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## Commission on Black Women and Girls

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Agency: [Commission on Black Women and Girls](#)

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### Summary

- The Commission on Black Women and Girls convened for its second meeting as members begin to establish the vision, mission and scope for the commission's work as advisors to the mayor pertaining to the quality of life for Black women and girls.
- The commission is actively seeking to fill four vacant seats for the following designations as outlined in the charter:
  - (1) Black woman representative from a college/university
  - (2) Black woman representative in labor (belonging to a union)
  - (3) Two black female students from CMSD between the ages of 11-17
  - (4) Black female current student in college
- The committee is currently revising its application process to ensure equity and eliminate barriers for potential applicants. It will vote to finalize the application process during June's meeting.

### Follow-Up Questions

- What evidence from Project Noir on the quality of life for Black women and girls in Cleveland is driving the commission's work?
- How will information be shared with the public to increase awareness?
- What strategic partnerships is the commission considering (now or in the future) to reach girls and women in "hard-to-reach" areas?

### Notes

In 2020, Cleveland was ranked as the least livable city for Black women. [A survey done by Project Noir in 2020](#) highlighted the disparities found for Black women. The mayor responded to these findings by forming a commission comprised of Black women and girls across sectors. They will serve in an advisory capacity and inform decision making regarding the quality of life for Black women and girls in Cleveland.

On May 29, the commission convened for its second meeting since being chartered.

[Agenda 5.29.24](#)

[Commission charter](#)

Meeting opened at 9:35 a.m. with roll call:

- Chair Kathryn M. Hall, vice president of Diversity and Inclusion, JACK Entertainment
- Vice Chair Dr. Linda Bradley Women's Health Institute, Cleveland Clinic (absent)
- Eugenia Cash-Kirkland, Social Support Services director, City of Cleveland
- Rev. Lisa Maxine Goods, senior pastor, Shiloh Baptist Church
- Taneisha Fair, associate, Racial Equity, The Center for Community Solutions
- Stephanie Howse-Jones, Cleveland City Council Ward 7
- Shameka Jones Taylor, chief operating officer, Saint Martin de Porres High School
- Anastasia Sakairoun, student, Cleveland State University College of Law
- Dameyonna Willis, founder and executive director, Queen IAM
- Lita-Marie Wills, commissioner of Health Equity and Social Justice, City of Cleveland

The commission is looking to appoint a current member to the vice chair position and has requested commissioners to submit interest. The vice chair will assume all duties of the chair in her absence.

The commission is still in its initial formation and will be focused on developing its vision and mission in subsequent meetings, including delegation of responsibilities and the identification of sub-committees.

The commission discussed recruitment for additional commissioner seats. Commissioners will make a joint decision on applicants. Willis and Jones Taylor have taken point on creating the application process for interested candidates.

Current vacancies needing to be filled include a Black woman in labor, a Black woman working in higher education, a Black woman who is a college student, and two Black girls who are Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) students between the ages of 11-17.

The commissioners reviewed the draft application and recommended revisions that ensure equity and eliminate barriers. Several commissioners offered opinions about the application requirements for the student commissioner seat, acknowledging potential

barriers such as recommendation letters or GPA requirements. Commissioners decided to do a full review and vote during the June meeting, with specific consideration given to students who may not be represented in the draft criteria but whose voices and perspectives are important. June's meeting will also be used to determine a time frame for the application window.

As criteria for the various vacancies were discussed, commission member representing counsel clarified that although the Supreme Court in [Lima v. State of Ohio](#) overturned the decision prohibiting residency requirements for public employees and officers, the nature of the commission is specialized to Black women and girls in Cleveland, therefore making it both lawful and appropriate to require commissioners to live in Cleveland.

Hall reviewed the responsibilities of the committee as listed in the commission charter and identified subcommittees that align with those responsibilities. The following sub-committees are anticipated, and commission members will assume responsibilities delegated to each committee as assigned:

- Research
- Public hearings and listening sessions
- Education
- Economic development
- Healthcare
- Justice
- Civil rights

Hall closed the meeting with a statement of intention for the committee to review new survey results from the second survey from Project Noir 2024 which will be available [here](#) soon.

Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

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