pierce Lee provided an update on her subcommittee's work. The subcommittee is continuing to interview and gather information and best practices throughout Ohio and across the nation. She highlighted an article regarding a Maryland repeal of the Police Bill of Rights. She also discussed a meeting with South Asians for Justice and Equity (SAJE) and how they are working to align efforts with other community organizations. Member Lee also discussed a Cleveland Foundation Criminal Justice Senior Fellowship opportunity. Applications for the two-year fellowship are due May 1, 2021.

ii. Health and Healthcare Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Gullett provided an update on her subcommittee's work. She shared details of meetings with SAJE and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Advisory Board. The Health and Healthcare Subcommittee is also interviewing health leaders. Member Gullett reported some of the Health and Healthcare Subcommittee's recommendations were implemented and indicated County HHS employee, Sabrina Roberts, recently joined the Community Health Improvement Planning Group. HHS Director David Merriman also attends the meetings. The subcommittee is continuing to work with Dr. Hovmand on systems mapping.



iii. Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair McShepard provided an update on his subcommittee's work. He shared he was part of the discussions with SAJE and the DCFS Advisory Board and provided takeaways from those meetings. Member McShepard indicated children taken out of homes are disproportionately Black. He also suggested the CACE may want to review the training requirements for social workers. The subcommittee recently met with CMHA CEO Jeffery Patterson and Cuyahoga County Housing Administrator Sara Parks Jackson. The subcommittee is looking closely at pay to stay legislation and income source protection.

Member Sydnor asked if the intersection between mental health and child welfare was raised in the meeting with DCFS and a discussion followed.

iv. Economic Opportunity Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Caviness provided an update on his subcommittee's work. The subcommittee is continuing to schedule follow up interviews. They recently met with the Office of Procurement and Diversity Director Lenora Lockett and the Director of Workforce Development David Feinerman. The subcommittee is also researching policies such as the reparations program implemented in Evanston, Illinois.

Member Caviness requested information regarding CARES fund spending and the feasibility of his subcommittee participating in the selection process for a for the Chief of Economic Development position.

i. Communications Subcommittee

Member Grimes provided the Communications Subcommittee update. She indicated the subcommittee will continue to discuss the issue of youth outreach and involvement. She relayed the subcommittee will work with the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee to develop communications regarding the procurement process changes included in the Disparity Study Executive Orders.

Member Grimes also stated the CACE should study initiatives to infuse dollars into households impacted by racism.



Chair Taylor asked the CACE members if there were topics they should research. Members recommended the following:

- Balancing long term needs with immediate needs and examining multigenerational trauma
- Examining pathways of students in educational settings, the impact of trauma on educational experiences, and how the County has touchpoints in education.
- Reviewing equity and the impact of dollars on jobs in the proposed Innovation District. Leverage the weight of the CACE to impact decision making.
- Examine the number of people at risk of losing homes based on water bills and the impact of the EPA consent decree on water costs.
- Examine affordable housing options and pending real estate projects to identify opportunities for creative sourcing.
- Examine how to institutional CACE recommendations for money passed through the County.

h. Update from Dr. Peter Hovmand re Systems Mapping

Dr. Hovmand provided a brief update on his work. He continues to meet with the subcommittees to discuss topic area system maps and is also mapping recent subcommittee interviews. He is beginning to map solutions and leverage points based on these discussions. He also intends to create a simulation model for use to think through scenarios. During the Equity Commission's March 18th Meeting Dr. Hovmand presented an overview of his work with the CACE. This presentation was well received by the Equity Commission members.

i. GARES Update

Clerk Byrd provided an update on recent GAREs events.

The February GARE Monthly Membership meeting included a presentation by the GARE Steering Committee. The meeting included Regional Connection Breakout Sessions which allowed members an opportunity to provide updates on their work in the racial equity space. The GARE Annual Membership Meeting scheduled virtually from May 19 -May 21 was also discussed.

The March Monthly Membership meeting included presentations by three GARE representatives participating in the North Carolina Cohort. The representatives discussed equity initiatives in the cities of Raleigh and Durham and Orange County. Details regarding each jurisdictions' equity



departments and DEI training for employees was provided. Orange County also provided a presentation on a data collection program to track equity metrics across departmental and jurisdictional lines. The three speakers all highlighted the need to build capacity and buy in for equity initiatives, the importance of measuring success, the need for data, and the importance of engaging the community in this work.

VIII. Next meeting

The CACE proposed tentative dates for meetings throughout 2021 and 2022. The meetings will generally take place on the 2nd Monday of each month but are subject to change due to member conflicts. The next meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2021 from 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned.