

Welcome Dayton Committee Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2022, via Zoom

Attendees:

Welcome Dayton Committee Members: Commissioner Matt Joseph (Chair), Kate Conway, Rachel Gut, Dani Heeter, Stephanie Keinath, Katie Kersh, Ashley Lakovich, Jaqueline Radebaugh, Bryan Stewart, Michelle Streeter-Ferrari, Tom Wahlrab, Anthony Whitmore

City Staff: Rachel Hardenbrook, Jeannette Horwitz, Verletta Jackson, Joann Mawasha, Desire Ntwayingabo, Charles Porter, Martha-Jeannette Rodriguez

Guests: RJ Francisco, Nozipo Glenn, Nicol Miller, Claire Preston, Tom Thompson

- I. **Call to Order**– Commissioner Joseph
Commissioner Joseph called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.
- II. **Approval of the Minutes**
The minutes were approved at 4:04 p.m.
- III. **Welcome and Board Updates** – Commissioner Joseph
Commissioner welcomed everyone and stated he appreciates the work everyone is doing and looks forward to great work ahead. Nozipo Glenn and Tom Thompson should be appointed to the Welcome Dayton Committee by the City Commission at the February 16 Commission meeting. Commissioner appreciates those who have submitted applications and will provide updates as these are processed.
- IV. **General Updates** – Commissioner Joseph
Commissioner shared that he appreciates those who have submitted applications to serve on the Welcome Dayton Board. At the City Commission weekend retreat (February 11-13), the process of appointing members to boards will be discussed.
- V. **Coordinator’s Updates** – Jeannette Horwitz

Jeannette thanked the sub-committee chairs for meeting with her, discussing their involvement with Welcome Dayton, what each committee is working on, challenges, etc. Jeannette is working on the Recertification of “Welcoming City.” Welcoming America gave Welcome Dayton a three-month extension to complete the project and the recertification is due March 31, 2022. Welcome Dayton’s annual membership with Welcome America has been updated for 2022. It’s a great resource for everyone to take advantage of. Members should contact Jeannette for more information. The Welcome Dayton website has been transferred to the Planning, Development and Neighborhood’s site but the old site is still available. Jeannette is working with the Web Technologies Administrator to complete the updates. The site will likely be launched in April. Welcome Dayton is on the planning committee for ENACT-937 (Emerging New American Community Team). 19 local fellows from Afghanistan, Burundi, Rwanda, Colombia, DRC, and Mexico are participating in the

yearlong program. They'll attend monthly workshops on civic engagement, education, public health, etc. and will work on an individual advocacy community project. The Community Engagement team in PND is complete with Desire Ntwayingabo joining as Community Engagement Specialist on January 10.

VI. Subcommittee Updates

a. Business and Economic Development – Jacqueline Radebaugh

Jaqueline reported that the subcommittee has a standing meeting on the third Tuesday of every month. They are still meeting online. The priorities for this year are:

- To contribute to the Montgomery County Job Fair, by providing workshops for US and immigrant-lead employers wishing to hire immigrants, and immigrant job seekers. The job fair takes place in the Spring.
- To identify/catalog immigrant-lead businesses (increased outreach by adding questions to Business Walks questionnaire)
- Connect identified businesses to chambers, trade associations, and other relevant resources, with a secondary goal of supporting chambers and trade associations in identifying and reducing barriers to access to information/resources by those businesses.
- This quarter, the committee is identifying topics for the workshops and will be seeking speakers. Input on both items is welcomed.

b. Education – Dani Heeter

Dani reported that the Welcome Dayton Education sub-committee strives to meet monthly to touch base on what's happening with English language learners within our K-12 system, higher education, adult education and what's happening within our community.

- There has been discussion on how to help DPS students and families to understand why the need for FAFSA completion.
- The committee would like to reconvene the workshops that were taking place pre-pandemic that helped the Dayton community workforce to understand why and how New Americans can be a great fit for their company.
- A learning hub will be starting this month at Rehoboth International Church in downtown Dayton, geared towards grades 3-12 and they would be open to help students on the weekends from 3-5pm. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Michelle Littlejohn at michelle.littlejohn@sinclair.edu
- Future meetings: Feb. 23 at 9am and March 23 at 330pm

c. Community, Culture, and Arts – Rachel Gut

Rachel shared that the Welcome Dayton Arts and Culture Subcommittee is scheduled to meet again on February 14, 2022. The committee will be discussing our goals for 2022, setting projects and assignments. Meetings will take place the 2nd Monday of every other month, in February, April, June, August, October, and December. Rachel also shared that the Dayton Metro Library is close to wrapping up the hiring for the position

of Newest Americans Specialist. She expects an announcement to be made soon. The NA Specialist will serve on the Community, Culture, and Arts Committee.

d. **Local Government and Justice** – David Larson

Jeannette shared the report from the Local Government and Justice Committee:

