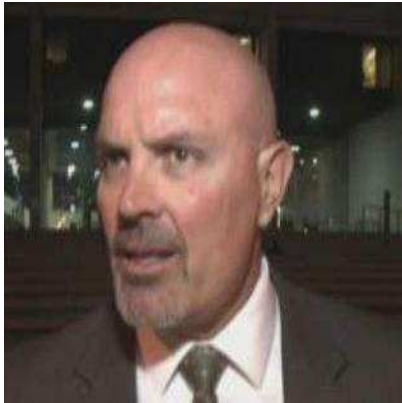


Written by Kathy
Thursday, 21 January 2016 08:22



By Kathy Wray Coleman, editor-in-chief, Cleveland Urban News. Com and the Cleveland Urban News.Com Blog, Ohio's Most Read Online Black Newspaper and Newspaper Blog. Tel: 216-659-0473. Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com. Coleman is a 23-year political, legal and investigative journalist who trained for 17 years, and under six different editors, at the Call and Post Newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio.

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alone.

CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM-CLEVELAND, Ohio — Former Cleveland councilman Mike O'Malley, also a former assistant county prosecutor and the Parma safety director until he quit last week to campaign, will kick off his campaign for Cuyahoga County prosecutor today, Jan. 21, at 6pm at Trinity Cathedral at 2230 Euclid Avenue in downtown Cleveland, his campaign manager, Ryan Miday, told Cleveland Urban News.Com.

"We are going to win this thing," said Miday.

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A former chief deputy under former county prosecutor Bill Mason, O'Malley hopes to unseat controversial county prosecutor Tim McGinty in the March Democratic primary this year.

Miday said that the campaign kickoff will include community affiliates and elected officials, including Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Yvonne Conwell, who is Black, and state Rep. Kent Smith (D-8), a Euclid Democrat.

Both McGinty and O'Malley are White in a 29 percent Black county, Ohio's largest of 88 counties statewide, and a Democratic stronghold.

No Republican took out petitions for a race that has divided the county Democratic party, to some extent, though city ward leaders stunned McGinty late last year and endorsed O'Malley.

But O'Malley, like McGinty, is taking a degree of criticism too, and as Mason's chief, given ongoing discrepancies in the legal system, including documented disparities in sentencing that were revealed via a study commissioned by the Cleveland NAACP.

A first term county prosecutor who wants four more years, McGinty, a one-time Mason ally, succeeded Mason into office.

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A resident of Parma, Mason, who is White and an O'Malley supporter, decided against reelection in 2012.

And though not an elected official now, and instead a partner in the law firm of Bricker and Eckler, he still wields power with the county Democratic party.

A former longtime common pleas judge, McGinty was denied an endorsement last month from the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party and activists and Cleveland area Black and other clergy, led by the Rev. Dr. Jawanza Colvin, senior pastor at the prominent Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, have called for his resignation.

At issue are high profile Cleveland police fatal shootings of Blacks, including Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, whom police shot and killed, firing an unprecedented 137 bullets, and following a car chase in 2012, rapper Kenneth Smith, Tanisha Anderson and 12-year-old Tamir Rice.

In spite of such police killings only officer Michael Brelo, who shot at Russell and Williams, slinging 49 bullets, was indicted on serious charges, though he was acquitted last May of voluntary manslaughter in a bench trial before Common Pleas Judge John O'Donnell, now a Democratic candidate for the Ohio Supreme Court.

McGinty is under fire, and accused of tainting the grand jury that freed two White cops who gunned down Rice in under two seconds from criminal charges.

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It did not help that he publicly released pro-police expert reports, reports compiled by experts that he handpicked to lobby the county jury for police, his critics say, and after waiting nearly a year to even bring the Rice case before the grand jury.

Eleventh Congressional District Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge, a Warrensville Heights Democrat and one of two Blacks in Congress from Ohio, is hot on McGinty's trail, and upset, saying that he did, in fact, taint the grand jury process. She has endorsed O'Malley.

McGinty, however, enjoys the advantage of the incumbency status, is an avid campaigner, and comes from a rich family.

Both have potent names.

O'Malley has said that he would have handled the Rice case differently, but did not give specifics

Rice was gunned down on November 22, 2014 when police officers Timothy Loehmann, a rookie who pulled the trigger, and Frank Garmback, pulled up at a public park and recreation center on the city's west side where the kid was toting a toy gun, and following a foiled 9-1-1 call to police dispatchers.

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Loehmann and Garmback, who both took the fifth before the grand jury and would not testify, have been reassigned to restrictive police duty pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

The grand jury decision has the Black community in shock, though some say that given the history of Cleveland police garnering impunity from prosecution when they erroneously kill unarmed Blacks, the outcome in the Rice case was not totally unexpected.

Experts commissioned by the attorneys for the Rice family say the deadly shooting by police was excessive force, and is unjustifiable.

In December the U.S. Department of Justice, an arm of the federal government now led by U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch, the nation's first Black female attorney general, issued findings of systemic problems in the Cleveland Police Department, including illegal excessive force killings, and cruel and unusual punishment against the mentally ill.

An agreed upon court-monitored consent decree for police reforms between the city and the federal government was reached last June.

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