

# NEW LONDON VILLAGE COUNCIL

Regular Meeting – Monday, April 27, 2020 @ 7 p.m.

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Mayor Toby Thomas called the meeting to order. He then gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was then taken with the following members present: Myers, Jennifer Ball, Cooke, Gullett, Willis and Steve Ball.

Also present: Chief Marko, Steve Bond, Shawn Pickworth, Ellen Simmons, Bob James and Lynn Phillips.

Toby Thomas then asked for approval of the agenda. Myers made a motion to approve the agenda. Jennifer Ball seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; no one opposed.

The minutes from the March 23, 2020 regular meeting were then presented for approval. Jennifer Ball made a motion to approve the minutes. Willis seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; no one opposed.

Toby Thomas asked for any public questions or statements.

He checked his phone as the meeting was being live streamed to see if there were any questions or comments from any viewers and there were none. He stated that under the circumstances, if questions came in throughout the meeting he would make sure they got answered.

Toby Thomas then called for a report from the Administrator.

Shawn then reported the following.

## Water

- Park Avenue Water Main Replacement Project – We are still looking at funding sources for this project. Request for a PTI has been sent to the OEPA for review and approval.
- GIS Project – project continues.
- Tower Improvement Project – Project has started. Crews have moved in and tower taken out of service. Project is expected to be completed around June 1st, weather permitting. In preparation for this project, crews installed a PRV at the water plant. This will allow us to control the line pressures throughout the distribution system a lot better. Water crews came in at midnight Monday night and worked through the night to install. This was done at night to reduce the impact on our customers. Everything went as planned and the project was completed by 6:00 am. Great job in planning and executing to our Water Crew.
- Train 4 – the week of April 12<sup>th</sup> WesTech and Kirk Bros. came to the water plant and changed out the underdrain system and media in the 2<sup>nd</sup> filter. For the most part work went as planned except for being around 20 bags short on media and an additional order had to be delivered. The Village also requested that the drain lines be lowered 6” to match the height of the lines on Train 1,2 &3. We feel the Train will perform as it should once this is completed. At this point the only remaining issue the Village has, or questions, is the underdrain system in the 4 GAC tanks

that were installed during this project. It only makes sense that because the underdrain systems were proven to be wrong in the 2 filters installed that these same underdrain systems must be wrong in the GAC's. It is our intent for WesTech to address this issue. Still more to come.

### Wastewater

- Wastewater Treatment Plant Project – design prints for this project has been sent from J&H Engineering to the Village for review. Once the review is completed and we are satisfied with the designs we will then forward the designs to the USDA-RD and the OEPA for approval and PTI.

### Storm Sewers

- Crews have been out cleaning some storm sewers.

### Sanitation

- Spring Cleanup – residents have a few more days to take advantage of the spring cleanup dumpsters at the Village Garage. This Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> the dumpsters will be emptied and removed at around 3:00 pm.

### 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.
- Crews have been out patching potholes.
- Prospect/Euclid/Miner Road Project – this project is expected to be done mid-May. We will be closing the road during this project. There is 1 business and 2 houses within the project area and crews will work with these residents during the project. We expect to close the road 1 day for grinding and 1 day for paving. We expect the grinding to happen about 1 week before the paving, but the road will remain open between the two days. I have sent a request to the County Commissioners to release the funds for this project.
- Catch Basin – Catch Basin on West Main Street has failed, crews making plans to replace.

### Other

- Columbia Gas Project – I was notified on Thursday, April 23, 2020, that a contractor would begin work on the East side of town on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and the plan is to have the pipe crews in town sometime mid-May to start installing new gas lines. I have not been given any other timelines. Supposedly residents affected will receive or have received a letter from Columbia Gas about the project. I did request through the contractor that Columbia Gas contact the Village and bring us up to date of the plans for this project. I will pass along any information as I receive it. I did receive a letter from Columbia and it appears the project area involves East Main including Downtown, South Main from the light to just passed Kirk Street, James Street, Park Ave. from East Main to just past the Catholic Church, Williams from James Street to Walnut, Walnut Street & Coleman Court.

