

Keeping you informed about our neighborhood!

The Ward 8 Citizen

Michael D. Polensek • Councilman, Ward 8 | Winter 2023-2024



A MESSAGE from your Councilman Michael D. Polensek

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As we approach the New Year, I would like to reflect on some of the challenges and successes we have experienced this past year. Thank goodness, we had more successes than challenges.

It has been over three years since the height of the pandemic, and we are still dealing with the aftermath in the City. Many of our schoolchildren have fallen far behind as a result of schools being shut down, and many small businesses are still struggling, especially our restaurants. Then, when you add the state of the economy and the cost of living, you can understand why so many families are having a very difficult time. As one local restaurateur said to me recently, "how high can you raise your food prices while still maintaining your customer base?" We have been fortunate in Ward 8 that we haven't lost more businesses as a result of inflation.

We are seeing national chains closing and we are hearing from commercial realtors that over the next year or so, we are going to see more hemorrhaging both nationally and locally. This is why I urge all to support our local ward-based businesses.

Along those same lines, I have been notified that the **United States Postal Service** is, once again, looking at what stations could be closed. We are fortunate that we currently have three stations: the **Collinwood Station** at Five Points, the **Beachland Station** at East 185th Street, and the **Glenville Station** at 680 East 105th Street.

In addition, we are seeing **major banks considering what branches to close** in their

Our strength is with our residents and our businesses. Don't ever forget that. If we continue to support one another, we can move our community forward.

efforts to cut overhead costs. There is that old saying: "If you don't use it, you will lose it." In the world in which we live today, people shop online and do their banking. However, **if we don't not physically utilize our post offices and our bank branches in the Greater Collinwood community, we will not have them in the foreseeable future.** In Ward 8, we have more bank branches than many other eastside wards combined. Banks are a symbol of neighborhood stability. **All I can say, it is more important than any time before to support these institutions and businesses in our community.**

This year we were again faced with many City service challenges, especially as it pertains to the Division of Police, despite their many incentives for hiring. As I write this newsletter, **we are now below 1,200 CPD officers, which is about what we had in the year 1920.** That number is shocking, and it should be. On Election Day, November 7th, while visiting the seven voting locations in our ward and listening to folks who voted on Issue 38, policing and safety were the common denominators. The challenge that lies before those of us in City Council is that, by law, Council cannot hire, fire, deploy,

or administer. The City Charter is very clear about that. However, we allocated the funding to hire an additional 180 officers in the 2023 City Budget this year. As of this writing, only 37 have been hired. I will continue to stress to the City Administration that the City Government's number one priority is to provide for public health, safety and to address the "quality of life" issues in our neighborhoods. I am here to help the Mayor and his Administration in any way possible to improve programs and the delivery of city services.

The City also struggles to fill critical vacancies in the **Division of EMS**, even though I believe there may be "a light at the end of the tunnel." Therefore, I continue to urge anyone in our community or who might know someone, who is **interested in serving as a Police Officer or EMS EMT/Paramedic, to call the Department of Public Safety at 216-623-5233.** What is so often overlooked with public service careers are the fringe benefits, i.e. health care and pension programs. We see where many fringe benefits have been substantially reduced in private sector jobs, yet we have significant openings in

Continued on page 2

Longfellow Senior Housing Ribbon Cutting

Ward 8 Councilman Mike Polensek and many others were on hand for the official ribbon cutting for the Longfellow Senior Housing complex on October 26th.

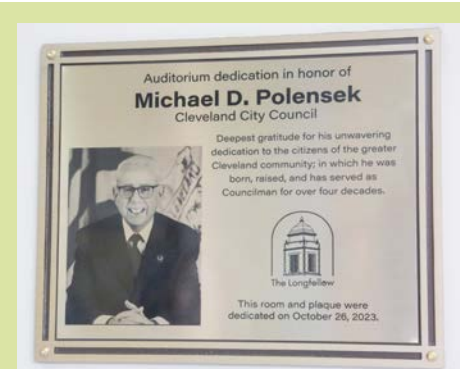
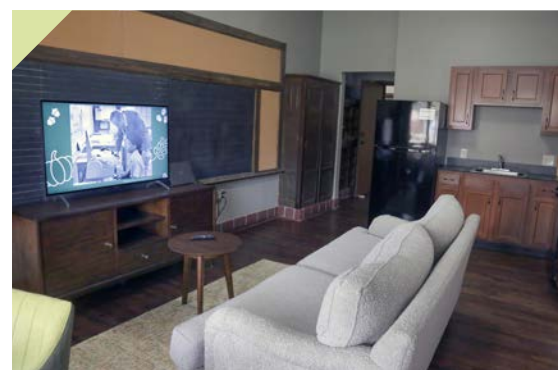
Located at 650 E. 140th Street, the Longfellow project not only adds new and affordable senior housing in Ward 8, but it repurposed the historic landmarked Henry W. Longfellow School in the Collinwood community.

