

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

INTERNATIONAL WATCHMAN, INC.,

Plaintiff,

vs.

81 JANUARY, INC., *et al.*,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:17-CV-497

OPINION & ORDER
[Resolving Docs. [6](#), [12](#), [15](#)]

JAMES S. GWIN, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE:

Plaintiff International Watchman, Inc. sued Defendant 81 January, Inc. for trademark infringement.¹ Defendant’s Director, William Shaine, moved pro se to dismiss the lawsuit on jurisdictional grounds.² Shaine also asked for leave to appear in this case.³ Plaintiff moved to strike Defendant’s motions, arguing that corporations cannot litigate pro se.⁴

Plaintiff’s argument wins.

Under Ohio law, a licensed attorney must represent a corporation in all non-small-claims-court proceedings.⁵

Accordingly, the Court **GRANTS** Plaintiff’s motion to strike Defendant’s Director Shaine’s motions to dismiss and for leave to appear.

¹ Doc. 1.

² Docs. 6 & 15.

³ *Id.*

⁴ Doc. 12.

⁵ *Gass v. Headlands Contracting & Tunneling, Inc.*, 2008 WL 4964656, at *1 (Ohio Ct. App. Nov. 21, 2008) (“[O]utside of small claims court, an individual, including a corporate officer, who is not an attorney, may not appear in court or maintain litigation *in propria persona* on behalf of a corporation.”); see also *Disciplinary Counsel v. Kafele*, 843 N.E.2d 169, 173 (Ohio 2006) (“And with limited exception, unauthorized practice occurs when a layperson renders legal services for another person or for a corporate entity by attempting to manage legal actions and proceedings before courts of law.”).

Case No. 1:17-CV-497
Gwin, J.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 18, 2017

s/ James S. Gwin

JAMES S. GWIN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE