



CUYAHOGA COUNTY CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL ON EQUITY
Monday, October 25, 2021
1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

I. Call to Order

Nailah K. Byrd called the meeting to order at 1:47 PM.

II. Roll Call

In Attendance- Eddie Taylor, Heidi Gullett, Marsha Mockabee, Habeebah Grimes, Sheila Wright, Glen Shumate, Stephen Caviness, Jenice Contreras, Randell McShepard and Victor Ruiz

Excused Absence- Yanela Sims, Rabbi Joshua Caruso, LeVine Ross, Rev. Kenneth Chalker and India Pierce Lee

Since the last meeting, two members have resigned. Danielle Sydnor and Cordell Stokes have both stepped away from their roles with the CACE.

The County Executive plans to present new members to Council for their consideration in the coming weeks.

III. Moment of Silence and Reflection

During the moment of silence and reflection, Clerk Byrd reflected on systemic racism's impact on the value of homes in Black neighborhoods.

As highlighted in a recent article in the Cincinnati Enquirer, appraisals are often undervalued based on the race of the homeowners. In the article, a Black owned home in Loveland, Ohio, which is 91.92% White, was



appraised at almost \$100,000 more than an original appraisal when the homeowners removed all evidence of their identity from their home.

According to a study by Andre Perry, a senior fellow with the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, homes in Black neighborhoods are undervalued on average by \$48,000 per home. The study also found metropolitan areas with greater devaluation in Black neighborhoods are more segregated and produce less upward mobility for Black children in those communities.

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge recently launched an interagency Property Appraisal Valuation Equity task force to combat appraisal discrimination. Over the next six months, the task force will examine the cause and consequences of undervaluation of properties in Black neighborhoods.

The task force also plans to create a comprehensive approach to combating valuation bias. The plans include educating consumers and practitioners on valuation bias and making appraisal data more accessible.

The CACE reflected upon how racial discrimination impacts the value of homes in Black communities and wealth disparities between White and Black Ohioans.

IV. Public Comment

Since the last meeting, no public comment was submitted via email to equity@cuyahogacounty.us. Additionally, no requests for in person comments were received today.



V. Message from County Executive

Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish discussed the Source of Income legislation. He shared the legislation will be finalized in the coming weeks and will then be presented to County Council. This legislation would protect residents from discrimination based on their source of income. Cities within the County will have the option to opt out. If passed by Council, any complaints can be filed with Human Rights Commission. The County is also looking at ways to provide funding for landlords who experience delays in receiving money.

Executive Budish also shared information regarding the County's tuition reimbursement program. This free program would give County employees an opportunity to enhance their professional development by acquiring an Associates, Bachelors or Masters degree. The County has partnered with Baldwin Wallace, Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College on this initiative. The county is anticipating participation from approximately 500 of its employees.

Lastly, the Executive shared a few preliminary details of a project regarding the repurposing and beatification of the vacant lots in our county. CACE member Randell McShepard (Co-Founder of Rid-All Farm) and Executive Director of Food Strong Sarah Continenza will work with the county to look at possibly replacing these vacant lots with urban farms, urban gardens, trees or parks to restoring value to the community and possibly create jobs for its residents.

VI. New Business

a. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the last two CACE meetings were distributed for review and comment.



A motion was made by Member McShepard and seconded by Member Mockabee to approve the two sets of minutes. There was no discussion and the minutes were approved.

b. Resolution Opposing House Bills 322 and 327

There was a discussion about HB 322 and HB 327. Opponent testimony against both bills was heard on September 22nd and information was distributed to the CACE's members in advance of the hearing. The bills face strong opposition from a long list of interested stakeholders.

Cuyahoga County Law Director Greg Huth prepared a draft resolution for the CACE to review and discuss.

The CACE engaged in discussion regarding amendments to the draft resolution and confirmed the final resolution language. The motion was made by Member Gullett and seconded by Member McShepard to adopt the resolution.

There was no further discussion and no one opposed the motion. The motion carried and the resolution was adopted.

c. Protect Cleveland Renters on Day 1 Campaign

There was a discussion regarding the Day 1 Campaign. Prior to the meeting CACE members received communications from Emily Lundgard, Senior Program Director of State and Local Policy at Enterprise Solutions, requesting support for the "Renter Rights Day 1" campaign launched by local organizations and housing advocates.



The campaign asks both Cleveland mayoral candidates to commit to the following on their first day in office: 1) introduce Source of Income legislation, 2) introduce Pay to Stay legislation, and 3) establish a group to develop a comprehensive Renter Bill of Rights. Ms. Lundgard and others are seeking support for this initiative.

The CACE engaged in discussion regarding the draft resolution, the timing of the resolution's adoption and additional meeting possibilities. While not prepared to move forward on this resolution at this time, the CACE will engage in further conversation with certain interested parties regarding this issue.

d. The Center for Community Solutions Presentations

John Corlett, the President and Executive Director of the Center for Community Solutions provided a brief presentation concerning feedback received from the community regarding the American Rescue Plan Act spending.

