

NEW LONDON VILLAGE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting – July 8, 2019 @ 7 p.m.

Mayor John Martin called the meeting to order. He then gave the invocation followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was then taken with the following members present: Curtis, Myers, Cooke and Ball. Willis and Paramore were absent.

Also present: Chief Marko, Shawn Pickworth, Steve Bond, Lynn Phillips, Heather Brown, Marvin McCallister, Mary Oney, Ellen Simmons, Toby Thomas, Gayle Ashbaker, Suzanne Cooke, Tom Howell, John Neel, Stacy Crabbs, Dorothy Sword, Susan Gerlak, John Gerlak, Bryan Clime, Melissa Martin, Don Patton, Steve Ball and Kelly Pence.

John Martin then asked for approval of the agenda. Myers made a motion to approve the agenda. Curtis seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; No one opposed.

The minutes from the June 24, 2019 regular council meeting were then presented for approval. Ball made a motion to approve the minutes. Myers seconded the motion. Roll call: All ayes; No one opposed.

John Martin asked for any public questions or statements. He asked anyone who had a question or statement to stand, state their name and they would be allotted three minutes to talk.

John Neel stood and stated he was a lifelong resident of New London. He added that he had been at the last meeting and he had asked the question of what constituted council to declare it an emergency to fork out \$30,000 of railroad money for a gate at the reservoir when as far as he was concerned and he thought a lot of people were concerned, it has nothing to do with the town of New London. He never got an answer and he felt that as a life-long citizen and taxpayer of the town, the least council could do was give him an answer on how they had come up with that situation. What had made them declare it an emergency and why.

Stuart Cooke stated he would answer. From his understanding it was due to a loss of revenue going on at the reservoir from people waiting until the workers leave and then they go into the campground without paying. It is just a minimal charge of \$2 to use the facility. They have had a lot of loss of money as they have been told. He voted it as an emergency because they needed to get it in the process and get them in so they could start taking the money in.

John Neel asked how Stuart Cooke knew they were taking a loss. Where do they get their information that people are sneaking in and sneaking out?

Bill Curtis stated he would explain it. If John Neel would have been at one of the previous meetings, Marvin McCallister had asked the same question. He continued by saying what had happened was they had an incident at the reservoir where 18 campers came in after the park was closed. They camped overnight with other campers who were seasonal campers there. They were told that they had brought their friends and family in after the park was closed and then before the office opened, they were gone. They had gone out there to party during the night supposedly, and then they were gone. Bill Curtis then asked Heather Brown what the price for a campsite was.

Heather Brown answered that it was \$25 for non-hook up and \$35 for water and electric.

Bill Curtis then stated that was really a theft to John Neel as a taxpayer of the town.

John Neel asked Bill Curtis if they were charged with theft.

Bill Curtis stated no because they were gone by the time the people came in. This had been brought to council members by people who had been camping out there for years who had been seeing this happening. It isn't the first time it has happened. It has been going on for quite a while. He continued by saying as far as the railroad money goes, it is already in the plans that the money will be spent and that money will be paid back. Bill Curtis then asked Shawn Pickworth how many years it would take to pay the money back.

Shawn Pickworth answered that it would be paid back in five years.

Bill Curtis stated that money will be put back into that coffer within five years and it is going to come out of the campers. Not out of the residents of New London.

John Neel thought that with all the campers out at the reservoir the last few years, there would be enough money generated out there to pay for the gates. He wondered where all the money was going.

Stuart Cooke answered that there was the cost of running the park. There was the cost of the packaging plant for the sewer being bad because it was put in in 1975. Stuart Cooke then asked Shawn Pickworth how many thousands were spent to get a pumping station from the sewer plant to the park.

Shawn Pickworth stated it had cost \$140,000.00.

Stuart Cooke repeated that it had cost \$140,000.00 to run the sewer and there are just costs that are always going on. They had an electrical upgrade that had to be done. He continued by saying it wasn't like they were wasting the money. They are trying to bring more revenue in to make it more self-sufficient.

John Neel stated that he just personally doesn't see where it benefits the people of New London. He gets water from the New London Reservoir and that's all he gets but he pays for it. Lorain buys water from the reservoir which he assumes that money goes to the water department.

It was verified that it does go to the water department.

John Neel added that he doesn't know how much it is but he sometimes thinks money is being misspent on stupid things and he thinks a gate is ridiculous. Especially for \$30,000. He thinks it is totally ridiculous. John Neel then asked if anyone had checked around for prices first or did they just go with a place out of Canada.

