


City Council Application

First Name	Sarah
Last Name	Stone
Phone Number	
Cell Phone Number	
Email Address	
Street Address	
Place of Employment	retired
Position	retired
Length of residence in Cleveland Heights	10 years (2016)
Are you a registered Cleveland Heights voter?	Yes
What do you think would be your role as a member of City Council? What are your priorities for our community and are there areas in which you believe the City needs improvement? How would your service on City Council help achieve those goals and improve the City?	<p>As a Council member, my responsibility would be to carry out the mission of Cleveland Heights government – “to protect all things that matter most to our residents and visitors.” That’s the job description, I believe: to understand what matters most to our community by doing the work to listen, to become informed, and to understand all sides to the issues that come before Council in order to discern a path forward. City Council is also charged “to protect” both what we have – a 120+ year community with both the heritage and headaches that come with that infrastructure—and what will be, with challenges ahead we can see and those (like COVID) we might not imagine. The task is to be ready for both.</p> <p>The city’s vision statement gives Council a to-do list: “a diversity of people and thought...safe and</p>

desirable neighborhoods...thriving commercial districts...sustainable quality of life.” The steps the City is taking to sustain the economic vitality of Cleveland Heights, particularly in fostering its retail districts and new housing developments across the economic spectrum, are key investments in our city’s viability that I want to support and work on. Ten years ago, I knew I wanted to live in the Heights because of the side-by-side diversity within our neighborhoods while also seeing how much there is to be done to deliver on that promise. Reclaiming and repurposing vacant lots for new residential development is just one example of the way Council has led in expanding housing opportunities while improving our neighborhoods. Guiding the future of Severance Center is another key priority in improving the city’s service and attractiveness to residents.

Effecting and sustaining change,...

... I believe, requires a diligent understanding of the problems, a sustained commitment to hear both expected and unanticipated perspectives, and the persistence to stay with the emerging solution through the twists and turns of its realization. I’ve done that throughout my nonprofit career and would pledge to do so as a Council member.

I come to this opportunity not with an agenda of my own interests but a desire to serve the agenda of the City.

What special qualities, abilities, skills, insights or perspectives do you possess which would be of value in serving on Cleveland Heights City Council? What working knowledge of City

My work in nonprofit governance has helped me develop the following skills that might be useful to Council:

Council meetings do you currently have?

- Experience in taking an idea (or problem solution) from concept to realization as a consortium leader, fundraising executive and board/development consultant
- Fluency in the work of governance in supporting the work of large and small corporate boards, understanding how to develop a good idea into a constituent-backed board resolution and then implementing that board action within the organization.
- Consensus-building ability in leading opinion-gathering polls, focus groups, town hall meetings, and detailed negotiations in service of a solution
- Experience in developing and working with budgets, including capital and construction budgets, forecasting, operating budgets, audits and financial statements.
- Understanding of government compliance issues by authoring and managing federal, state, and local government grants
- Effective public speaker and fast, accurate writer
- Commitment to doing the reading and preparation essential to decision-making and ability to synthesize lots of material to key points

While I have not worked with Cleveland Heights City Council, I have appeared before and made submissions to the Greater Columbus Arts Council, Ohio Arts Council and the State of Ohio Arts and Sports Facilities Commission.

What educational training (formal or informal),

My work in nonprofits has focused on realizing

employment and other life experiences have helped you develop the qualities, abilities, etc., described above?

the potential of ideas by working with sometimes very disparate groups to get to a long-term goal.

As Executive Director of the Five Colleges of Ohio, I led the collaboration of five similar but competing liberal arts colleges (Denison, Kenyon, Oberlin, Ohio Wesleyan and Wooster) to combine back-office functions and pool funds for joint projects to improve performance, save money, and open up opportunities for students. This involved leading the hard work – for them -- of ceding some autonomy in service of the common good. I brought in new partners – Ohio State, Stanford, foundations, a large procurement network – to realize new potential.

As VP for College Relations at Kenyon College, I led a large (\$240 million) campaign by working with trustees, faculty, and donors to unite around big concepts – buildings, endowment programs, financial aid for underserved populations – and to act as a catalyst and communicator between the funders and the funded. The campaign's success relied on rebuilding, training and refocusing the work of a staff of 45 to become an effective, united team, and it paid off. This work was preceded by a similar role at CAPA (Columbus Association for the Performing Arts, the "Playhouse Square of Columbus") which blossomed into a multi-state theatre management company and restorer of landmark theatres. At CAPA I worked across the spectrum, with local government, national and local funders, volunteer groups and boards on advocating and raising money for large-scale renovation projects and more than 300 performance events annually.

Most recently (now in retirement!) I have held leadership roles at Fairmount...

... Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights, the largest church in the denomination in NE Ohio. From 2023-25 I served as Clerk of Session, a board chair-like role that is also the corporate secretary. I have helped develop and lead Fairmount's work in supporting immigrant and refugee populations, collaborations with historically Black churches, international missions, hunger programs, as well as helping develop local church programs (such as our recent solar panel project.) I am also an active volunteer in supporting the Church's extensive social justice and community initiatives. This includes participating in Greater Cleveland Congregation's volunteer projects in documenting properties vacated by absentee landlords and reducing juvenile bind overs in Cuyahoga County courts and the work of Interfaith Group Against Hate, a multi-denominational group that calls out and addresses hate speech and actions in our community.

