

Welcome Dayton Committee Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2022, via Zoom

Attendees:

Welcome Dayton Committee Members: Commissioner Matt Joseph (Chair), Kate Conway, Nozipo Glenn, Rachel Gut, Dani Heeter, Katie Kersh, Ashley Lackovich, David Larson, Jaqueline Radebaugh, Bryan Stewart, Tom Thompson, Tom Wahlrab, Anthony Whitmore

City Staff: Jeannette Horwitz, Verletta Jackson, Joann Mawasha, Desire Ntwayingabo, Martha-Jeannette Rodriguez

Guests: Maia Brooks, RJ Francisco, Yunus Ibraghim, Cady Landa

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Joseph called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner Joseph asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 11 Welcome Dayton Committee Meeting. Rachel Gut moved to approve the minutes. Dani Heeter second. The minutes were approved.

III. Welcome and Board Updates

Commissioner Joseph welcomed everyone and asked those present to briefly introduce themselves. He welcomed Tom Thompson and Nozipo Glenn, appointed by the City Commission to the Welcome Dayton Committee in February. He shared that the City Commission will soon appoint additional members to the committee: RJ Francisco, Yunus Ibraghim, Cady Landa and Claire Preston. He also announced that the City Commission has appointed Joann Mawasha, Assistant Executive Director of Human Relations Council to be the official liaison between HRC and Welcome Dayton. He added it is important not to lose any momentum with the move of Welcome Dayton from the HRC to PND and to make sure the many things the HRC brings to the table with regards to defending the rights of immigrants still remain in place.

IV. General Updates

None. Commissioner Joseph introduced Dr. Cady Landa to comment on the recent release of the report "New Americans in Montgomery County and the City of Dayton."

V. Special Report: Dr. Cady Landa. "New Americans in Montgomery County and the City of Dayton." Dr. Landa shared highlights from the report "New Americans in Montgomery County and the City of Dayton" released in March 2022. The HRC was awarded the Gateways for Growth Grant from Welcoming America and put together a steering committee that worked with New American Economy, now part of the American Immigration Council, on shaping the report about Montgomery County's new Americans and to lay the groundwork for a county-level strategic process. Dr. Landa shared the link to the report where portraits of four new Americans included in the report can be viewed, and the report in its entirety can be downloaded. Dr. Landa said she finds the report stunning as it shows the important economic and social contributions new Americans have made to

Montgomery County. She added that it challenges the common anti-immigrant narrative that immigrants come to the US to take from those who were born here. The report's data is based on the American Community Survey 2014-2019 which is known to undercount new Americans and people from minority groups and should probably be supplemented by locally collected data. The final page of the report presents statistics about the city of Dayton only. Dr. Landa highlighted a couple of items in the report including the number of foreign-born individuals in Montgomery County, which helps to offset population decline in both the city of Dayton and the county. She also pointed out the highly significant economic contributions of new Americans to the city and the county. In 2019, immigrants earned a total of \$782.0M, paid \$75.1M in state and local taxes, \$144.4M in federal taxes and had 562.4M in spending power which contribute to the health of the local community and the well-being of all of us. Additionally, immigrants contributed \$74.4M to Social Security and \$19.8M to Medicare in 2019. In Montgomery County, 49.8% of the foreign-born population is naturalized, 12.4% likely eligible, 37.8% not eligible. Dr. Landa pointed out that full inclusion in society cannot occur unless one can become a full citizen and it is important to advocate for federal policies to provide a pathway to full citizenship.

Link to the report: <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/new-americans-in-montgomery-county-and-city-of-dayton/>

Joann Mawasha will send Jeannette Horwitz a link to a shortened version of the presentation given by New American Economy/American Immigration Council and the steering committee at the Dayton Metro Library on March 19. Jeannette will send it to the committee.