Shawn Pickworth answered that the gates are built in Ohio. The headquarters are in Canada.

John Neel thought \$30,000 for a gate was ridiculous. He didn't know how the village could justify spending that much.

Shawn Pickworth stated the gates were \$11,000.

Suzanne Cooke asked if the gates were \$11,000 why had Shawn Pickworth said \$30,000.00.

Shawn Pickworth stated they had borrowed \$30,000.00 from the CSX Fund because they are doing other improvements out at the reservoir.

Bill Curtis told Suzanne Cooke if she had something to say she needed to stand up and state her name. She couldn't just shout out.

John Martin asked if there was anything else for John Neel. There was nothing.

John Martin thanked John Neel and asked if there were any other questions or comments.

Ellen Simmons stood and stated the Community Club would be meeting the next morning at the Wildcat Diner at 9 a.m. She explained that the Community Club was the group who did Hometown Holidays each year. They welcome new members and visitors to come and find out what is going on. She then continued by saying that the following week on Tuesday, July 16th at noon the CIC will be meeting out at the aforementioned reservoir. She doesn't know if the gate will be up or not but people attending the meeting will get in for free so that is everyone's one chance to get a bargain. Lunch will be available for \$6 and the agenda is basically what is going on in New London and if anyone has any ideas on where the group should be going.

John Martin thanked Ellen Simmons and asked if there were any other questions.

Dorothy Sword stood and stated she wanted to know about the ordinance about the tree lawn and garage sale signs. During the community garage sales, some of the garage sale signs were pulled out of the tree lawn. She was told it was because of an ordinance but she wanted to know where she could put hers. She lives on Birch Park Drive which is not off a main street. People aren't going to know she is having a sale if she can't post a sign. She knows she isn't allowed to post a sign on a pole, so she had purchases signs that go in the yard and put them in the tree lawn like she was told last year. Her signs were pulled so she wanted to know what they could do about it and how they can change it for people who reside on streets that can't be seen from a main road. If residents on those streets have a garage sale, no one is going to know about it. She wanted to know what could be done about it.

Bill Curtis addressed Mayor John Martin and said he thought they allowed residents who had garage sales to put signs in the tree lawn because they were just temporary and then they were taken out.

Dorothy Sword said she had no problem with that. She would make sure they were removed within 24 hours. She read the ordinance which said within 24 hours of the sale they had to be removed. She had no problem with that but hers were removed the day of her sale so people didn't know she was having a sale.

John Martin asked if that was during the community garage sales.

Dorothy Sword replied that yes it was for the community sales and there was more than one who had their signs removed. They were told about it. She didn't think that was fair when they were trying to participate in the community sales. They didn't know their signs had been removed. They had no idea because they were doing their sale. When they went to go collect the signs, they were gone.

Stuart Cooke asked if the police chief was in attendance.

Chief Marko stood and said he was and he had no idea.

Dorothy Sword stated she knew it had said in the police log that the police had removed some signs.

Chief Marko replied that they had removed the signs from telephone poles.

Dorothy Sword stated that her sign was not on a telephone pole. Her sign was in the ground with stakes.

Chief Marko stated the officers did not remove any signs without going up to the resident and asking them to remove it first.

Dorothy Sword added that the police log didn't say they removed signs from poles, it said they were signs in the tree lawn.

Chief Marko stated he was the one who printed the police log and he didn't recall saying that.

Dorothy Sword said she thought she had a screen shot of it and she began searching her phone.

Chief Marko repeated that he could have said it but he didn't think he did. He then added that he wanted to explain where everything had gotten started. The last couple years during the summer, the police department spent an enormous amount of time pulling signs off telephone poles.

Dorothy Sword agreed and said they were told they couldn't do that. That wasn't a big deal. She understands that.

Chief Marko continued by saying unfortunately the way the ordinance is written it states tree lawns also. He can't just enforce one without the other.

Dorothy Sword was looking for a solution. She again stated that since she lives on Birch Park Drive, they don't live off a Main Road. If she has a sale, no one is going to know it.

Chief Marko stated that he doesn't disagree with her but she needed to address council with it.