Please list your recent community, professional or charitable involvements. List the most recent first.

Fairmount Presbyterian Church
Clerk of Session (2023-2025)
Elder (board member) (2022-2025)
Deacon (2018-2022)

Cuyahoga County Democratic Party – Poll Observer 2024

Trustee, Association for Collaborative Leadership, the national organization of college consortium leaders (2017-2022)

Do you have other responsibilities which would prevent you from participating in City Council and

I am retired and do not have time restrictions that would prevent me from full participation. I will be

Council Committee work during certain hours or on certain days? Please note, having a full time job will not disqualify any applicant, and Council works hard to accommodate all members schedules when scheduling meetings.

out of town from 2/8-17/2026 and the month of March but would be able to participate in any Council business via Zoom.

State any additional information you would like to have considered.

I am stepping forward for consideration in this role because I love my adopted home of Cleveland Heights and the qualities that make it so special – its embrace of coexisting diverse communities, its historic character that is paired with a progressive focus, its walkable neighborhoods and engaging local business centers. I have devoted my recent volunteer work to social justice projects and will bring my commitment to fairness, equity, and opportunity to bear on these issues that are especially critical in these political times and in urban communities. I want to do my best to keep the best of the Heights while working together on its issues and opportunities, including and especially the future of Severance Center. I have a lot to learn and am committed to doing the work.

Please upload your CV or Resume (5 MB Limit)

[Sarah_Stone_Resume_2025.pdf \(234 KB\)](#)

Do you agree to electronically sign this form?

Yes

Signature

Sarah Stone

SARAH STONE

Employment History:

The Five Colleges of Ohio, Inc., Oberlin, Ohio

Executive Director (2017-2022)

Led the Five Colleges of Ohio consortium, which manages the joint academic, library, and business affairs of Denison University, Kenyon College, Oberlin College, Ohio Wesleyan University, and The College of Wooster. During my tenure, the Ohio Five:

- Built collaborations with The Ohio State University to support shared postdoctoral language teaching opportunities and develop the first remote shared language courses in Advanced Chinese
- Established Ohio Five internship programs in the sciences and mathematics in collaboration with The Ohio State University and Stanford University
- Expanded a common e-procurement system to handle more than \$143 million in purchasing activities overseen by over 2000 business and faculty users on the five campuses
- Led a multi-campus research project to investigate improved teaching and advising programs for underserved populations, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Launched CODEX, the Ohio Five's Collaborative for Digital Engagement and Experience, integrating digital practices in humanities and social science curricula, funded by The Hewlett Foundation

Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio

Director, Kenyon Institute and

Senior Advisor to the President for Strategic Initiatives (2012-2017)

Founded and directed a new summer adult education enterprise focused on helping adults become more proficient writers in their professional fields, now part of the public programs of *The Kenyon Review*.

- Kenyon Institute in Biomedical and Scientific Writing, an intensive grant- and journal-writing workshop for MD/PhD researchers, led by a faculty from the MD Anderson Cancer Center, Cornell Weill Medical College, Penn State, and medical journal editorial boards. The program became the medical writing provider for Columbus's Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Ohio State University College of Medicine in 2014.
- Kenyon Playwrights Conference, a commissioning and playwriting program based on international collaboration between major UK and US theatre companies, including Playwrights Horizons, Steppenwolf, Goodman Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout, the Atlantic Theatre Company and others.
- BEYOND WALLS, an interfaith writing intensive to enable clergy to reach seekers and believers in digital communications, led by a faculty of journalists, authors, and social media specialists.

Vice President for College Relations (October 2004-July 2014)

Senior staff administrator and corporate officer of Kenyon College, directing the 45-member College Relations Division that encompasses development, alumni and parent programs, annual funds, research, and public affairs and publications. Planned and surpassed the goal of "We are Kenyon," a six-year \$230 million comprehensive campaign with the following markers of success:

- Completed the campaign at \$240 million in 2011, a 106% increase over the Kenyon campaign ending in 2001.

- Secured outright lead gifts of \$27 million, \$11.7 million, and \$10 million, as well as a \$30 million estate commitment. Cash-in results were at record levels of \$24-26 million+ annually.
- Personally managed a portfolio of “Top 100” donors that included successful solicitation of the above lead gifts and others, for a total of \$123 million in \$500,000+ leadership gifts.
- Led a six-year growth in annual operating funds from \$3.7 million to \$6 million annually, including the \$1.2 million+ Kenyon Parents Fund, now ranked among the top annual funds of the nation’s four-year private colleges in participation (54%).
- Established a government relations program resulting in first-ever appropriation to a liberal arts college from the State of Ohio and one of the NEH’s largest “We the People” Challenge Grants.
- Oversaw highly regarded publications and news divisions which established regular, new coverage in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time Magazine* and other news leaders. Publications and video/web submissions received annual gold/silver national citations from the Council for Aid and Support of Education (CASE) and its 2009 and 2011 Robert Sibley Magazine of the Year Award for the best college magazine in the nation, judged by the editors of *Newsweek*.
- Received the CASE Award for Overall Fundraising Performance in 2011, one of four private four-year colleges internationally so recognized.

