

Welcome Dayton Committee Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2022, via Zoom

Attendees:

Welcome Dayton Committee Members: Matt Joseph, Stephanie Keinath, Katie Kersh, Karla Knox, Claire Preston, Jacqueline Radebaugh, Bryan Stewart, Tom Thompson, Tom Wahlrab,

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

Guests: None

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Joseph called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 12 Welcome Dayton Committee meeting. Katie Kersh moved to approve the minutes. Tom Thompson second. The minutes were approved.

III. Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Joseph welcomed everyone to the meeting.

IV. General Updates

Commissioner Joseph provided an update on the discussion for how to move forward with the countywide [Montgomery] welcoming effort. Since there is not yet a place within the County to house this effort, Commissioner has proposed a temporary Welcome Dayton subcommittee focused on nurturing and building the countywide effort. Commissioner provided a heads up and asked for any initial thoughts the Committee has on this initiative. Katie Kersh added that this sounds similar to the “Welcome TLC” model in Toledo, Lucas County that has been successful. Jacqueline Radebaugh added that the Business and Economic Development Subcommittee has had some conversations on this topic and that it seems like a natural progression of collaborations with the County. Tom Wahlrab reminded the Committee that this work has been going on for 1.5 years and that this is the second stage. Getting the Committee’s support for this initiative is important, he added.

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

- 1) Afghan Adjustment Act – pending in the Senate
 - o Would create a pathway to lawful permanent residence for Afghans admitted to the United States through humanitarian parole or other means
- 2) Biden Administration approved 65,000 visas under the H-2B program
 - o 20,000 of these visas will be designated for individuals from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras
 - o H-2Bs are temporary, seasonal, nonagricultural workers (low-skill labor, as opposed to H-1B visas, which are for high-skilled labor)

- o Employers seeking workers must take a series of steps to test the U.S. labor market and certify in their petitions that there are not enough US workers to meet their labor needs
 - o One potential solution to address some of the labor shortages facing Ohio, including the Dayton area
- 3) USCIS delays, waivers, naturalization applications, work permit renewals – causing a lot of issues, many employers and immigrant workers finding these delays to be a major hardship
- o These delays are the subject of litigation across the country
- 4) DACA – 5th Circuit court of appeals issued a decision last week (October 5) on the appeal of the 2021 nationwide injunction of the DACA program vacating the original DACA memo and finding it unconstitutional
- o Anticipating this decision, the Biden administration published a rule codifying DACA in the federal regulations in August 2022
 - o 5th Circuit remanded to the district court to analyze constitutionality of the DACA rule

Tom Wahlrab asked if there is any connection between “can’t find people and finding people.” Katie mentioned it can be challenging to get a worker’s visa for someone who has crossed the border without inspection. They may have to go back to their home country to apply for the visa. Ohio has had major population loss and farms have had to close down due to lack of workers. The visas under the H-2B program are an opportunity for people to come here legally and a great opportunity for sectors who are suffering from labor shortage to gain workers.

Claire Preston asked about a recent change in process for Venezuelan asylum seekers. Katie mentioned that not as many are granted parole as in the past. *

*From Katie Kersh after the meeting with regards to New Parole program for Venezuelans: “The good news is that the government has created a new parole program that, similar to the Ukrainian program [*Uniting for Ukraine*] requires a sponsor and allows Venezuelan citizens to have permission to stay in the US for a temporary period. The bad news is that the government has started using its Title 42 authority to expel Venezuelans who present themselves to the border out of the US if they haven’t used this new process.”

Shoutout to Tom Wahlrab from Katie Kersh about his t-shirt that reads “Justice for Farmworkers.”

Contact information for ABLE:
130 W 2nd St, STE 700, Dayton, OH 45402
Phone: 937-228-8104

VI. Coordinator's Updates

Jeannette shared that on October 13 she received an update from Welcoming America on the Recertification. The City of Dayton has met 40/45 of the core criteria (88%). The City is non-compliant in two areas: 1) Equitable Access EA2.1 and 2.2 – Language Access Policy (updates to policy, training of staff and addressing language needs for accessing important community information including safety services and emergency and alert systems and 2) Safe Communities SC1.3 (diversity training of code enforcement staff). Jeannette has to submit an Audit Action Plan to Welcoming America by November 28, describing how the City will address the non-compliant areas. The City then has until May 12, 2023, to show evidence of compliance. Jeannette will share the report with the WD Committee after the meeting to read and provide feedback/thoughts on. The City of Dayton remains Certified Welcoming, "Recertification in Progress" while addressing the non-compliant areas.