Dorothy Sword stated that is why she wanted to see about having it changed. She thinks as long as she removes her sign within 24 hours she sees no big deal about it. She understands they don't want signs staying in the tree lawn forever because she doesn't like it when people do that either. What she was saying was her signs were pulled out the day of her sale and they were gone. If she is allowed to put a sign in the tree lawn that is the city's property, which everyone takes care of. She doesn't have to ask anyone to put a sign in the tree lawn. If council is saying they aren't allowed to put signs in the tree lawn, do they have to go on Main Street and ask residents if they can put a sign in their yard? It doesn't make sense to her. She just wanted some clarification so she could participate in the community sales. This year they couldn't because people didn't know they were there.

Stuart Cooke asked Steve Bond to look into the ordinance and see how it was written.

Bill Curtis stated it was his understanding that originally the ordinance was written for political signs in the tree lawn because they were displayed for a longer period of time.

Dorothy Sword replied that all she could tell was that it said garage sale signs had to be removed within 24 hours of the end of the sale. She said she didn't have a problem with that. She pulls her signs as soon as she is done with her sale. She just wants to know what can be done because it is a problem. As it stands, residents on side roads can't participate in the community sales because no one can see them.

John Martin stated that he thought with the community wide garage sales, there should be an exception. He stated they would look at the ordinance and council would talk and see if they can't make a change to the ordinance for one day.

Dorothy Sword continued by saying that was all she was asking. She just wanted to be able to participate in the community sales and she currently can't where she lives.

Mayor John Martin stated he understood a lot of people go out on a Friday and start also so they could probably make it a two-day exemption. Council will have to talk about it and the ordinance would need to be changed.

Dorothy Sword added that she hadn't seen in the garage sales ordinance about the tree lawn. She had just seen that the sign needed to be removed within 24 hours. She had thought it would be fine for her to post it in

the tree lawn because the tree lawn is city property so anybody can do that as long as they remove them. If council doesn't allow it and they have to go ask residents permission to use their yard to put a sign, she thinks that will be a problem. She doesn't believe residents will want a sign up by their house about a garage sale that is the next street over.

Bill Curtis asked her if she was talking about putting a sign at the end of her street.

Dorothy Sword stated that she had put one at the end of New London Avenue and the end of East Street because those streets come to her street. Both of her signs were gone when she went to remove them. The same thing also happened to a friend of hers who had her signs in the same location so it hadn't happened just once. She continued by saying she had wondered what had happened because in the beginning of the sale they had a bunch of people and then within an hour, everyone was gone. They didn't know the signs had been taken until they had gone to take the signs down at the end of the sale. Birch Park Drive is in between roads. It isn't off a main road.

John Martin stated he would get the village solicitor to write something up and then it will be presented to council and that should take care of it.

Dorothy Sword said that was all she was asking for. She just wants to be able to do the same thing and participate like everyone else.

Mayor John Martin stated they would try to make a provision for both Friday and Saturday of the weekend of the community garage sales. He just wanted her to know that no signs could be put on any utility poles.

Dorothy Sword responded that she knew that. She had been told that before She has no problem with that and understands the rules on that and why they can't do it. She just doesn't see a problem with getting a sign from Walmart and sticking it in the tree lawn.

John Martin asked Dorothy Sword if there were any other signs out there that she knew of right then.

Dorothy Sword answered that there is house for sale signs out in tree lawns. She has noticed them. She noticed that those signs hadn't been pulled like hers had. She continued by saying once something like that happens to you, you notice that stuff.

John Martin told Dorothy Sword it would be taken care of. He then asked Chief Marko if he would make sure to see about the for sale signs.

Chief Marko agreed to look into it.

Dorothy Sword added that her daughter lives on the corner of the road to the park and she says people are always putting signs in her yard because she is right on the corner going into the park. Any festival or anything else going on is posted in her yard. That's why it upset her that they pulled her yard sale signs that were only for one weekend.

Mayor John Martin apologized for the confusion and hopefully they would get the ordinance taken care of.

Dorothy Sword thanked John Martin and ended by saying that was all she was asking for.

John Martin thanked Dorothy Sword and asked if there were any other questions or comments. There were none.

John Martin then called for a report from the Administrator.

Shawn reported the following.