Eighty new senior apartments are spread between the historic rehabilitation of the existing

Longfellow School and a new building on-site that includes an enclosed connecting walkway providing residents easy access to features in both buildings without exposure to inclement weather and slippery sidewalks. **The entire project cost about \$23.5 million.**

"I've long advocated for these historic schools throughout Cleveland to be reused for projects like this," said Councilman Polensek. "I have to thank so many that made this project possible, including Gov. Mike DeWine, my fellow Council members, Cleveland Restoration Society and the Vesta Corporation who specialize in these type of redevelopments and who brought in Marous Brothers Construction to complete the transformation."

To learn more or apply for residence, visit longfellowseniorhousing.com, or call 440-431-3850.



The 3,000 square foot auditorium of the former school has been transformed into a community space for residents. The area is dedicated to Councilman Polensek in honor of his efforts to keep the building intact.



many divisions and departments in the city which provide those benefits.

In fact, if you are looking for a job, do yourself a favor, and **look at what is available on the City's website at clevelandohio.gov or at City Hall on the First Floor at Civil Service (216-664-2467).** You might be surprised as to what is available.

When I look back at our neighborhood accomplishments, I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of the projects and initiatives that had been started or are finishing up:

The historic Longfellow school building on East 140th Street at Darley officially opened as a Senior Community apartment complex. The **\$23 million** project not only saved this building from demolition, but now has provided 80 quality apartments for seniors. My sincere thanks to the Cleveland Restoration Society, Marous Brothers Construction and the Vesta Corporation for believing in our community. As a result of this major financial commitment, I, along with Ward 10 Councilman, Anthony T. Hairston, sponsored legislation to implement the **\$8.6 million streetscape project along East 140th Street from Lakeshore Boulevard to St. Clair Avenue** (see project map above). **The project will continue throughout 2024.**

I don't have to tell anyone how difficult the **East 185th Street project** has been. This **\$25.8 million** project was in the works for approximately a decade, but thanks to my colleagues in Cleveland City Council, the City of Euclid, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), it became a reality. The City installed a new storm sewer and water line along with new road pavement, and through the remainder of this year and into next Spring, we will be finishing the streetscape itself.

The historic LaSalle Theatre is now fully operational as the Ariel LaSalle Event Center. Thank you to Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Ms. Linda Warren and our neighborhood advocates, Ms. Caroline Peak, Ms. Elva Brodnick and Ms. Michelle Kenny, for all their due diligence in bringing this project to fruition. We look forward to more memories in this great place.

Thanks to all who participated to help in planning the **re-imagining of Neff Road Park and Playground.** Work should start in 2024. We are also looking at new ideas for Humphrey's Sports Complex and will continue to tweak those plans.

I wish to thank those non-profit and for-profit entities, who are in the process of building new

PROJECT AREA



East 140th Street Rehabilitation & Streetscape Project



affordable housing in our community. I wish to thank, once again, my colleagues in Council for allocating **\$1 million** to assist **Habitat for Habitat** to build ten (10) new ranch-style homes just off Grovewood Avenue and Rebuild Cleveland, who has begun to clear land on Westropp Avenue for additional new housing. I am also working with builders looking at East Glenville and in the Collinwood Village area. I am committed to working with developers to create affordable housing for our community. Watch for future updates.

It goes without saying, that I am a great supporter of **the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.** I cannot think of another non-profit group that has meant so much to our greater community. They not only invested in building a **200,000-square-foot food warehouse** on Coit Road, but on November 1st, they officially opened their **Community Resource Center** at the former headquarters on S. Waterloo. Their financial commitment to our community has been estimated at **\$79 million.** Please see enclosed article about the Food Bank and the Resource Center offerings.