CAPA, a nationally acclaimed non-profit arts and entertainment presenter and owner/manager of historic theatres in Columbus, Chicago, and New Haven.

Interim President (February – August 2002)

- Reported for staff of 88 to Board of Trustees, served as institutional spokesperson, and administered search for new CEO with CAPA Executive Committee and national search firm
- Concluded interim period in post-9/11 season with positive financial results in all locations

Vice President for Advancement (July 2000-January 2004)

Director of Advancement (September 1993-July 2000)

Responsible for planning and directing all aspects of contributed revenue generation, including operating campaigns, capital campaigns, grants, benefit events, corporate/marketing sponsorships, and corporate and individual membership programs

- Generated \$3 million in annual contributed revenues and \$600,000 in sponsorship income
- Staffed institutional strategic planning activities
- Supervised CAPA education program in Columbus
- Managed nominating process for Boards of Trustees in three cities

Achievements:

- Directed successful completion of \$8 million BUILDING CAPAcity campaign for an addition to the Ohio Theatre, educational programming and endowment, exceeding original goal of \$6 million.
- Directed the \$10 million campaign to restore the 100-year-old Southern Theatre, including 400+ donors, generating eight first-time gifts of \$250,000 or more, and administering major appropriations from the State of Ohio and City of Columbus. Campaign exceeded original goal of \$7.9 million.
- Supervised two National Arts Stabilization projects in Columbus (1995-2000) and New Haven (2001 to 2004), a long-range planning and board development program resulting in two \$1 million grants for working capital reserves.
- Built a multi-city sponsorship program securing official and event/series sponsorships with companies including United Airlines, Merrill Lynch, Coca-Cola, Wendy’s International, Key Bank, A T & T, United Technologies, Bob Evans Farms, Honda, Limited Brands, Nationwide, Omni Hotels. Sponsorship

revenues for final year tracked at 30% above previous year.

- Directed major fundraising events, including annual CAPA Celebrates Gala, the opening gala for restored Southern Theatre, the Chicago Theatre 80th Anniversary (televised), and performance-related galas featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov, the Joffrey Ballet, The Boston Pops, Michael Feinstein, and Three Mo' Tenors.

Columbus Museum of Art

Grants Coordinator (1988-93)

- Managed grants program for regional art museum, generating \$750,000 in annual revenues
- Secured major first-time awards from the challenge grant programs of the National Endowment for the Arts, and National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute for Museum Services, and Henry Luce Foundation.

Opera/Columbus

Director of Development (1983-1986)

- Created development program for new company, replacing seed grants of \$300,000 with \$650,000 annual fund program
- Established The Diamond Horseshoe, first multi-year major gifts and endowment program • Secured first National Endowment for the Arts Challenge grant

Education:

B.A. Smith College, Northampton, MA, English Literature and Theatre, magna cum laude, 1979

Phi Beta Kappa

Yvonne Sarah Bernhardt Buerger Prize in Theatre

James T. and Ellen M. Hatfield Prize in English Literature and Writing

Development and Board Development Consulting

Provided board development, grants writing and fundraising consulting for organizations including:

The Ohio State University Office of

Corporate and Foundation Relations

Ohio Theatre Alliance

The Ohio State University Lawrence and

Dance Theatre Lee Theatre Research Institute

Wofford College

Wellington School

Ohio Designer Craftsmen

Cincinnati Contemporary

Ohio Arts Council

Speaking and Writing:

Presentations for organizations including:

National Association of Fund Raising Executives (NSFRE)

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

Association for Collaborative Leadership

Arts Midwest

ORACLE

Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)

Community Involvement:

Clerk of Session (2024-2025) and Elder (2023-2025), Fairmount Presbyterian Church

- Principal board (Session) officer overseeing board and congregational meetings, corporate records, congregational communications and issues resolution
- Led congregational process for first-ever Manual of Operations of church policy and revision of Personnel Manual.
- Headed electronic record preservation process for all Session records from 2006 to present.
- Served as Commissioner to the Presbytery of the Western Reserve (2024)

Chair, Serve Council, Fairmount Presbyterian Church (2022)

- Oversaw Fairmount external grants and community outreach program
- Led visioning process, authoring of council charter and establishment of external grants application and evaluation process.

Deacon, Fairmount Presbyterian Church (2018-2022)

- Led congregational meals program and participated in multiple community care initiatives, hunger drives and outreach volunteer programs.
- Served on Refugee Resettlement Team for Congolese refugee families supported by Fairmount

Poll Observer, Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, 2024

Trustee, Association for Collaborative Leadership, the international organization of higher education consortium leaders (2017-2022)