A copy of the presentation was distributed to the CACE members.

Executive Budish spoke regarding ARPA dollars and compared ARPA spending restrictions to CARES spending restrictions.

e. Redistricting Updates and Discussion

An update regarding redistricting was provided. The Ohio Redistricting Commission passed new Ohio House and Senate maps in the late hours of September 15th, the constitutional deadline, along party lines. The lack of Democratic support means the maps will only last four years under the Ohio Constitution.



In September, the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio and other groups including the League of Women Voters and National Redistricting Fund filed lawsuits in the Ohio Supreme Court challenging the new General Assembly maps. The suits claim the maps violate provisions in the Ohio Constitution against maps being drawn to favor or disfavor a political party as well as requiring seats be drawn to correspond with the statewide preferences of voters over the previous decade. The lawsuits are currently pending and the October 21st deposition deadline recently passed.

If the Ohio Supreme Court finds violations, justices will ask the commission to amend their maps. If more than six House districts or two Senate districts need to be amended, the map is declared invalid and the commission must draw a new one. Clerk Byrd will continue to monitor this case and provide an update during the next meeting.

f. Cuyahoga County Equity Commission and Update on RFP for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training

A recap of the Cuyahoga County Equity Commission's meeting on September 23, 2021 was provided.

During the Equity Commission's meeting, each Commission Member provided an update on their agency's equity efforts.

Director Lenora Lockett stated the updates to the SBE Policy and the MBE/WBE Policy were presented to the Public Works, Procurement, and Contracting Committee Meeting on September 22nd. Director Lockett also stated progress is being made on the development of an Equity Zone Policy and on the selection of a consultant for DEI training for employees and management/leadership. Director Lockett explained the Department of Equity and Inclusion will lead implementation of the eight (8) recommendations set forth in the 2020 Disparity study.



Human Resources Director Jesse Drucker spoke on the continued efforts of the Human Resources Steering Committee and why it is important to have conversations regarding equity and inclusion. Director Drucker stated work is continuing on the creation of a diversity statement. He also plans to initiate compensation and pay equity studies. Director Drucker indicated a tuition reimbursement program is slated to roll out in the Spring of 2022.

Leon Harris, Assistant Director of HHS indicated HHS celebrated the one-year anniversary of its Racial Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee. The Racial Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee devised a series of topics based on education, workforce input, measurements, policy review, gaps in workforce hiring, and policy and procedure through an equity lens.

Department of Public Safety and Justice Services Interim Director Melinda Burt indicated a Safety and Justice Services group will meet to discuss what they would like to accomplish in the fields of diversity and equity, and how they can best track initiatives.

Economic Development Deputy Director Vaughn Johnson introduced himself and provided information regarding his background. He stated he will focus on providing opportunities and access to minority businesses and small businesses within Cuyahoga County.

The Equity Commission also finalized a timeline for the Commission's Annual Equity Report. The report will include updates on progress from each of the pilot agencies since their initial report in early 2021.

The deadline for a final copy of the report is January 28th and public distribution and final submission is January 31, 2022.

The RFP process for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training is continuing to move forward, but has not yet started. The selection



process is in its final stages and contract negotiations are beginning. A decision should be announced soon. Clerk Byrd will provide an update once available.

The Guardians baseball organization is in conversation with the CACE regarding partnership in their diversity and equity training.

g. Systems Mapping Update from Dr. Hovmand

Dr. Hovmand continues to receive notes from subcommittee interviews. He is translating the information into the systems map identifying solutions and leverage points.

h. GARE Update

Clerk Byrd will distribute the GARE update electronically to CACE members.

i. County Statement on Diversity

During our September 13th Meeting, information was requested regarding the County's Value Statement. Following the meeting Clerk Byrd contacted Chief Human Resources Officer Jessie Drucker for additional information. Director Drucker confirmed the Human Resources Committee on Diversity is working on the statement. The Committee met in late September to discuss the Director's feedback and a statement is forthcoming.

j. Update on Semi Annual Update

In summary, the CACE does not have annual reporting requirements.



VII. Subcommittee Chair Reports

i. Criminal Justice Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Pierce-Lee did not have anything new to report.

ii. Health and Healthcare Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Gullett shared the subcommittee is moving forward with the community health assessment.

iii. Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair McShepard did not have anything new to report.

iv. Economic Opportunity Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Caviness did not have anything new to report.

v. Communications Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair Grimes added there will be a video forthcoming that will invite community members to utilize the youth toolkit.

VIII. Next meeting

The CACE will not meet in November. The next meeting is December 13th from 1:30 – 3:30 PM, in person in room 5-006 at the Cuyahoga County Administration Building.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 PM.