

Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting

October 21, 2021, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Cuyahoga County Administrative Building – Committee Room B

2079 East Ninth Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Cleveland, OH 44115

<b>Cuyahoga County Equity Commission</b>		
<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Burt	Melinda (Lindy)	Public Safety and Justice Services
Drucker	Jesse	Human Resources
Lockett	Lenora	Equity & Inclusion
Herdeg	Paul	Development
Merriman	David	Health and Human Services
<b>Guests</b>		
Miller	Adam	Equity & Inclusion
Brickner	Frank	Ohio Means Jobs/Workforce Development Board
Marshall	Sheba	Human Resources
Johnson	Vaughn	Development
Budish	Armond	County Executive
Parks-Jackson	Sara	Development
Carter	Calynn	Development
Seay	Melanie	Department of Public Works
Sotak	Thomas	Department of Public Works

- I. Welcome
- II. Call to Order (10:02am) – Director, David Merriman
  - a. Review & Approval of Minutes
    - Motion to approve made by Interim Director Burt, seconded by Director Drucker, minutes approved.
- III. Public Comment
  - There was no public comment.
- IV. Opening Remarks from Equity Commission Members
  - i. Interim Director Burt stated that the first Public Safety and Justice Services employee committee meeting was held on September 27<sup>th</sup> and would occur on the second Monday of the month. The five (5) committee

members will focus on topics to include: getting to know co-workers, department initiatives and overall expectations.

- ii. Director Merriman stated that the Budget Hearings have been completed, and that the Director of Re-Entry would be announced later in the day. Director Merriman stated that HHS was excited to work with HR on the tuition assistance program. Director Merriman also offered a congratulations to Director Lockett for her swearing in as official Director of Department of Equity and Inclusion
- iii. Director Drucker stated that the tuition reimbursement program was on track for a Spring 2022 Semester start. He also stated that the budget request was favorably received, and that HR is working on creating a resolution with the law office which should assist with DIV goals over time. Two internal committees have been created to discuss topics concerning DEI initiatives. An all-staff meeting group would meet on a monthly basis, with the second smaller teams to meet on the alternating bi-weekly schedule. Topics to include the issue of stereotypes, and would discuss what stereotype is, as well as the best ways to overcome and learn from them.
- iv. Director Lockett stated that Salena Hibbitt was hired as the final Contract Compliance Officer for DEI. The department is now fully staffed with six (6) Contract Compliance Officers. The 3<sup>rd</sup> reading regarding the updated SBE/MBE/WBE policy and procedure is anticipated to be on November 9<sup>th</sup>, with effective date of November 15<sup>th</sup>. DEI will be sending out Save-the-Date emails to both internal/external partners regarding trainings. Departments are currently working on updating the bi-annual purchasing and contracting forecast which will be posted by January 1, 2022, for the upcoming 24-month period. There will be a workshop taking place on Tuesday, October 26, 2021, to discuss the update process which should be a more streamlined process.

V. Refresher on the 2021 Equity Report-Equity Approach, Commitments, and Recommendations

- i. Director Herdeg introduced Vaughn Johnson, Sara Parks-Jackson, Calynn Carter as speakers who would provide a summary of DoD internal initiatives. Director Herdeg provided handouts to committee members which detailed their initiatives. Highlights included 215 loans provided to minority owned businesses, DoD supporting business attraction in the Aerozone hub, making low-income homes lead safe, affirmative outreach to low-income community residents, outreach and recruitment for the Skill Up program, as well as enhancing resources to designated distressed areas based on upcoming Equity Zone Initiative.

- ii. Executive Budish voiced his concern regarding a lack of support for young entrepreneurs. Director Herdeg stated that DoD is working closely on ways to address this gap.
- iii. Mr. Frank Brickner of Ohio Means Jobs/Workforce Development Board spoke on initiatives being taken to advance equity. Mr. Brickner spoke on the creation of a new subcommittee as well as additional initiatives based on the results of an internal survey. Mr. Brickner also spoke on partnerships with Tri-C and the Urban League that focus on assisting job seekers as well as employers concerning the difficulties in recruiting and retaining members from underserved populations. Mr. Brickner also spoke on the results from a yearlong survey which concluded that 76% of African Americans and Latin X populations need more opportunities.
- iv. Executive Budish requested clarification with regards to who would be providing the training as well as where funding would be coming from. Mr. Brickner stated that funds were obtained from Federal programs as well as State grant-based programs which have been approved with a deadline of June 30, 2022. Executive Budish apprised Mr. Brickner on the establishment of a new program with a local fast-food restaurant for soft skills and training, and to expect additional communication regarding program needs in the future.
- v. Melanie Seay of Department of Public Works spoke on the focus of racial equity and inclusion. She stated that over the past eight (8) months, 13 new hires consisted of women or minorities. Ms. Seay also spoke on partnerships with CMSD as well as local Unions in the creation of pre-apprenticeship pilot programs.
- vi. Thomas Sotak of Department of Public Works stated that the department is working on setting aside 20% of annual budget for equity zone projects that include 50/50 grant projects as well as funded public work projects.

