

Fair Employment Wage Board

December 12, 2025

9 AM

1910 Carnegie Avenue (3rd Floor Conference Room)

In attendance:

Matt Ashton, Chair; Bishop Ward, Vice Chair; Helen Qin, Camilo Villa. Guest: Lewis Smoot, Cleveland Law Department and John Ryan.

Matt called the meeting to order at 9:15, thanking everyone for joining on an off day for a wrap up meeting of the year.

(M/S/P) (Ward/Villa) To Approve our October 31, 2025 meeting minutes.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Matt reported that we received some media coverage of the Transparency law that went in affect since our last meeting.
- b. Bishop Ward said the kick off of the first enforcement event was successful. Matt and Bishop Ward reported the security guards were appreciative of our outreach. Helen said there was no security guard at her location. Bishop Ward reported that the company who hired is a Black owned company that does the screening of former police officers for the positions. John said that the Worker Center was a fantastic partner and the Cleveland AFL-CIO volunteered to finish up the other recreation centers. He also reported that the Mayor's office will be doing some social on the enforcement of the law and videos of some workers and the mayor.
- c. Website – John and Lewis Smoot gave an update of the website. Lewis spoke about the website being comprehensive and allows for complaints.
- d. Matt raised a question on a complicated complaint of an employer who was hiring a position in either Columbus or Cleveland. Lewis offered to write a draft letter and pass it by the board.
- e. Draft email to the public sector employers has been reviewed by board members. Helen did a rewrite that we will send to legal with a target timeline for after the second week of January 2026.
- f. Appointments for the board. We need one from the mayor's office, one from the council and two re-appointments of board members. There was a discussion.
- g. Matt thanked board members for their input on the annual report; it was decided to have it issued at the first of 2026.

New Business

- a. Matt report that he, Bishop Ward, and John Ryan met with the county on having them pass a fair employment wage law.
- b. Matt asked for volunteers on a 2026 plan for the Board for a small working group. Bishop Ward and Villa agreed to serve on the working group.

There was no public participation. Lewis provided a good review of the complaint process for both the Fair Employment Wage ordinance and the Transparency law.

Adjourn (Villa/Bishop Ward)

Respectfully recorded,

John W. Ryan