Janice Myers asked Shawn Pickworth how Columbia Gas would be handling the downtown area.

Shawn Pickworth answered that he didn't know. He hadn't even known they were coming in the first place. He requested a call from them but they haven't called him yet.

- Park Model Camping Units – Do we allow these in our campground?

Toby Thomas asked if that would be for seasonal campers.

Shawn Pickworth stated yes most of them are used for seasonal camping. Shawn recommended that council approve them because he thinks they look nice.

Janice Myers asked Shawn Pickworth if he had a picture of what they look like.

Shawn Pickworth stated he did not but he thinks they look nice. A lot of them are sided and have metal roofs.

Steve Ball commented that they are meant to leave at one location and not to be moved from place to place.

After a short discussion, it was determined that since there were no specific rules stating what type of campers were allowed, council agreed they would be fine.

Steve Ball made a motion to allow Park Model Camping Units to be allowed at the New London Reservoir Campground. Cooke seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Mayor Toby Thomas shared that he had a couple things he wanted to talk about. He began by saying he believes they are slowly going to be opening things back up beginning in May. The reservoir campground is not allowed to be open yet. He then asked Shawn Pickworth if he had heard if there was any kind of timeframe for when the campground would be allowed to open.

Shawn Pickworth stated that unfortunately he has not.

Toby Thomas thought that should be something everyone should be thinking and praying about because the campground provides much of the income for the parks. He continued by saying he thinks that Huron County and specifically the residents of the Village of New London have been doing a good job of following the guidelines put in place. He knows it is frustrating. He and Shawn Pickworth have been talking and they have determined the village really needs to tighten their belts. They have spoken with village employees and encouraged everyone to think of ways to cut costs. The pandemic is not just going to hurt the village now but also well into the future. Toby Thomas asked Shawn Pickworth if there was anything he wanted to bring up concerning village utilities.

Shawn Pickworth stated that since they currently were unable to do water shut offs, the village had 70 unpaid utility accounts. Of the 70 past due accounts, 25 are more than one-month delinquent and ranging up to around \$400. The delinquent utility bills add up to almost \$11,000 due to the village. Shawn continued by saying eventually all the restrictions will be lifted and the bills will be due. He encouraged everyone to pay if they can to avoid problems and extremely high bills that will have to be paid in the future.

Toby Thomas encouraged everyone to at least try to make partial payments on their bill.

Toby Thomas then talked about the paving of the streets. There is not enough money in the Street Fund to pave streets. Last year the village had tried to pass a levy and it didn't pass. The public needs to know that unless the village passes a levy or increases the income tax, there will be no way to repave the village streets. He stated he thought the village would need approximately \$100,000 a year to pave all the streets over a 10-year period of time. There was a possibility of receiving some grant money but not nearly enough for what

they would need. He wanted council to start thinking about if they would like to try to put another levy on in the fall or what their course of action should be.

Lastly, Toby Thomas asked council what they thought about continuing to have just one council meeting per month. He realized they would probably need Mr. Bond to write an ordinance allowing it to change but he wondered if the village really needed to have two meetings each month. He thought it was food for thought and wondered if council could touch on it in Old Business.

Stuart Cooke replied that he thought they seemed too out of touch when there was only one meeting a month and he didn't like it that way. Other members of council agreed. Stuart thought they should leave it at one meeting for the month of May and then revisit it at that time to see if they could return to two meetings a month.

Toby Thomas then asked for a report from the Police Chief. Chief Marko stated the search warrants that the police department has been executing have been slowly going through the criminal justice process. One of their search warrants from the previous spring just went through the criminal justice system and the police department will be receiving slightly over \$5,000 back from that warrant. It is a slow process, but the warrants are working through the criminal justice system. Chief Marko also talked about the police officer who had tested positive for the Coronavirus. The officer has not returned to work even though he could have returned two weeks ago. Chief Marko asked him to remain at home for an additional two weeks because he wanted to err on the side of caution. The officer received 80 hours of sick time from the state and Chief Marko donated sick time to allow the officer to still receive his pay. He also stated that the reserve and part-time officers would not be returning to work until at least June 1<sup>st</sup> since they all hold full-time jobs elsewhere. Chief Marko concluded by thanking council for their quick response in allowing him to call up two reserve officers that were not employed elsewhere to help take up some of the slack from the officer being off with the virus.

