



THE HEART OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz
Members of Council

From: Finance Director Vernon Blaze

Date: Friday, March 8, 2024

Re: Finance Office and Related Topic Updates

Misc. Recent Readings

A few parts of four recent articles from the *Wall Street Journal* were very insightful and are shared this week so that we can all expand our worlds and learn a little from others – three women and one man this week.

Actress Andie MacDowell said the following, proving once again that we never know what's completely going on with someone in their personal life, and we need to have empathy for people because of what we don't know about them:

- *“As a child, I was conscious of everything around me and was constantly trying to figure out how to survive. My teachers labeled me a daydreamer, but my distractions were motivated by worry, not by fantasy. There was enormous uncertainty at home.”*

Somewhat related to Andie's quote about the importance of developing empathy for others was what Ruth Gottesman said about one of the formative moments in her life:

Misc. Recent Readings – Continued

- “When Ruth was around ten years old, her family took in another ten-year old girl fleeing Nazi Germany during World War II.”

Said Ruth: *“She never said goodbye to her parents and she didn’t know whether they would be alive after the war. That began a process of seeing others and feeling their pain.”*

And here we are in the 21st century complaining about our fate in life if we’re inconvenienced in some small way. Again, empathy for others is so important.

By the way, Ruth was in the news recently for donating \$1 **billion** to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine *“to cover the tuition of every student in perpetuity, ensuring the school’s future doctors will no longer have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for their medical education.”* I’m not crying – you’re crying!

Tony Spring is now the CEO of Macy’s, but during high school, he worked at Burger King.

- “His initial responsibilities included picking up garbage in the parking lot. It was a humbling experience, but he said it taught him the importance of first impressions. The manager wanted him to understand that customers would make judgments about the restaurant before they even walked in the door.”

That last sentence could be applied anywhere, including here in Independence:

- *“The Mayor wanted everyone to understand that residents and visitors to the City’s facilities would make judgments about them before they even walked in the door.”*

And finally this week, writer, actress and producer **Mindy Kaling** said that she got the following advice from Oprah Winfrey, who got it from Maya Angelou:

- *“Do the best you can until you know better. And when you know better, do better.”*