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Ohio Attorney General's Charitable Advisory Council
10 a.m. November 17, 2025
Meeting by Teams
Minutes

Participants
Advisory Council members: David Ball, Erynn Beaton, Mark Cardwell, Erin Childs, Meghan Cummings, Erik Farley, Mary Gallagher, Monica Moloney, Jane Pfeifer, Elaine Pierce, Tom Poulson
Ohio Attorney General's Office Charitable Law Staff: Dan Fausey, Thaddius Townsend, Beth Short, Lynette Santoro-Au, Lance Suede

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by David Ball at 10:05am

Introductions
All present introduced themselves. Members welcomed the newest addition to the Advisory Council, Meghan Cummings of Philanthropy Ohio.

Minutes from the August meeting were approved with a motion from Mary Gallagher, a second from Erin Childs, and a unanimous vote.

Approval of future meeting dates
The following dates were approved, with a motion from Meghan Cummings and a second from xxxx
2026 – Feb. 2; May 4; August 3; Nov. 16
2027 – Feb. 1; May 3; August 2; Nov. 1

Observations of the Sector
Meghan Cummings, Philanthropy Ohio, talked about finding her way as Executive Director and shared that the member foundations that she works with are trying to find the best ways to support charities, filling in the gaps that reduced funding from the federal government has created. Of particular concern now are SNAP benefits as well as food supply/demand interruptions brought on by USAID cuts. Some funders are lessening restrictions to provide timely support. And she is helping discern rhetoric from fact so members can better plan. **Erin Childs** is seeing a trend of mergers and dissolutions in the sector, and many leaders of organizations are showing signs of stress. **Mark Cardwell** is helping leaders navigate these times with a weekly call with legislators to reach out and inform the sector of matters of interest. Of particular concern is AI and how its advancement will affect the sector. He is helping leaders understand the distinctions of lobbying, advocacy, and being political. **Erynn Beaton** shared that many nonprofits are afraid and unprepared to engage with legislators. **Mary Gallagher** and **Tom Poulson** added that subsidies are serious for hospitals and although many people will lose insurance, they will still go to the hospital putting a financial burden on the system. Increases in costs are not keeping pace with increases in pay/revenue/income. **Jane Pfeife**r observed foundations are moving toward donor-advised funds to take advantage of a bigger tax benefit in 2025.

David Ball turned the conversation to a review of faith-based groups 508 self-declaring an exempt state from all regulations. He is particularly interested in the healthcare ministry bill in the Ohio legislature. **Dan Fausey** observed this is not a new concern and shared about the Barberton Health sharing ministry case. The AGO sued and obtained a judgment in 2011 and in 2018 Liberty Healthcare was of concern as they are not regulated by the insurance industry, they are regulated by the AGO as a charity. There is little guidance for us to follow and though Liberty has since reformed, this continues to be a fairly unregulated space. 1716 attempts to address this with its deceptive actor practices language. **Erik Farley** remarked on the burden placed on institutions to provide aid during these difficult times. **Erin Childs** initiated a discussion about the Go Fund Me reversal of initiating fundraising on behalf of charities without their knowledge/consent. Many of us in the sector are interested in this issue. California is the only state with a process for regulation through registration and reporting. Fees and delays in payment from the platform make this process problematic.

Updates from the Charitable Law Section
Section Chief Dan Fausey shared a summary of the pending raffle legislation, HB476, the process for passing it, and how it might affect the Charitable Law Section. We are concerned about online number generators being vulnerable to manipulation and the lack of oversight.

Section Chief Fausey also shared an update on the Notre Dame College closure case. Smaller colleges across the country, who are in financial trouble, are finding themselves in the difficult position of finding funding or closing. This particular case involved an institution in Cleveland Ohio who utilized its endowments illegally. The AGO sued for a receiver to be appointed to oversee the distribution of assets.

Principal Assistant Attorney General Lance Suede talked a bit about the criminal process in our office which he leads. Charities are often begun with good intentions, and a life event occurs prompting the founder to use its money for personal gain. We have about twelve active cases in this category right now. PAAG Suede shared prosecution is meant as a deterrent. He specifically shared information about a recent case in Union County against Keven Barens of the Marysville Balloon Festival.

Beth Short has identified Rotary Clubs as the next group we will reach out to promoting Charitable University. Currently, there are some 4500 graduates of Charitable University.

Adjournment--Having no other business for the good of the order, and with thanks for everyone's attendance and participation, the meeting was adjourned at 11:34am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynette Santoro-Au.