 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 1000 small businesses are being forced to close. We are seeing national chains closing and we are hearing from commercial realtors that over 1000 small businesses are being forced to close. We are hearing from commercial realtors that over 1000 small businesses are being forced to close. We are hearing from commercial realtors that over 1000 small businesses are being forced to close.

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 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 those sectors and our banks in the Greater Cleveland area.

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.

Continued on page 2
Greater Cleveland Food Bank

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 store, financial counseling, and a personal Jesus Center to support people to access 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

5 years, 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:

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

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., 15500 S. Waterloo Rd.

TO SIGN UP: CALL 216-738-2067

Greater Cleveland Food Bank

216-738-2067

GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org

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

Tuesdays & Thursdays

1:30pm-3:30pm

2201 W 31st St.

6011 West Blvd.

(216) 632-5333

Mondays & Wednesdays

11:00am-1:00pm

1910 West Blvd.

TO SIGN UP:

CALL (216) 632-2170

OR SCAN

CITY OF CLEVELAND

GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org

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.

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 were 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 provides 80 quality apartments for seniors. My sincere thanks to the Cleveland Restoration Society, Menus Brothers Construction and the Westa 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 million streetscape project along East 140th Street from Lakeshore Boulevard to St. Clair Avenue for project management. 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), and many others, the City installed a new storm sewer and water line along with new road pavement, at the 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 the Cleveland Board of Education, Ms. Linda Warren and our neighborhood advocates, Ms. Caroline Peak, Ms. Du Braddock and Ms. Michelle Kenny, for all their due diligence in bringing this project to fruition. We look forward to more memories in the great place. Thanks to all who participated to help in planning the re-imaging of Neff Road Park and Playground. Work should start in 2024. We are also looking at new ideas for Humphrey’s Sports District and will continue to partner with developers to create affordable housing 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 Tarbleowdry winners looking back-to-back Division IV State Football Championship Coach Ted Glenn, Sr., and his team had another exceptional title run this season. Coach Glenn has stayed 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 phantom 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 216-664-4216 or via email at mpolensek@clevelandcity.org.
Collinwood

2024 Primary Election

City Hall (all departments) 216-664-2510.

FOR COMPLAINTS OR PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENTS CALL 3-1-1 DIAL-A-NUMBER
FOR EMERGENCY CALL 911

Cleveland Fire, provides free smoke alarms and batteries to Cleveland residents. Smoke alarms are installed by Cleveland firefighters at no cost to residents. Operation Save A Life, a program of the Red Cross and Cleveland Fire, provides smoke detectors throughout the City. Smoke Detectors are installed at no cost to residents. Smoke Detectors are also sold at local stores.

Winter Snow Plan

Smoke Detectors

For City Streets

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Ward 8 Citizen Center

Collinwood Recreation Center

Located at 2730 W. 150th St.

Phone: 216-664-2300

Ward 8 Columbus

Contact Mary Louise Jesek Daley, in Councilman Polensek's office at 216-664-4236 or via email at mpolensek@clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Collinwood Recreation Center at 16300 Lakeshore Blvd

This winter, activities at the Collinwood Recreation Center are

Collinwood Recreation Center at 16300 Lakeshore Blvd

Winter Activities

Winter 2023-2024 ACTIVITIES

of 24 ACTIVITIES

CALL 216-361-5535.

Collinwood Recreation Center, 16300 Lakeshore Blvd

Any questions about these meetings please feel free to call 216-623-5505 and ask for Mary Louise Jesek Daley in Councilman Polensek's office.

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

Collinwood Homeowners Meeting

Lithuanian Village Hall, 877 East 185th St

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

Collinwood Homeowners Meeting

St. Mary Church at 15519 Holmes Ave

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

Collinwood Neighborhood Resource Group

East 156th Street

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

Collinwood Neighborhood Resource Group

Lithuanian Village Hall, 877 East 185th St

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

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