- The Hall Hunger Initiative and Westminster Presbyterian Church are operating a community ID project which has already issued a number of IDs and has two more sessions scheduled to welcome the public and issue IDs.
- City of Dayton Courts have been working on problems that have occurred in having qualified interpreters available for court proceedings.
- Little progress has been made in producing videos to educate people on interacting with police officers.

e. **Health and Social Services** – Kate Conway

Kate shared that the committee has had two recent meetings. The members are reactivated and excited to start working together, reviewing the roster and reaching out to more points of contacts to build a robust network of people WD can count on for their expertise and circle of influence on these important topics. Members are learning more about each other's role in the community and reviewing data that has been gathered already regarding our refugee and immigrant populations access and utilization of healthcare resources in the area. The committee wants to pick a project to work on together that allows them to focus their efforts and be intentional with sustainable success that can benefit the most at risk community members. The committee is considering starting with improving the equity of access for families who could be serviced by the DPS-Based Health Center at Roosevelt Elementary. Members of the committee shared that this site should be servicing 11,000 students and their families but that current data shows only a little over 500 are currently utilizing services there. Work that is done together to improve elements of accessibility and utilization for this site will then be a model for the committee as it works with other health care and social service organization to address similar themes there.

Also, members of this committee will be supporting and providing expertise for BSOM/WSU partnership with CSSMV to build a Refugee Health outreach program to offer trainings for healthcare providers and systems on how to better care for newly arrived refugee neighbors, especially in light of Dayton's newly arrived 136 Afghan community members. This outreach will also offer health education and screening programs for the refugee community members themselves. Work is newly underway and updates on what/when will be shared with all.

Tom Wahlrab asked about the number of Afghans in the United States and what individuals can do when they receive an inquiry to help. Kate explained that Afghans are brought in under a different designation, humanitarian parolees, that there are 136 currently in Dayton and approximately 70,000 in the United States. She suggested it is best to connect any newly arrived Afghans with Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley.

f. **Natural Helpers** – Jeannette Horwitz

Jeannette shared that she has registered for Welcoming America’s yearlong program, “Community of Practice: Advancing Immigrant Civic Leadership through Natural Helper Programs.” The first workshop is scheduled for February 23, 2022. A goal is to eventually bring back Natural Helpers, which has not been active for some time. This year, participating in ENACT-937 somewhat takes the place of Natural Helpers.

VII. Old Business

a. Miami Valley Community ID Card

Jeannette shared that the MVCID Card Drive was postponed due to Covid-19 from January 8 to February 19 and March 5, 2022, at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dayton. Community Engagement Specialist Martha-Jeanette Rodriguez has been an integral part of making this program happen. She has taken on the big role of handling the registrations: 67 for February 19 and 62 for March 5. Additional drives are being planned for later this spring/summer. Martha-Jeannette has started taking down contact information for 80+ people who have reached out and are interested in the card.

VIII. New Business

Jeannette Horwitz mentioned that numerous individuals have reached out to her with questions about Afghans in the area that they are trying to help. There are three Fulbright Scholars at UD who arrived in August 2021, now unable to return home. They are hoping to bring their families, currently in Pakistan, here. Jeannette is exploring possibilities for a collaboration between the City of Dayton, UD and Catholic Social Services with the Community Sponsorship Hub (www.communitysponsorship.org/). Kate suggested to bring any questions re Afghans to the committee in order to identify common themes and resources. Jeannette mentioned that Welcome Dayton will look to create a future “How to…” document for community members who are looking to help out.

Tom Wahlrab provided an update on Francisco Diaz Perez, former HRC Board member who came to the US from Mexico and was instrumental in many of Dayton’s welcoming efforts. He received a doctorate in theology and is now at Drew University where he continues to make contributions and influence the community.

Jeannette asked the committee to think of new Americans to feature in the “Stories” section of the Welcome Dayton website. Please reach out to her with suggestions for individuals to interview and take pictures of. Jeannette is looking for a wide variety of people including business and restaurant owners, students, a family, etc.

Approval of the Minutes: Commissioner Joseph asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3 meeting. The motion was second and approved by the committee at 4:04 p.m.

Tom Wahlrab shared that he and his son, Amentahru Wahlrab, have recently published a paper in the peer-reviewed journal *Globalizations*. The paper connects Welcome Dayton with the global migration of people and the influence of global migration on Dayton and other cities like ours. Tom will share a summary of the paper and a link to the paper when it is published online.

IX. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Jeannette thanked everyone for their work and announced the next meeting. She will send out minutes, agenda and sub-committee report-outs one week prior to the meeting. Please feel free to reach out to her with any agenda suggestions.

X. **Next Meeting Date:** Friday, April 8, 2022, 3:30-4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannette Horwitz, Welcome Dayton Coordinator