Water

- Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project – Work continues. Crews are now filling the tanks with the media. Clear Wells are up, piping and baffling on inside to finish. Rehab of intake bridge is the last of the major items to be done on this project.
- Water Tower – Crews have completed the sandblasting and welding of the inside of the tower and have installed the first layer of sealcoat. Once the sandblasting was done the inspectors realized that the tower was in worse shape than we thought which is now requiring us to add adding layers of coating to preserve the life of the tower. This will cost us an additional \$26,000.00. This project is expected to last a couple more weeks. During this time, residents might experience some low water pressure due to the tower being down. Please bear with us. We will return the tower to service as soon as possible.
- Water Leaks – crews repaired 2 major water leaks. One on East Main Street in front of the Post Office and another on Hooker Street. Both leaks were splits on 6” mains that required a 30” repair clamp. We want to Thank Virgil Giles, Village of Greenwich and the City of Norwalk in helping us out in a huge way getting the clamps from them when our supplier didn’t have any in stock. It is awesome when neighboring communities are willing to step up and help each other. We owe both. I also want to say thanks to our water crew for once again going above and beyond the call. They worked 2 days straight with little sleep or rest to get the job done.
- GIS Project – project continues.

Wastewater

- Wastewater Treatment Plant Project – We had a conference call with Jones & Henry Engineering and the USDA-RD this morning. We are now ready to begin the application process for funding. I am asking Councils permission to allow us to move forward with this. Once the application is submitted the USDA-RD will come back to us with an offer of funding and at that time we will find out the amount of loan verses the amount of grant that will be awarded for this project.

Storm Sewers

- East Hooker & East Washburn – catch basin has been set. Crew will begin installing new tiles as weather permits and other projects allow.

Sanitation

- No Major Issues.
- Crews had a busy week last week due to the holiday schedule. Again, we want to thank the water crew for stepping over and helping.

Street

- Potholes – with the crazy up and down temps. and the amount of moisture that is under the road we are going to have a lot of potholes. Please feel free to contact our office if you see one that is not getting addressed. 419-929-4091.

- Johnson Drive, Pearl Street, City Parking Lot – Commissioners have awarded the bids. I am now waiting to be invited to a preconstruction meeting and find out when these projects will be done.

Other

- Terry Wilson Memorial Deck – Nothing new to report.
- A Park Board Meeting was held on Monday, July 1, 2019 here in Council Chambers. There is a Park Board Meeting scheduled for Monday, July 15, 2019 @ 6:00 PM in Council Chambers.

Campground

- The beach is getting a makeover. We are having some white sand hauled in for the beach.
- Tomorrow we plan on moving the water toys back into place and anchoring them down with sand bags so hopefully they stay put.

John Martin then asked for a report from the Police Chief. Chief Marko stated he did not have anything unless someone had something for him.

John Martin then asked for a report from the Fire Chief. Chief John Chapin absent.

John Martin then asked for a report from the Ambulance. Bill Curtis stated for June they had a total of 50 runs. Of those runs, 25 were Basic Life Support, 24 were Advanced Life Support and one was Advanced Life Support 2 which is similar to adding a paramedic. There had been one overdose and 11 traffic accidents. It was a busy month with summer being here. Bill Curtis concluded by saying he had attended the open house at the new UH building and it was really nice. They gave the CIC a compliment from Kent's Sporting Goods. They said if it wasn't for the CIC, Kent's probably wouldn't be where they were today. They were a big help.

John Martin then asked for a report from Zoning. Bob James unexcused absence.

Shawn Pickworth stated he had received a phone call from a contractor/engineering firm from Florida. McDonalds is going to be getting new digital media signs. They were asking for permits so the signs are going to be updated at McDonalds.

John Martin presented Ordinance 2019-13 An Ordinance Authorizing the Village Administrator to Enter into a Contract with the Huron County Land Reutilization Corporation. Second Reading. Myers made a motion to approve the second reading. Curtis seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

John Martin presented Resolution 2019-07 A Resolution Declaring it Necessary to Proceed with an Election on the Question of Levying an Additional Tax Levy in Excess of the Ten-Mill Limitation for General Construction, Reconstruction, Resurfacing, and Repair of Streets, Roads, and Bridges of the Village, and Declaring an Emergency. First Reading. Cooke made a motion to approve the first reading. Ball seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

John Martin stated he needed to go back to departmental reports and then called on Heather Brown for a report from the Recreation Department.

Heather Brown stated they had been breaking records at the reservoir campground. For the month of June, they had over 1000 more admissions than 2018 and in the first seven days of July they had broken 2018's record with 125 more for general admissions so far in July. She continued by saying the girls in the office had been staying pretty busy. Heather Brown then said she would like to thank Kent Sporting Goods for their donation of all the life jackets they brought in to the reservoir the other day.

