Maple Heights OKs jobs creation grant with GOJO

By Judith Goldsworth

At a special teleconference meeting last week, Maple Heights Council approved legislation authorizing Mayor Annette Blackwell to enter into an agreement with Akron-based GOJO Industries for a Job Creation and Retention Program Grant. The manufacturer will be investing about $25 million to produce sanitizing products in a facility in Maple Heights.

GOJO makes Purell products, which are in extremely high demand in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and recently purchased a 325,000-square-foot facility at 5700 Lee Rd. South in the Rocksidge-Broadway neighborhood to manufacture Purell Surface Spray. Blackwell stated after council approved the resolution.

"This is bringing 100 jobs to the city through a partnership with Cuyahoga County, JobsOhio and Team NEO," Blackwell stated. She said that besides its facilities in Ohio, GOJO has operations in the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Japan, Mexico and Canada.

Economic Development Director Patrick Grogan-Myers, who Blackwell said was instrumental in bringing GOJO to Maple Heights, stated, "The total investment for GOJO Industries is approximately $25 million. GOJO’s Maple Heights facility will bring 100 jobs and over $5 million in payroll to the city. This payroll is estimated to generate $127,000 in income taxes for the city."

(Continued on Page 3)

Indy Council votes to expand outside restaurant seating; hires added law firm in 'traffic ticket quotas' lawsuit

By Ellen Psenicka

In a letter to Garfield Heights Mayor Vic Collova dated last Thursday, Police Chief Robert Byrne submitted his notice of retirement from the city’s police department.

Widely covered media reports and video of a man diagnosed with mental disorders, Kenta Settles, 28, being detained by Officer Michael Malak last January on Turney Rd. without giving him a reason, and subsequently failing to let Independence restaurants know of its desire to assist was the ground with Officer Robert Pitts and Tased in a violent confrontation played into the chief’s decision to retire, Byrne said.

"Let me be clear," Byrne said in his letter to Collova, "I stand by my decision to support the officers involved in this incident.

"It is evident that many want changes in police departments across America including Garfield Heights. I do not believe I am the best person to instill this change," the chief continued.

At Monday night’s telephone conference meeting of city council, Collova praised Chief Byrne for his distinguished 31-year career in law enforcement, and said how disturbed he was by the “slanted media reports” on the January incident, in which an internal investigation had found the officers innocent of any wrongdoing.

"There’s a lot more involved with that incident that would certainly cast a different light on the case," Collova said at the council meeting. "But unfortunately because of litigation I can’t comment now, but when the time comes I will comment loudly and clearly."

By Attorney Jeremy Tor, Dennis Lansdowne and Nick DiCello of Spangenberg Shibley & Liber LLP, have brought a police brutality lawsuit against five officers of the Garfield Heights Police Department on behalf of Settles. The lawsuit claims the officers acted with excessive force and violated the plaintiff’s civil rights, according to the law firm’s online posting.

Residents phoning in to the council meeting questioned the police department’s use of force, its lack of diversity and more than one called for Malak’s firing.

"It’s been a tough few weeks with the virus and racial tensions spilling over across the country into Garfield Heights," the mayor told residents. "But don’t give up on this community. We will get through this, and we’ll do it together."

Meeting on policing set

At the meeting, civic activist and Garfield Heights resident James Fruits announced a meeting on policing in Garfield Heights set for this Thursday, June 25, at 5:45 p.m. at The Rock Church, 9403 Garfield Blvd.

He said a neutral moderator will be on hand as well as facilitators who will lead small discussion groups, hoping for more people, and converting our Garfield Heights store was critical for our ability to meet the needs of Cleveland area Giant Eagle guests," said Giant Eagle spokesperson Jannah Jablonowski. "We are now in a position to meet the increased demand for grocery pickup and home delivery services with same-day and next-day slots available to guests at most locations, and with that, felt it was time to welcome guests back into our Garfield Heights supermarket."

Giant Eagle, Inc. has announced that it has resumed regular operations at its Garfield Heights location on Transportation Blvd. The location has been operating exclusively as a curbside pickup center since April.

"The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic created an urgent need for food retailers to innovate and find ways to make contactless pickup and delivery options available to more people, and converting our Garfield Heights store was critical for our ability to meet the needs of Cleveland area Giant Eagle guests," said Giant Eagle spokesperson Jannah Jablonowski. "We are now in a position to meet the increased demand for grocery pickup and home delivery services with same-day and next-day slots available to guests at most locations, and with that, felt it was time to welcome guests back into our Garfield Heights supermarket."

Giant Eagle at City View open for public shopping

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Shoppers can continue to place curbside pickup and home delivery orders from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., daily. The Garfield Heights in-store pharmacy will continue to operate for prescription pickup or drop-off both in-pharmacy and at the drive-thru from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Patients are encouraged to speak to a pharmacy Team Member to determine the best way to obtain their medications.
Indy Council votes
(Continued from Page 1)

The complaint, as outlined in Chandra’s posting, relates how Independence officials pursued a policy of setting traffic-ticket quotas to increase revenue. The policy, which the police chief called a “performance standard,” required each patrol officer to write 10 tickets per month or face discipline, according to Chandra.