Toby Thomas asked Chief Marko if the money coming back to the village from the search warrant would be able to stay in the police fund.

Chief Marko answered that according to the state of Ohio, the money would need to go into the Drug Law Enforcement Fund.

Toby Thomas asked Shawn Pickworth if John Chapin had given him anything to report for the fire department.

Shawn Pickworth stated that John Chapin didn't really have anything to report except it had been very quiet and not a lot calls for the fire department.

Toby Thomas then asked for an ambulance report from Jennifer Ball. Jennifer Ball reported that for the month of March there had been a total of 53 runs. There were 33 runs in the Village of New London; nine in New London Township; three in Fitchville Township; five in Troy Township; and three in Ruggles Township. She also stated that Firelands Ambulance wanted to thank the following businesses for their donation of PPE: Thomas Creative Apparel, Stone Creek Dental, Knockout Tree Service, Makena Construction, Gilbert Hardware and New London Schools. She concluded by saying she thought there would be others, but that was the list they had so far.

Toby Thomas asked Bob James for a zoning report. Bob James stated he had nothing to report unless anyone had anything for him.

Toby Thomas asked Shawn Pickworth if Megan Sherlund had given him a report to share for the recreation department.

Shawn Pickworth shared the following report from Megan Sherlund.

1. I spoke with the health department in regards to the concession stand at the downtown rec park and they said before a new operator opens for the season there must be new building plumbing and health department permits applied for. That would be the responsibility of the food stand operator not the village of new London, but having experience working for and with building and health departments I will gladly help them through the process.
  - a. We received 2 bids for the concession stand. It was advertised for on Facebook, the website, and the New London Record. The two bids we received were sent in by Alexis Hinckley and Kathleen Overy. They are included with this report. The state still has not given a date for social events to start happening so we are not sure if or when this establishment will be able to open for the season.
2. We started the process of turning on water at the reservoir and ran into some issues so we have Terry Granneman coming out to look at a leak that is located behind a water tank that we cannot access.
3. My team is continuing to prepare for when the parks are open. I'm hoping to start working with Jobs and Family services to obtain more employees for various positions to help with cutting costs this summer.
4. The recreation committee is recommending we cancel the Country Concert and Rokin the Rez this year. We will have to find some other form of social distancing fundraising to help with events like the Labor Day Festival, etc. We have come up with some of the following ideas.
  - i. T-shirt design contest and sale
  - ii. Drive-thru chicken dinner
  - iii. Fishing tournament
  - iv. Golf scramble
  - v. Around town scavenger hunt
  - vi. Some sort of online game
  - vii. 100 Club-50/50 raffle with only 100 tickets \$50/each
5. I am preparing to apply for the Nature Works grant, I will need an ordinance in May.  
Proposed projects:
  - a. Outfield Nets for the softball field
  - b. Kitchen upgrades at Hileman
  - c. New Playground at reservoir back in seasonal camping area

Shawn Pickworth added that the electric was still off at the campground and asked council what should and should not be allowed at the campground during this time. Should the gates ever be open? Should campers be allowed back at their campsites to mow or clean?

Janice Myers asked if Megan Sherlund posted hours of when someone would be in the reservoir office.

Shawn Pickworth replied that yes the hours were posted.

Stuart Cooke thought that maybe they could allow seasonal campers in the campground only when an employee was there.

Toby Thomas commented that the campers would need to realize that they would not be allowed to stay the night.

Shawn Pickworth replied that was true and that was why he had not wanted the electric turned back on out at the reservoir yet. As soon as it comes on, it would entice people to want to stay out there. He wants campers to just mow or do whatever else they have to do and then leave. He also thought council should begin thinking about what would happen when the campground is allowed to open. He wanted them to think about

visitors and the public restrooms. He continued by saying the village did not have the man power to make sure the public restrooms were cleaned and sanitized like they would need to be. He thought the restrooms would have to remain closed. The seasonal campers had bathrooms in their campers they could use. He also thought it would be likely that they would not be able to allow visitors or weekend campers. He thought it would be good to check what other campgrounds are doing and conform to something similar. He wants to be fair to everyone but the village also needs to do what is right.