As we move into 2024, none of us have a crystal ball, especially regarding the national economy. We see conflicts throughout the world which have an impact on us locally. What is clear, though, is that we have made great strides in the community. We see new businesses and a renewed spirit from East Glenville to Collinwood Village to Waterloo Arts District to East 185th Street business district and beyond. Our strength is with our residents

and our businesses. Don't ever forget that. If we continue to support one another, we can move our community forward.

Winter is a season of believing. And there's no better example of that than the **Glenville Tarblooders winning back-to-back Division IV State Football Championships! Coach Ted Ginn, Sr.,** and his team had another exceptional title run this season. Coach Ginn stays committed to athletic success on the field while emphasizing the importance of a good education, brotherhood, and being true community partners on a daily basis. I'd also like to acknowledge **"Collinwood's own" Tom Lombardo, head football coach of St. Edward,** on his third consecutive Division I football championship. **Congratulations to both of these phenomenal coaches and their respective school teams.**

As 2023 comes to a close, always remember that I believe in the GREATER COLLINWOOD and GLENVILLE neighborhoods. I wish you and yours a **Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and a Joyous Kwanzaa** as you celebrate with your family and friends. God bless our community and our City. God Bless America.

As always, I may be reached at the office at 216-664-4236 or via email at mpolensek@clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Sincerely yours,

Greater Cleveland Food Bank's Community Resource Center Grand Opening



On November 1st, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank (GCFB) officially opened its Community Resource Center (CRC), with the mission in mind to shorten the line of neighbors experiencing food insecurity. The new CRC will be a "one-stop shop" including a healthy choice market with dedicated evening and weekend hours to support our neighbors. In addition to the healthy market, GCFB has partnered with an array of non-profits that will be available to work with neighbors in providing **access to wrap-around services and help neighbors overcome barriers to food insecurity.**

Last year, the Food Bank served a total of 401,000 unduplicated neighbors, the highest amount at any point in their history, including during the height of the pandemic. Nearly 100,000 people turned to GCFB and their 1,000 partner agencies for the first time. In all, **GCFB distributed over 51 million pounds of food, and will continue to expand their distribution with the new CRC.**

The CRC will house 15 different non-profits and providers, with a goal to move households toward food security. Those partners include:

- CHN Housing Partners
- Towards Employment
- MetroHealth
- Shoes and Clothes for Kids
- Legal Aid Society of Cleveland
- The Diaper Bank of Greater Cleveland

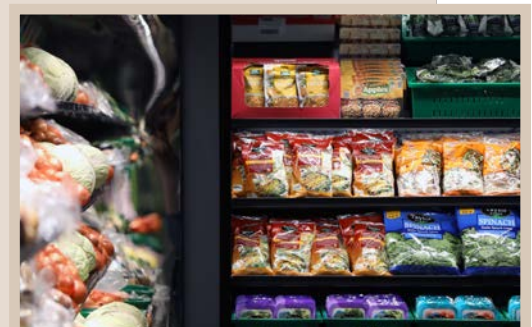
- Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services
- United Way-211
- Benjamin Rose
- Family Connections
- College Now
- Ohio Means Jobs
- Future Plans
- Cuyahoga Community College
- MAGNET

GCFB plans to address the many challenges being faced by people in our community who need assistance. As the need for food assistance remains high, housing, unemployment, education, and healthcare are vital to the wellbeing of our neighbors in Collinwood and Glenville.

Greater Cleveland Food Bank's Community Resource Center is open to the public!

Located at 15500 S. Waterloo Rd., building hours and Market hours differ.

FOR UP-TO-DATE HOURS OF OPERATIONS, CALL 216-738-2067



NEED HELP? DIAL 2-1-1



When you need help, United Way 211 is there to answer the call. **Dial three numbers: 2-1-1,** and a compassionate person will help you access community resources, **24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

United Way 211 is free and confidential.



Career Opportunities WITH THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

The City makes every effort to recruit the most qualified applicants available to serve the residents and visitors of Cleveland. Visit clevelandohio.gov/careers to view current openings and to apply!