The suit is still pending in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio. Presiding Judge James S. Gwin is assigned to the case.

Also approved at the June meeting were the following:
• Tax budget for 2021;
• Project agreement with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for the West Creek at Patriots Way Culvert Replacement Project, which includes reimbursement from NEORSD of up to $46,850, and the city to pay $33,850;
• Acquisition, installation, equipment and improvement of certain public improvements in connection with the Northeast Ohio Advanced Energy District for the Pleasant Valley Road Project in connection with Redwood’s purchase of the old ADP building. Officials said this economic development project will bring jobs to the city and massively upgrade the building. Also passed were two related pieces of legislation to levy special assessments for the project;
• Proposal of Euthenics, Inc., for professional services in connection with the Hillside Road Sidewalk Improvements Project (Hawthorn Trace to S. Great Oaks Parkway), not to exceed $15,000, which will cover about 30% of the engineering work;
• Allocating of up to $50,000 towards the purchase and distribution of personal protection products (masks, sanitizer, etc.) for vulnerable, at-risk residents of the city in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic;
• Approval of a preliminary plan for sublots for Timothy J. Lee, Daisy, LLC, and Daisy May, LLC.
• Requesting the city’s share of funds ($121,000) from the County Coronavirus Relief Distribution Fund.

Grab and Go lunches at Fleet branch library

The Fleet Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, 7224 Broadway Ave., in Slavic Village, has started to serve Grab and Go meals for children ages 18 and under and will continue throughout the summer between 10:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. each weekday, as announced by Ward 12 Councilman Tony Brancatelli.

The Stella Walsh Recreation Center across the street from the library is not opening this summer. All meals will be canceled as of July 3.
Maple Heights OKs jobs

(Continued from Page 1)

The structure of the grant is as follows: the city will award GOJO an annual grant payment from city non-tax revenues equal to 25% of the income tax withheld on GOJO’s employee payroll for a period of five years, beginning August 1, 2020, capped at $31,000 per year, with the stipulation that during the five-year period, GOJO stays in the city, maintains a minimum annual payroll of $5 million and annually employs at least 100 workers.

Blackwell explained GOJO’s need to expand its operations, given the increased demand for Purell products due to the pandemic, and also noted the facility’s large area, which formerly housed Blue Coral products, and its close proximity to rail transport and to the company’s headquarters in Akron as reasons for GOJO’s decision to locate in the city.

CARES legislation, other items passed

Council also passed a resolution at last week’s meeting to affirm that funds from the Cuyahoga County Coronavirus Relief Distribution Fund will be expended only to cover Maple Heights’ costs consistent with the requirements of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, signed into federal law in March.

Blackwell said the distribution of the funds was the work of the Ohio Municipal League to offset “significant losses of revenue to cities due to COVID-19.”

Council also passed a resolution authorizing Blackwell to enter into the 2020 Construction Season Master Cooperative Agreement with Cuyahoga County for preventive maintenance services.

“Pursuant to an award letter dated February 24, 2020 and May 7, 2020, the municipalities will be reimbursed by the county for performing preventive maintenance activities on county roadways,” including pavement resurfacing, base repairs, curb replacement and repairs, rebuilding catch basins and manholes, pavement striping, crack sealing, pavement joint repair and other maintenance services.

Also passed was an ordinance amending the city’s codified ordinances concerning side yard fences on properties purchased by homeowners as adjacent side yards from the city’s Land Bank.

The maximum height of fences in side yards (except for living fences) “shall be six feet from the finished grade to the top of any portion of the fence,” and as amended, “side yard fences shall be located at least 30 inches from the property line, and not be constructed in front of the dwelling.”

Council also approved a motion to authorize the Community Life and Education Committee’s “Bridge The Gap Rally and Parade,” which was held over the weekend, “to further the public purposes of promoting good will, civic pride, harmony and understanding throughout the entire Maple Heights community by fostering interaction between residents... and the police department.”

~Laws of the Land~ in Garfield Heights

Do you live in Garfield Heights and have a question about its ordinances - what may or may not be legal in any given circumstance? This column will answer your questions with the help of members of Garfield Heights City Council.

Question – What is the city’s policy on animal excreta?

Answer – No owner, keeper or person in charge of any animal shall allow or permit such animal to void urine or excrement on any public or private property other than the property of the owner, keeper or person in charge of such animal, except that animals may be allowed or permitted to void urine or excrement between the curbs of public streets or alleys and on vacant, unoccupied and unused public or private land, provided the owner of such unused public or private land does not publicly and prominently post notice thereon that such acts are prohibited.

No owner, keeper or person in charge of any animal shall fail to pick up and properly dispose of any fecal matter left by his animal on any public or private property. Ordinance 90-1991. Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

E. 55th detour in S.V.

Cleveland Ward 12 Councilman Tony Brancatelli said he is pleased to announce “we are on the home stretch” for the last phase of the million-dollar E. 55th Street Restoration Project.

