



FOUNDED 1923 ■ LOCALLY OWNED AND EDITED

The Garden City News

Lawsuit against GCPD settled

| May 17, 2018

BY RIKKI N. MASSAND



The Village of Garden City and a former Nassau County Corrections officer and Army veteran, Ronald Lanier, have agreed to a \$150,000 settlement for a 2017 claim Lanier brought against the village and the Garden City Police. Lanier alleged that on November 30, 2016, members of the police force beat him, threw him on the ground and verbally abused him as they went through the Western Beef supermarket in Mineola “recklessly arresting the first black male they spotted inside the supermarket.”

Lanier had been shopping for groceries to make a dinner with his kids, but he claims that GCPD officers racially profiled him and used excessive force in wrongfully arresting him as they were searching for an African American male suspect in a petty larceny who had shoplifted a purse/handbag from the Lord & Taylor store on Franklin Avenue in Garden City. In the court settlement the Village of Garden City, its police department and the officers and police leadership named in the suit do not admit damages or wrongdoing against Lanier in the incident or thereafter.

The \$150,000 settlement was agreed to by Lanier on April 9, but the court order stipulates that the village will also pay for legal fees incurred by Lanier. That amount has yet to be determined and disclosed. Last year at the June 1 press conference on the case inside his Hempstead office, Lanier’s attorney Frederick Brewington said the GCPD never provided a report of the incident to Lanier and had not produced “a stitch

of paper” that was requested about him being the subject of force by the officers. Brewington is also the attorney who won a federal fair housing discrimination case (the MHANY/ACORN litigation) against the Village of Garden City. Lanier’s lawsuit against the village and GCPD made multiple references to what the plaintiffs called racially-motivated housing and zoning restrictions in Garden City from 1969 to the 1990s, preceding the MHANY/ACORN litigation, “taken to prevent an influx of minority residents.” Once Lanier’s suit was filed nearly a year ago, Brewington traced back to the MHANY case and federal court ruling in 2014 to speak about a perceived trend in Garden City.

“There is something terribly wrong in Garden City – the GCPD has a real responsibility as does their government. Their village government has been found responsible for housing discrimination and other forms of discrimination, including those found by the Justice Department. Garden City needs to change the culture so that people of all faiths, backgrounds and races can feel free to be in Garden City without being singled out because of the color of their skin,” Brewington said.

Earlier this week he called the settlement between the village and Lanier “a win,” signifying not only a positive monetary outcome, but “a positive moral outcome.”

Last June 1, a tearful Lanier appeared in front of TV cameras and in photos accompanying news reports, commenting at the time “I just want equality for minorities and black young men and boys out there to live normal lives and become respected as American citizens. My goal is for those officers held accountable for their actions and for Garden City to change its form of policing – this (racial profiling) has been going on there since I was a child. Even then I was challenged just walking through that community.”

More From Front Page

[Go To The Front Page Section](#)