VI. Federal Immigration Updates – Katie Kersh, Senior Attorney and Project Director, ABLE

DHS Secretary Mayorkas designated Afghan for TPS (Temporary Protective Status)

- TPS provides relief from deportation and employment authorization for so long as TPS is designated and renewed
- Designation lasts for 18 months
- Must have resided continuously in the US since March 15, 2022

DHS Secretary Mayorkas designated Ukraine for TPS

- Designation lasts for 18 months
- Must have resided continuously in the US since March 1, 2022

Title 42

- Has led to quick deportation of hundreds of thousands of migrants in the past two years on “public health” grounds
- Expelled people to other countries (often Mexico) and then individuals were ordered deported because they failed to attend their immigration proceedings
- Revocation is effective May 23, 2022

New asylum rule

- Expedites asylum cases for people asking for asylum at the border to about 90 days
- Becomes final in May 2022

New ICE Office of Principal Legal Advisor Memo

- ICE will be moving to exercise prosecutorial discretion in *all* cases where individuals are not priorities
- This *should* mean people in removal proceedings who are not current ICE priorities, which is the vast majority of people, should have their cases dismissed

VII. Coordinator's Updates – Jeannette Horwitz

Jeannette shared that the self-assessment for Recertification of Dayton as “Certified Welcoming” was completed and submitted to Welcoming America March 30, 2022. Welcoming America will schedule a 2.5 day audit (site visit) in 2-3 months. The Welcome Dayton website should be updated by the end of April. There has been increased media attention regarding immigrants in Dayton, partly due to the “New Americans in Montgomery County and the City of Dayton” report. Jeannette will continue to share items of interest to the committee via email and asked that everyone shares through their channels. The *Dayton Daily News* will run a story on Afghans in Dayton in Sunday's paper (April 10).

Commissioner Joseph added that he will be interviewed April 11 by Channel 7 News with regards to immigrants' financial contributions to Dayton and Montgomery County.

A story on NPR about a church raising \$140K in a weekend for refugees sparked Bryan Stewart's interest in what vehicles are available to groups to raise money for folks who need it. Bryan met with Michael Lehner, Director of Marketing and Development at Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley (CCSMV) to discuss. The conversation took a turn to focus on housing and Bryan learned that right now, much of CCSMV's work centers on this. There are donors interested in getting involved with the immigrant/refugee community and who want to donate and fund housing for this population. Bryan is interested in pursuing this further. Commissioner Joseph added that continued conversations on this topic are needed. Bryan asked if there is a particular City of Dayton committee related to housing that someone from Welcome Dayton can serve on to ensure representation of immigrant/refugee voices. David Larson suggested coupling refugee housing with housing for homeless veterans. Martha-Jeannette Rodriguez mentioned a Welcoming America conference session she attended on housing where in one US city, refugees help work on restoration of buildings. She suggested bringing different organizations together, e.g. East End Community Services, CityWide, etc., to discuss.

VIII. Subcommittee Updates

a. Business and Economic Development – Jacqueline Radebaugh

Jaqueline reported that one of the committee's major goals this year is to support workforce development and access to jobs for new Americans. She recently visited a job fair to figure out logistics. The committee is working to put together a formal partnership with Workforce Development in Montgomery County so that they can host immigrant-specific job fairs and allow committee members to be on site to provide resources. Jaqueline mentioned Workforce Development has a good amount of resources for translation,

interpretation and similar services but their website does not indicate this. This is, however, something they're willing to work on so that jobseekers know upon registration that interpreters will be available for interviews if they come to a job fair. The committee is also talking to the Dayton Metro Library about hosting events there.

b. Education – Dani Heeter

Dani reported that the Education and Business & Economic Development Committees are joining forces to create a “subcommittee of a subcommittee” to bring the “New Americans Employer Roundtables” back and up and running again. She shared a “When is Good?” link in the chat for those interested in joining an initial planning meeting set to take place in the next two weeks. Dani appreciates getting information about volunteer opportunities in the community and sends those to the 40+ members of the committee to share. Recent volunteer opportunities include helping out with FAFSA Day at Belmont HS and Ponitz HS as well as tutoring at Rehoboth International Church. The Recertification of Dayton as “Certified Welcoming” has generated some good discussion on what else can be done to help New Americans, especially those who are not refugees being served by CSSMV. The committee will continue discussing tangible things to do to help in upcoming meetings.

Dr. Conway added that she too has been thinking about those who are unattached and are not part of the formal structure of resettlement. How to provide information to this group?

