MAYFIELD VILLAGE

Council offers grants to small businesses to cope with crisis

Jeff Piorkowski *Special to Sun News*

Mayfield is offering grants to small businesses of up to $2,500 in an effort to help them through the COVID-19 crisis.

Village Council unanimously approved legislation on Sept. 21 that will make $50,000 available for the Small Business Relief Fund program, drawing from Mayfield's economic development fund. Small-business owners must apply for the grant by Oct. 16. The program will continue until the $50,000 is exhausted.

"Complete, eligible grant applications with the necessary back-up documentation will be processed in a first-in, first-out fashion," Economic Development Manager John Marquart said in an email, explaining program details. "Each applicant will have the opportunity to request any amount up to $2,500."

The program is to be administered by the Mayfield Community Improvement Corporation (MCIC), which will determine how grants are disbursed.

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"After a good deal of debate," Marquart said, "we settled on the $2,500 award as a figure that would have a meaningful impact for our businesses, while still allowing us to spread the aid to a wider number of businesses."

The village is home to approximately 130 businesses, of which about 90, Marquart said, would be considered small businesses.

"Many companies were temporarily shut down in the spring due to orders from the state of Ohio," he said, "but we are fortunate that no one has yet to close permanently due to the virus."

Mayor Brenda Bodnar said that she hopes that the money will keep village businesses open and thriving.

"I'm very glad that we were able to roll out our grant program," she said, "especially during national Small Business Week. Even though other programs offered some early assistance through loans and grants, that funding has pretty much been exhausted. The need, however, remains.

"We are hopeful that our grant program can help sustain our small businesses through these challenging times, and let them know that they are an important part of the Mayfield Village community."

Marquart, in a Sept. 1 letter to Village Council, stated that, with federal aid being made available to businesses in recent months, it would be prudent for the village to wait before taking action and see how those programs would work, and if the virus would abate. He said that, over the summer, 30 village businesses applied for Paycheck Protection Program loans and grants via their lending institutions, money guaranteed by the Small Business Administration. While exact SBA dollar figures are not made known, Marquart stated in his letter to council that at least $12.65 million was lent to those 30 businesses, and helped preserve 1,300 jobs.

As for the village's Small Business Relief Fund program, applicants will be asked for documentation showing things such as gross sales, profit and loss, payroll records, rent or mortgage payments, utility payments, receipts for PPE for staff, and receipts for sanitizing equipment and supplies.

To be eligible, businesses must be physically located within Mayfield, employ 20 or fewer people, be in good standing with the village, be able to document eligible expenses equal to the amount of the grant requested, and demonstrate a negative financial impact brought on by COVID-19.

"We anticipate that the $50,000 fund will be exhausted in short order, likely within a month," Marquart said. "If the demand from the business community remains, we plan to approach Village Council with a request to replenish the fund with an additional $50,000 for a second round of awards.

"Mayfield Village is home to a vibrant mix of small businesses, many of whom face the challenge of a lifetime due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayfield Village is fortunate to be in a position to respond to their needs, and both the administration and council are pleased to offer this assistance to help them weather the storm."

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Suspicious activity *Wilson Mills Road*

A Mayfield High School student reported Sept. 21 that he got a threatening text message from an unknown sender. The message stated there would be a protest in the school's parking lot sometime during the week and there could be violence. Officers could not determine who sent the message. Special attention was given.

Juvenile complaint *Beta Drive*

Officers responded to the Holiday Inn at 1:47 a.m. Sept. 17 for a report of youths causing a disturbance in a second-floor room. A large group was leaving as they arrived, but officers were called back a second time for a report of the youths drinking in the parking lot. The situation was adjusted, and the renter of the room was advised he would be asked to leave if there were any further disturbances.

Disturbance *North Commons Boulevard*

A prior employee of a cleaning company arrived at Progressive Insurance Sept. 17 to pick up his paycheck and then refused to leave when told it would be mailed to him. Responding officers advised the man it was a civil matter and he was no longer permitted on the property. He left without further incident.

Welfare check *Beta Drive*

Officers assisted paramedics Sept. 18 with a woman who passed out at a table at a restaurant at the Holiday Inn. They found she was alone and highly intoxicated. She denied witness statements about her arguing with her boyfriend, who was not at the scene. As she was too drunk to drive, she was allowed to stay in a room at the hotel, where she had been staying for the past three days.

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Police Blotter

Welfare check *Hickory Hill Drive*

A resident said Sept. 18 that a Mayfield Heights woman, 30, was at his home and had made comments about harming herself. Officers and paramedics found her to be highly intoxicated. She denied any intentions of harming herself and was taken to the hospital for a psychiatric evaluation. Reports indicate there have been similar incidents involving the woman.

Suspicion *Aintree Park Drive*

A caller reported Sept. 19 that she heard a female screaming "stop" somewhere at the Village Park apartments. Officers could not find the origin of the voice but believed it may have come from a resident's TV.

Psychiatric situation *Wilson Mills Road*

A man approached an officer at True North Shell Sept. 22 and asked that he be arrested. The officer engaged the man in a conversation, and it was determined the 24-year-old resident was having a psychological episode. He was taken to the hospital for an evaluation.