Toby Thomas thought it would be better for everyone if the village would make a time frame for when the reservoir would allow the seasonal campers to have access to their sites and the gates would be open. He thought Megan Sherlund should determine certain hours and post them so campers would be aware.

Stuart Cooke added that he thought they should have to be checked in and checked out at the office when arriving and leaving.

On another note, Shawn Pickworth also wanted council to be thinking about Labor Day. He doesn't know if the state will allow them to have the festival but he also stated that it takes at least \$30,000 to \$40,000 in advance to be able to hold the Labor Day Festival. He thought council should make a decision in June as to whether the village would be able to hold the festival or not. He guessed that the mass gatherings would be one of the last things that would be allowed by the government so the decision could be made for them.

Shawn Pickworth concluded by asking council to make sure they read through the information that had been given to them concerning the concession stand at the recreation park.

Toby Thomas then presented Ordinance 2020-10 An Ordinance Authorizing the Village Administrator to Auction Miscellaneous Equipment Which is No Longer Needed for Public Purposes. Third Reading. Jennifer Ball made a motion to approve the third reading. Steve Ball seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Toby Thomas then presented Ordinance 2020-12 An Ordinance Amending Various Provisions of the Income Tax Code to Incorporate Revisions Already Adopted in the Ohio Revised Code. First Reading. Myers made a motion to approve the first reading. Gullett seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Toby Thomas then presented Resolution 2020-03 A Resolution in the Matter of Determining Emergency Management Service for the Political Subdivision of the Village of New London. First Reading. Willis made a motion to approve the first reading. Gullett seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Toby Thomas then called for Old Business.

Toby Thomas stated that Stuart Cooke had recommended that they have only one council meeting in May and then revisit the situation at that time and see if they could resume with two meetings each month. He asked Mr. Bond if they would need a motion to do that.

Mr. Bond stated that at the last meeting they had made a motion to begin having just one council meeting a month until further notice so they would not need a motion to continue in the same manner.

The next council meeting was scheduled for May 25, 2020 but it was determined that date would be Memorial Day.

Jennifer Ball made a motion to move the May council meeting to the 26<sup>th</sup> to avoid having the meeting fall on the Memorial Day holiday. Steve Ball seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Toby Thomas then announced that he thought the Memorial Day parade for the village had been canceled.

Toby Thomas then called for New Business.

Jennifer Ball asked if council should make a decision whether to cancel the Country Concert and Rockin' the Rez since the Country Concert was coming up.

Toby Thomas asked if someone needed to make a motion to not have the concerts or they would just be canceled.

It was determined the concerts were events of the Recreation Committee and not of the village.

Toby Thomas thought they would not need a motion then if the Recreation Committee had canceled the concerts, they would be canceled.

Steve Ball commented that the only thing they had requested was for Megan Sherlund to publicize the cancellation of the concerts so people would be aware.

There was a short discussion on the Recreation budget reports that had been given to council.


Shawn Pickworth stated that the parks would lose around \$9,000 for every month they were shut down.

Toby Thomas then presented the monthly bills for approval under Schedule A. Myers made a motion to approve the bills as presented. Gullett seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; No one opposed.

Toby Thomas then presented the Then and Now bills for approval under Schedule B. Cooke made a motion to approve Schedule B. Steve Ball seconded the motion. Roll call – All ayes; No one opposed.

Jennifer Ball made a motion to approve vouchers 1-68 for payments dated April 14, 2020. Steve Ball seconded the motion. Roll call: Steve Ball – yes; Jennifer Ball – yes; Willis – yes; Gullett – yes; Cooke – abstain; Myers – disqualify herself.

Gullett made a motion to adjourn. Steve Ball seconded the motion. Roll call - All ayes; No one opposed.

Nancy Howell  
Fiscal Officer

Toby Thomas  
Mayor