Commissioner Joseph added that originally there was a “Welcome Center” subcommittee that discussed the possibility of having a physical one-stop location for resources. Discussions were also held about creating a virtual location. Eventually, the Natural Helpers Program was created. No longer in place, the hope is to bring it back.

c. Community, Culture, and Arts – Rachel Gut

Rachel shared that the committee’s last meeting focused on goal setting and that one of the goals is to create a resource guide. It would be good to pull in folks from other committees on creating this and the New Americans Specialist (Dr. Gabriela Pickett, hired in March) and Rachel can work on this. The New Americans Art Exhibit is planned at DLM (Main) for November-December 2022. Members from the Dayton Art Institute will join the next committee meeting and the committee will discuss the art exhibit with them. Looking to work with local venues to promote New American performers, specifically the 2nd Street Market and the Downtown Dayton Partnership Summer Music Series. Looking to create opportunities to support new Americans mental health and wellness and to create partnerships around this. This was partly born out of the Gem City Selfie Museum DML hosted this spring. The committee is also looking for opportunities to bring New Americans together around food.

Tom Wahrlab suggested connecting with the folks who created the music videos for “Where the Rivers Meet” back in 2013—2014 and Rachel asked for contact information to reach out.

d. Local Government and Justice – David Larson

David mentioned that the committee has worked on the Miami Valley Community ID Card Project spearheaded by the Hall Hunger Initiative and Westminster Presbyterian Church.

The program is very well received. In the next subcommittee meeting, the Ohio Innocence Project at the University of Cincinnati will give a presentation. David said it will be interesting to see what they have to offer since sometimes immigrant community members face difficulties with the law and defending against criminal charges.

Tom Wahlrab added that he has attended some of the MVCID Card Drives where he has had a chance to speak to the organizations involved. He pointed out that a community ID was mentioned in the original Welcome Dayton plan and is pleased that Welcome Dayton recognizes and acknowledges organizations who are able to do things like getting the MVCID card started.

At 4: 20 p.m., Commissioner Joseph stated he needed to leave for a City Commission meeting and turned the meeting over to Welcome Dayton Coordinator Jeannette Horwitz to continue.

e. Health and Social Services – Kate Conway

Dr. Conway shared her excitement for the committee being “rebooted” and members learning more about each other, what each do in their home organization and how they can better help each other. She shared that Dayton is set to receive up to 300 refugees through the official resettlement program this year. The health screening capacity is stretched. More screening sites are being recruited. There is a need for primary care after initial screenings: primary care offices that can work with newcomers and make these part of their standard patient population. Some federal funding is available to organizations to help with health education and outreach. The Boonshoft School of Medicine and Dr. Conway’s crew will develop a program to address how to be a good patient and how to be a good provider. WSU Physicians is looking to stand up their expedited medical assistance training program. Healthcare systems are struggling to have enough staff to meet basic patient care. Dr. Conway would love to tap into certifications of New Americans who are here and get them certified to work. If you have names she can reach out to, please send them her way. A new grant recently was announced, Ohio Health Improvement Zones Pilot Project. There is money available for public health intervention addressing health equity aimed at specific zip codes. Lots of people in the county are interested in being part of this.

f. Natural Helpers – Jeannette Horwitz

Jeannette is part of Welcoming America’s yearlong program, “Community of Practice: Advancing Immigrant Civic Leadership through Natural Helper Programs.” She reported that she will attend the second workshop on April 27.

IX. Old Business

Jeannette shared that Welcome Dayton has participated in two more Miami Valley Community ID Card Drives, February 19 and March 5. About 130 cards were issued at the two drives. The next drive is on May 7, 9:30 – 12:30 at the Dayton Metro Library, Main. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Jeannette. Afghans in Dayton, an informal group of individuals helping Afghan families in Dayton and the Miami Valley area that Jeannette helps facilitate, will meet again April 26 to share updates. The “Afghan Welcome Event” that Welcome Dayton is hosting together with Dayton Metro Library and Ohio TESOL

has been moved from April 30 (Ramadan/Eid) to Saturday, August 6, from 10:00 – 12:00 at the Dayton Metro Library (Main).

X. New Business

Jeannette shared that the World Refugee Day Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, June 11, 11:00 – 2:00 at Grace United Methodist Church. Planning is underway. The event will include food, entertainment and resource tables. Jeannette will speak to Dr. Conway about including a health fair. More information to come. Jeannette will continue to send out emails with updates, links, articles, etc. until Welcome Dayton once again has a newsletter in place, hopefully later this year. Anyone who has information to share, please send to Jeannette to send out.

XI. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Jeannette thanked everyone for their time. She will keep everyone in the loop regarding Welcoming America's Recertification.

XII. Next Meeting Date: Friday, June 10, 2022, 3:30-4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannette Horwitz, Welcome Dayton Coordinator