LIFEGUARD TRAINING & PLACEMENT

Two Upcoming Classes
From September 18 - December 22, 2023

Thurgood Marshall	Cudell
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30pm - 7:30pm 8611 Hough Ave	Mondays & Wednesdays 5:15pm - 7:00pm 1910 West Blvd

High school students ages 15-18 may qualify to be paid \$13.50/hr during training.

**Get paid
to work Poolside!**

**TO SIGN UP:
CALL 216-664-2570
OR SCAN**



**UP TO
\$5,000
SIGNING BONUS**

**APPLY TO BE A
PATROL
OFFICER**

- ✓ Healthcare Packages
- ✓ Over 50 Specialized Units
- ✓ Pay increases each year with top out at year 5- \$36.22 per hour
- ✓ Excellent Retirement Benefits

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT PUBLIC SAFETY RECRUITMENT
(216)-623-5233



PAID POLICE ACADEMY
Cadet Salary \$24.48 per hour and increases upon graduation to \$29.38 per hour.

PAY INCENTIVES
Increased pay incentives for Cadets who have a College Degree and/or have served in the Armed Forces.

REIMBURSEMENTS
Receive a reimbursement for previously obtained OPOTA Certification. Tuition Reimbursement (\$6,000 per year)!

SCAN TO APPLY



CLEVELANDOHIO.GOV/JOBS

NEED FOOD?



Greater Cleveland
Food Bank



216-738-2067

GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org

Serving Ashland, Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Richland Counties.

216-738-2067

TEXT "FOOD" to 63566
for information regarding SNAP (food stamps) applications, food pantries, free produce and hot meals.

Scan this
QR Code with
your phone's
camera for
more info!

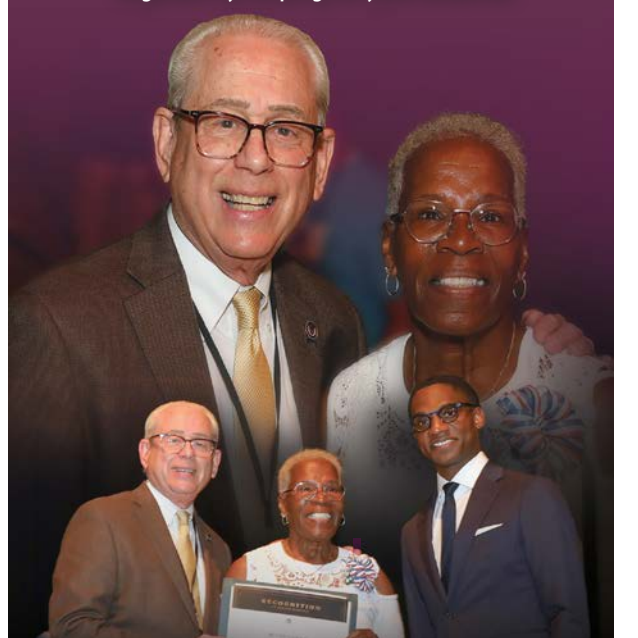


Greater Cleveland
Food Bank
GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org

2023 Senior of the Year BETTY EASLEY

Join Councilman Polensek in recognizing Betty Easley as our Outstanding Senior of the Year!

"Miss Betty" is a proactive Ward 8 resident who takes great pride in cleaning up her street and inspiring neighbors by keeping her yard beautiful.



Ms. Betty Easley with Councilman Mike Polensek and Mayor Bibb at the 2023 City of Cleveland Senior Day event on May 25th at Cleveland Public Hall.

PRESORT STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CLEVELAND, OH
PERMIT NO. 2893

The Ward 8 Citizen

COUNCILMAN

MICHAEL D. POLENSEK

City Council Office:

601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 220
Cleveland, OH 44114

Phone: 216-664-4236

Fax: 216-664-3837

Email:

mpolensek@clevelandcitycouncil.org



Visit www.ClevelandCityCouncil.org

DIAL-A-NUMBER

FOR COMPLAINTS OR PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENTS

CALL 3-1-1

Emergency (Police, Fire, EMS)	911
Police (non-emergency)	621-1234
5th District Police (881 E. 152nd St.)	623-5500
Fire (non-emergency)	621-1212
EMS (non-emergency)	623-4545
City Hall (all departments)	664-2000

