

The Neighborhood News

THE GARFIELD HEIGHTS TRIBUNE

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FREE

Blackwell mayoralty historic for Maple Hts.

By Judith Goldsworth

Annette McMillian-Blackwell took her place in the Maple Heights history books last week as she was sworn in as not only the first black mayor of the city, but also the first woman to hold the post.

She takes over from longtime Mayor Jeffrey Lansky, who chose not to run for another term last year. She won the office with 68 percent of the vote against Councilman Bill Brownlee, who chose to run for mayor instead of reelection to his council seat.

"This is a prideful moment, a moment of unity," Blackwell said, adding, "There's hope... people are worth fighting for. Our life is not our own and for that reason I choose to serve."

Blackwell pledged to help lead Maple Heights out of fiscal emergency, a status it has held for nearly a year from State Auditor Dave Yost. The city's deficit, attributed in part to years of federal, state and local cuts in funding, has been estimated as being in the \$2.7 million range.

A committee has been meeting over the past several months to help the city find a way out of fiscal emergency, as mandated by the state auditor's office.

Former Councilman Richard Trojanski was sworn in last week as the city's new council presi-

dent. Former Council President Jackie Albers chose not to run for reelection last year.

Trojanski has already made history of his own as Maple Heights' first openly gay council member, and was honored by the Cleveland Stonewall Democrats with the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Freedom Award in 2014 for his leadership in the LGBT community in the area and his service to the city. He has promised to work closely with administration and council members in his new post.

During a well attended ceremony at Maple Heights High School, Blackwell and Trojanski took the oath of office, along with incoming council members Stafford Shennett, Ebony Miller, Tanglyn Madden and Sharri Thomas. Also sworn in to new terms were



Maple Heights Mayor
Annette McMillian-Blackwell

returning council members Toni Jones, Ron Jackson and Edwina Agee.