Mary Oney then stood and said there had been an incident at the campground the previous night. She has a campsite at the campground with the support of council to keep track of things or if someone comes in after hours they can come to her. So far she hasn't been able to house a specific campsite so she has been moving from one site to the other until they can get her a set spot. Mary Oney continued by saying they wanted her in a site up front so that she could watch better than being mixed in with all the other campers. Her grandson also works for the parks, picking up garbage and other duties. The day before he had been using the golf cart to pick garbage up out of the big 55-gallon drum containers. These containers are heavy and it has been necessary in the past for someone to help him lift them. Mary Oney then stated to make a long story short, the people at the campground are not happy with her. Mary's grandson had come to her and said that someone had been videoing him. She told him he was just imagining things because she couldn't believe that would happen. Her grandson was insistent so she asked him what made him think he was being videotaped. He told her they had their camera out. She then decided to check things out herself and stated she had gone no more than 100 feet before she saw a man videoing her. She debated whether to confront the man or not because she was a little apprehensive. She pulled her cart up to him and got off and asked him if he was videoing her. She then stated he told her he sure as heck was only he didn't use that word. She asked him if he also had videotaped her grandson and he replied yes to that as well. Mary Oney asked him why and according to him, she is on site #7 illegally and her grandson is supposedly not allowed to drive the golf cart because he is only 17 and the rule for campers is you have to be 18. Mary thought that since he was a worker and not a camper the rule would not apply for him especially because there really was no other way to get a 55-gallon drum to the dumpster. She explained that to the man, but the gentleman videoing stated that he didn't believe that Mary's grandson should be anywhere else in the campground other than in the office working. He should not be allowed to drive the golf cart because he is 17 and not 18. Mary then told the gentleman that what they did was none of his business. Mary Oney continued by saying that she wasn't as nice to him as she was being to the audience that night. She actually called the gentleman a liar because he said they had gone four days without toilet paper in the men's restroom and she knew for a fact that there was. The argument between Mary and the gentleman lasted a long time. She was accused of showing favoritism and they also stated they want to sue the village for discrimination. Mary Oney stated that earlier in the season they had sent letters to campers asking them to remove refrigerators from their decks. Most of the campers removed their refrigerators right away but one didn't because they were in Florida and they didn't get back to the campground until May 1st so there was no way they could get it off their deck before then. Mary Oney thought that both Heather Brown and Shawn Pickworth had told the disgruntled gentleman that the campers were in Florida but the man was still unhappy and says he has contacted a lawyer. Mary Oney stated she feels really bad because they have a lot of campers out at the campground that are very nice. They just want to go camping and they don't want all the drama. She also said that at 72 years old she herself did not want all the drama either. She concluded by saying that the current situation just could not continue. Another camper had seen the confrontation between Mary Oney and the gentleman and she came in the office that morning and told her she had gone after her husband because she had seen the person yelling at Mary and cussing at her. At least six different people witnessed the incident.

Mayor John Martin thanked Mary Oney

John Martin then called for Old Business. There was none.

John Martin then called for New Business.

Bill Curtis made a motion to allow the Village Administrator to begin the application process for funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project by submitting an application with the USDA for Rural Development Funding. Myers seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

John Martin asked if there was any other new business. There was none.

John Martin then presented the monthly bills for approval under Schedule A. Myers made a motion to approve Schedule A. Ball seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; No one opposed.

John Martin then presented the monthly bills for approval under Schedule B. Curtis made a motion to approve Schedule B. Ball seconded the motion. Roll call: Ball – yes; Paramore – absent; Willis – absent; Curtis – yes; Cooke – abstain; Myers – disqualify herself.

John Martin asked council if there was anything else to be brought forth before he asked for a motion to adjourn.

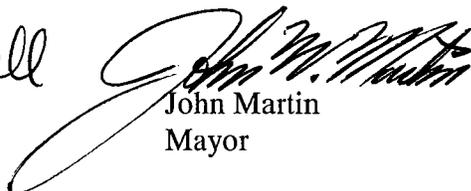
Bill Curtis stated that he was concerned that village employees were being bullied. He wanted Shawn Pickworth to look into it and deal with it. He thought it was a big problem and wanted to make sure it didn't continue.

John Martin told Mary Oney to be sure to get in touch with Shawn Pickworth so he could follow up on the incident.

Cooke made a motion to adjourn. Myers seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; No one opposed.



Nancy Howell
Fiscal Officer



John Martin
Mayor