## VI. Equity Zone Policy

- i. Director Lockett spoke on the Equity Zone Ordinance approved by Executive Budish in July, which focuses on addressing areas that have experienced historic disinvestment. The criteria for determining the Equity Zones includes: HOLC 1940 Maps (aka HOLC red lining map); Improvement Target Areas; residential property valuations; life expectancy; and poverty level. Where available, census block level data will be used. The map of the proposed Equity Zones must be approved by the County Executive. DEI must work with departments and consult with the Equity Commission and the Citizen's Advisory Council on Equity (CACE). Timeline for completion of work will be as soon as possible.

## VII. Closing Remarks

- i. Director Lockett provided a reminder that the deadline for material to be included in the 2022 Equity Report is six (6) weeks.
- ii. Director Drucker stated that he was excited about all the upcoming work in the areas of equity and inclusion.
- iii. Director Merriman emphasized the importance of turning in of all data for the 2022 Equity Report in a timely manner. He also stated that Melinda Burt was asked to serve as Interim Director of Public Safety and Justice Services. Director Merriman requested that Interim Director Burt provide an individual to be named as her alternate.
- iv. Interim Director Burt asked for an update on RFP training. Director Lockett informed Committee that a notice of intent to award was issued with recommendation of award to Tri-C.
- v. Director Herdeg identified Deputy Director Vaughn Johnson as his alternate, stating that Mr. Johnson would be attending future meetings.

VIII. Adjourn (11:01am)

**Department of Development powerpoint slides for Agenda Item V. Refresher on the 2021 Equity Report-Equity Approach, Commitments, and Recommendations**

# Department of Development

## INITIATIVES

- Support The Cleveland Innovation Project, which emphasizes inclusion and resource access to minority tech-based businesses and talent.
- Small business support will include new funding to small business support partners for their focused support to minority and women-owned businesses.
- New funds will be allocated for working capital loans to minority-owned businesses.
- The Department will seek to negotiate affirmative minority hiring and subcontracting efforts in its direct economic development lending programs.
- Job Hubs with access for residents of distressed communities will be supported as preferred locations for new business attraction and business growth investments.
- Support Lead Coalition and other lead safe efforts.

## STATUS

- ✓ Highlighted initiative as priority in County's 5 year Economic Development plan
- ✓ Processing awards on a \$3M RFO
- ✓ 215 loans were made to minority owned businesses
- ✓ Recommendation pending to Cuyahoga County Community Improvement Corporation
- ✓ DoD supporting business attraction in the Aerozone hub. DoD has offered incentives to businesses to create an opportunity corridor and continues to work with community development organizations and partners to further this strategy.
- ✓ County's \$800,000 contribution to Lead Coalition was handled and expedited by DoD for LC June deadline. DoD staff will participate in making low income homes lead safe.



Cuyahoga County Department of Development

# Community Development and Housing

## INITIATIVE

- Development will renew its focus on HUD's Section 3 business registry which requires affirmative outreach to businesses owned by low-income community residents, contracting goals for such Section 3 businesses, and hiring goals for Section 3 low-income community residents. This will expand contracting opportunities for minority-owned businesses.
- As part of the County's Equity Zone initiative, community development and housing support resources will be focused and enhanced in designated distressed areas, complementing opportunity zones and other county programs that are directed to designated areas

## STATUS

- ✓ Staff have participated in a variety of courses on Section 3
  - ✓ HUD "Best Effort" requirement
  - ✓ Statistical information is maintained in the county's LCP tracker for reporting purposes
- ✓ Upon completion of the Cuyahoga County Equity Zones the Housing and Community Development division will add the Equity Zones in the point calculation to the request for grant proposals for programs where the U.S. Department of HUD or Department of Treasury rules and regulations are not superseded by the inclusion of the Zones as a criteria.



Cuyahoga County Department of Development

# Workforce Innovation

## INITIATIVE

- Outreach and recruitment for the Department's innovative SkillUp program will be redesigned to significantly increase the number of businesses adopting data-driven, non-discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. This is expected to increase the number of African American workers hired and promoted and reach more African American owned businesses to provide broad business supports



Cuyahoga County Department of Development

## STATUS

Demographic	2019	2020
% African American	33.8%	50%
CJFS Benefit Status		
% of participants currently receiving benefits	20.5%	43.1%
% of participants receiving benefits within the last 12 months	22.86%	44.8%
% of participants who ever received benefits from the Ohio Benefits System (including current and past 12 months)	38.1%	65.5%