There will be one-way traffic on E. 55 St. for the next 30 days southbound from Harvard to Fleet avenues. Northbound traffic will be detoured from Harvard Ave. east to E. 71 St. north to Fleet Ave. west.
Two shot at Marathon station in Maple Heights

Last Wed., June 17, at 2 a.m., the Maple Heights Police Department received a call from the Cleveland Police Department stating they were with a male who was shot at the Marathon gas station, located at 5012 Warrensville Center Rd.

The Maple Heights Police Department never received any calls about shots being fired, said Lt. Joseph T. Mocsiran, in a MHPD press release.

When units became available they went to the area of the Marathon gas station and found between 18-20 spent shell casings.

While on scene, they received another call from Cleveland Police stating that they were informed that there was a second shooting victim at South Pointe Hospital being transferred to MetroHealth Medical Center. Both males were treated and are in stable condition with non-life-threatening injuries.

After reviewing the surveillance video, MHPD noted there were two groups of African-American males who began shooting at one another at the Marathon station. The group of three males were parked in front, in a red vehicle, and the other two males involved were in a black vehicle. The males started to argue and as the black vehicle pulled away both groups started shooting at each other, according to the press release. Police are looking for a black Nissan Sentra and a red Toyota Camry.

Pictures of all males involved and the vehicles of interest are included are shown at right.

Anyone with information related to this case is urged to contact the Maple Heights Detective Bureau: 216-587-0624 or Detectives@mhpd-ohio.com

As always, information can be supplied anonymously to Crime Stoppers.
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Breaking and Entering

Officers responded to Jamaica’s Drumpoon Jerk, 4980 Turney Rd., for a breaking and entering sometime during the night of June 9-10. A window of the restaurant was broken and the only thing the owner could see missing was a tip jar kept on the counter in the lobby. Owner was advised to contact police if anything was found on the surveillance video. The next day a suspect was in custody who admitted to the break-in.

Criminal Damaging

On June 11, shortly before 1 a.m., police responded to Garfield Auto Center, 4923 Turney Rd., for a commercial glass break alarm. While in route, officers observed a male crossing Turney Rd. westbound from the area of Garfield Auto. He was stopped but had no weapon or criminal tools on him and was released. There was a large crack in the business’s lobby window but it was still intact. At about 5 a.m., police responded to an alarm at Boulevard Garage and found the man they had previously detained attempting to break into that business. He was arrested and admitted to his involvement in this incident.

Breaking and Entering

A man in the 3500 block of Cumberland Dr. reported the theft of a scooter and charger from his garage on June 14. He was unsure how someone could have entered his garage as it only opens with a garage door opener.

Theft-Shoplifting

Officer responded to the Get-Go gas station on Transportation Blvd. on June 14, at about 9:20 p.m., for a robbery that occurred a few minutes prior. The manager told police a man had parked a red Chevy Cavalier near the entrance of the store, walked inside to the cooler and took an unknown number of cases of Red Bull, loaded them onto a two-wheel dolly and left the store.

The manager said he verbally confronted the suspect as he left the store. The suspect then loaded the cases into his car trunk, but there was no physical altercation. The man then left the area traveling north on Transportation Blvd. Value of the stolen Red Bull was estimated at $400.

Shots Fired

At 1:51 p.m. on June 17, police were sent to North Drive for shots being fired from a moving auto. An officer spoke to a resident of the 12700 block of North Drive who said a black auto came down the street and the driver shot at least four times into the air from his car window. Officers did not find the car but did locate a single 22 Mag casing in the street.
Saluting the 2020 Class of Cuyahoga Heights High School

Spencer Robert Adams
Maxwell James Alpert
Makayla Nichole Barfield
Jason Christopher Bartosik
Sydney Lauren Bowden
Darci Georgette Bundus
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Brian Caporuscio
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Megan Elizabeth Cervenka
Purva Chauhan
Joseph Michael Connors
Emily Rose D’Onofrio
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Curtis Anthony Davis
Katherine Marie Davis
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Jesse Noel DeRoberts
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Luke Vincent Ewelt
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Nathan Gregory Glinka
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Jerry Lee Hanson III
Carson Nicholas Horstmann
Olivia Lee Jisa
Roman Jacob Jisa
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Victoria Elizabeth Kattler
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Katarina Calliope Kiriazis
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Mason James Laski
Keith Andrew Lipkowski
Kendall Shea Lee Meriwether
Abigail Morgan Morrow

Presenting the 2020 Class of Independence High School

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Elizabeth Ann Angel
Virginia Marie Baire
Wyatt Elston Balser
Madelyn Rose Bilinovic
Vincent Patrick Bucci
Brian Edward Caporuscio
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William Angelo Rodgers Jr.
Ryan Edward Rose
Rhyan Howard Selig
Samuel John Shafer
Nicholas Allen Shaw
David Charles Lee Shull
McKayla Margaret Spicer
Jordan William Stefanko
Abigail Grace Szendrey
Rodrick Edward Hein Terrigno
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Ashley Lauren Waryk
Bryan Anthony Washko
Grace Veronica Wittenmyer
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Kate Elizabeth Taliaferro
Abbey Lauren Terliber
Antigone Grace Tschetter
Nathan Edward Vincell
Liam Alexander Walker
John Julian Walters
Riley Marie Wilson
Benjamin David Wisinski
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