The Welcome Dayton website has been moved from being hosted by the HRC to Planning, Neighborhoods and Development. Please let Jeannette know any suggestions for resources, etc. to be added to the site. Jeannette is working with eight members whose Welcome Dayton Committee terms are up December 31 to find out if they wish to renew their appointments or not. She will also be working on some guidelines for members of the WD Committee and the subcommittees for next year. There are numerous upcoming events including New American Employer Roundtable (October 21), New American Artist Exhibit Open House (November 5), MVCID Drive (November 12), Ukrainian Welcome Event (November 19). Regarding the MVCID, Tom Wahlrab added he has his ID now and was excited to attend the September drive at the Dayton Metro Library and see this program come to life after having been discussed for many years. A number of WD Committee members shared they now also have IDs.

VII. Subcommittee Updates – Subcommittee Chairs or Representatives

- a. **Business and Economic Development** – Jacqueline Radebaugh
Some of the members have been meeting with the Education subcommittee to help plan the New American Employer Roundtable. The next meeting is October 18 at 4:00 p.m. though it may be cancelled so members can attend the New American Employer Roundtable instead. Stephanie Keinath added that the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce is budgeting for 2023 to support these events and plan on sponsoring three of them next year. They have 30 people registered for the October 21 event as to date. Tom Wahlrab asked if the employers who have signed up for the roundtable are already hiring New Americans. Stephanie responded that many already do and that a goal is to get a wider variety of people to attend and to ensure that employers can talk to each other during these events.
- b. **Local Government and Justice** – David Larson

Jeannette reported on behalf of David that the subcommittee is still supporting the Miami Valley Community ID Program. The Dayton Police Department will work on presenting

“Interacting with the Police” sessions at various locations next year, primarily going to places where immigrants/refugees gather such as churches and ESL programs. The next subcommittee meeting is on Zoom, November 2 at 12:00 noon.

c. **Education** – Dani Heeter

Jeannette reported on behalf of Dani that the Education subcommittee has worked with the Business and Economic Development subcommittee on the New American Employer Roundtable. Nikki Lyons from Larson & Lyons, LLC and Professor Ericka Curran from University of Dayton Law School along with a speaker from DACC and CSSMV will serve on the panel. The next meeting is November 8 at 2:00 p.m. in person, place TBA.

d. **Community, Culture, and Arts** – Rachel Gut

Jeannette reported on behalf of Rachel that the New American Artist Exhibit organized by the Community, Culture, and Arts subcommittee starts November 1 and runs through December 31 at the Dayton Metro Library (Main) during the library’s regular opening hours. 10 people have submitted artwork including students from the International School at Residence Park. There will be an Open House Reception on November 5, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the library to kick off the exhibit. The next meeting is December 12 at 11 a.m. on WebEx.

e. **Health and Human Services** – Dr. Kate Conway

No report.

f. **Natural Helpers** – Jeannette Horwitz

No report.

VIII. Old Business

- a. LinkedIn Group “Welcome Dayton – Spanish Speakers Network” (Bryan Stewart). Jeannette referenced a request for members to reach out to Bryan with thoughts on piloting a Welcome Dayton LinkedIn group. Bryan had to date not received any feedback. Jeannette suggested she, Bryan and Claire Preston continue the conversation.
- b. Upcoming renewal process for Committee members with terms expiring in December 2022. Jeannette has reached out to members, eight, to discuss.
- c. Welcome Dayton Committee and sub-committee guidelines. Jeannette will work on this but would like for it to be a joint effort and will reach out to members for feedback.

IX. New Business

None.

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Commissioner Joseph thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

XI. Next Meeting Date: Friday, December 9, 2022, 3:30-4:30 p.m. **IN PERSON**, PRC Room on the Mezz floor of City Hall, 101 W. Third St.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannette Horwitz, Welcome Dayton Coordinator