Animal Control (dogs, etc)	664-3069
Building/Housing Complaints	664-2007
ClevelandPublicPower	664-3156
Collinwood Recreation Center	420-8323
Department of Aging	664-2833
Dominion East Ohio Gas	361-2345
Health Department Complaints	664-2300
Illuminating Company	1-800-589-3101
Potholes/Snow Removal	664-2510
Sewers/Catch Basins (dugged)	664-2513
Street Light Outages (COP)	621-5483
Traffic Signs Down & Missing	420-8282
Tree Trimming/Removal	664-3104
Waste Collection Issues	664-2397
Water Department (leaks, hydrants)	664-3060

UPCOMING Community Meetings



Collinwood Homeowners Meeting

1st Wednesday of the Month*, 6:00 PM

St Mary Church at 15519 Holmes Ave

(*Months: March, April, May, June, Sept., Oct., and Nov.)

East 185th Street Neighborhood Association

2nd Tuesday of the Month*, 6:00 pm

Lithuanian Village Hall, 877 East 185th St

(*Every month except January; June meeting at Wildwood Park Pavilion)

Ward Club

2nd Wednesday of the Month*, 6:00 pm

Collinwood Recreation Center, 16300 Lakeshore Blvd

(*Months: Feb., March, Apr., May, June, Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.)

East 156th Street Neighborhood Association

3rd Thursday of the Month*, 6:00 pm

Collinwood Recreation Center at 16300 Lakeshore Blvd

(*Every month except January; Call to be connected to Chairperson)

Any questions about these meetings please feel free to contact Mary Louise Jesek Daley, in Councilman Polensek's office at 216-664-4236 or via email at mdaley@clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Winter Snow Plan for City Streets



Plowing is provided to primary and main secondary streets throughout the city. Service is directed first at main streets until they are passable, then service is redirected to residential streets as soon as possible.

As soon as snow plow drivers report road conditions, supervisors direct trucks accordingly.

The goal is to plow all streets within 24 to 72 hours after a major snow event depending on the actual amount of snow fall and weather conditions.

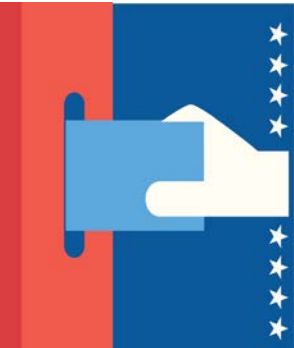
Residents should find OFF STREET PARKING in advance of snow plows coming down the street; for cars and vehicles which have not moved, pose a serious hazard to traffic and make it difficult to clear the roadway. For abandoned or snowed-in cars on your street call 216-623-5505 and provide as much information as possible to the Fifth District Police. For more information or to report hazardous road and snow conditions please call **216-664-2510.**

Smoke Detectors Save Lives

Operation Save A Life, a program of the Red Cross and Cleveland Fire, provides **free smoke alarms and batteries to Cleveland residents.** Smoke alarms are installed by Cleveland firefighters at no cost to residents. Call 216-361-5535.

2024 Primary Election Information

Another election is fast approaching! Clevelanders recently voted in the November '23 election. Now, you'll have the opportunity to vote for Democrats and Republicans for federal, state, and county offices, in addition to a Health & Human Services levy. The Health & Human Services levy funds substance abuse treatment, MetroHealth, child protective services, programs for the elderly, homelessness services, and more.



2024 PRIMARY ELECTION CALENDAR

- Election day:** Tue., March 19
- Registration deadline:** Tue., February 20
- Early voting begins:** Wed., February 21
- Update or check registration:** Visit myohiovote.com

- WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT:** Primary election for President; U.S. Senator; Congress; State Representatives; Health & Human Services Levy

COLLINWOOD

Neighborhood Resource & Recreation Center

VISIT or CALL for a complete listing
of WINTER 2023-2024 ACTIVITIES
AND PROGRAMS!

Location 16300 Lakeshore Blvd **Phone** 216-420-8323
[www.clevelandohio.gov/city-hall/departments/public-works/
divisions/recreation](http://www.clevelandohio.gov/city-hall/departments/public-works/divisions/recreation)

