

VILLAGE OF NEW LEXINGTON COUNCIL MEETING

February 5, 2024

5:30 PM

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Village of New Lexington met in regular session with Mayor Thompson presiding and the meeting being called to order at 5:30 PM. Council Members present were Jim Welsh, Dan Bethel, Janie DePinto, Jeff Danison, Ty Danison, Bob Spencer and Debra Hooper. Also present were Administrator Emmert, Police Commander Biggers, Finance Director Lewis, and Fire Chief Fain.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 16, 2024 meeting as read. Seconded by Councilperson Jeff Danison. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Erik Peterson from Rural Action addressed Council. Peterson represents thirty-two Appalachian counties. Peterson stated he is there to make Council aware of the grant opportunity to acquire funding for the Village. The grant is to help with reducing greenhouse gases and other environmental issues. Peterson stated they would need to know how the funds could best be used for the Village. Administrator Emmert stated solar panels would be great for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Emmert stated this could be tied in with the Fairview Assisted Living and Job and Family Services. This grant could possibly be used for new waterlines also. The due date for the grant is November 21, 2024 and is on a rolling basis. The date the applications begin is in March 2024. Peterson stated the earlier the better. Council will need to fill out a survey to start the process. A Resolution will be needed to follow through with the grant.

Chase Bennett introduced himself to Council as a candidate for Perry County Commissioner in the March 2024 primary. Bennett stated he has a degree in Health Administration and is currently helping run the family business. Bennett stated as a commissioner you need to know what is going on in all the communities. He stated you not only need to focus on current issues, but you need to look forward also. Councilperson Welsh stated the Village is supposed to be the County Seat, but we have issues getting help from the commissioners. Bennett stated he wants to get more involved in the County. Administrator Emmert stated he will soon be addressing the issue of the Village not having a backup water supply. Emmert stated he would like to be able to tie into Northern Perry Water as a backup.

Heidi Milner presented Council with a slide show of the updates to the Lempco remediation project. Milner presented Council with a Resolution for the Mayor to execute contract documents for window replacement. Milner informed Council they performed soil samples on the property and the biggest concern was arsenic. Milner informed Council this metal is in a lot of soil in the area. Milner stated they are going to test several other properties to check the levels of arsenic to prove it is in the area. Milner stated the windows that were removed will be replaced with glass block windows. Councilperson Bethel asked the risk of the windows being broken again. Milner stated the owners are looking at putting up a fence. Milner stated the owners started demolition last Friday. Milner informed Council they are hoping to have the project completed by June 2024. Then information will be sent to the state for review. Milner informed Council the Resolution is for the lowest and best bids.

Mayor Thompson stated he attended the school funding meeting with Troy Balderson, Groundhog Day breakfast and many water leaks.

Finance Director Lewis stated she has been working on the year-end financial statements to send to the state. Lewis presented Council with a resolution for amending compensatory time.

Administrator Emmert informed Council Finance Director Lewis, Administrative Assistant Saffell and himself will be attending AI TechCred classes. Emmert stated Police Chief Gill, Commander Biggers, Attorney Barclay, Administrative Saffell and himself attended the Perry County Commissioners meeting on January 31,

2024. Emmert stated there needs to be a motion on record for the police dispatch to be moved to the county. He stated according to the Ohio Revised Code the county is responsible to dispatch for the Village. If the Perry County Sheriff declines to do the dispatching, then the county is responsible.

Councilperson Bethel made a motion to move Village of New Lexington Police Dispatch to the County effective April 1, 2024 at 12:01 am. Seconded by Councilperson Welsh. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Emmert informed Council the bid for the CO2 tank replacement was awarded to Downing Construction for \$237,145 and the filter replacement bid went to Buena Environmental for \$77,835. Emmert stated the American Red Cross will be holding a blood drive at the Municipal Building on February 16, 2024. Emmert informed Council the ODOT TAP grant has been submitted. Emmert stated the bar screen has been pushed back to December 2024. They are looking at other avenues for funding for this. Emmert stated the Village is applying for the fluoridation assistance program through the Ohio Department of Health. Emmert stated Hannah Brothers will be laying the carpet in the Council room on February 6, 2024. Emmert presented Council an application from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control for CVS to obtain a liquor license.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to not request a hearing for CVS to obtain a liquor license. Seconded by Councilperson DePinto. All Council voted "yes" except for Councilperson Hooper who voted "no". Motion carried.

Emmert stated James Bryant bought two more properties on Lincoln Street where he plans on building houses. Bryant previously built two houses on Lincoln Street which look very nice. Emmert stated he investigated white foam in the creek down by State Street that Councilperson Hooper inquired about. Emmert stated they walked the creek, and it is coming into the Village from another area. Erik Peterson stated that he may be able to help with this. Peterson gave Councilperson Hooper his card to contact him. Emmert reported that the Public Service Department and Kyle Gabbard from the Water Treatment Plant have been very busy with water leaks. Emmert stated they have had leaks on Maple Hts., Elizabeth St., Panther Dr. and Pleasant St.

Police Commander Biggers reported one dispatcher is in training and is expected to finish training this week. Biggers stated Chad Wilkins will start employment as the Code Enforcement Officer in March. Biggers thanked the New Lexington EMS medics for helping with their CPR/AED First Aid training. Biggers stated an additional SRO completed swatting training. Biggers reported they received signed destruction orders and items have been pulled. They are currently waiting on disposal orders for items of value. Biggers stated Police Chief Gill and herself attended the homeless coalition meeting and the child injury prevention coalition meeting. Biggers stated a subcommittee of the child injury prevention coalition is planning a distracted driving event at the New Lexington High School. Biggers stated they participated in the safe community's video filming on January 31, 2024 for a county wide Superbowl safety video. Biggers informed Council the New Lexington Police Department vs the New Lexington Fire/EMS Department are hosting a basketball game on March 15, 2024. There will be food trucks and other activities that night. This is a joint UAS fund raising program. Biggers stated cruiser three is stripped and will get the new decals next. Biggers presented Council with a breakdown of the calls for the department from 1-1-2024 – 1-31-2024.

Fire Chief Fain reported he attended the Homeless event held at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on January 24, 2024. Fain stated the department had a water rescue on State Rt. 37 that was a success. Fain stated the upcoming basketball game between the two departments should be a great event. Councilperson Spencer stated residents have asked him why the New Lexington Fire/Ems are going into the southern part of the county. Spencer gave a breakdown of the calls from 911 showing how many times Somerset Fire Department has had to respond to New Lexington. Councilperson Ty Danison stated most of the New Lexington Volunteer Firemen work during the day. Fire Chief Fain stated he is always accepting applications. Ty Danison stated the New

Lexington Department has 26 volunteers whereas Somerset has 42. Administrator Emmert stated everyone needs to get involved with the Work Force Development at the New Lexington CSD. Emmert stated they offer Fire/EMS classes. Council discussed the issue.

Councilperson DePinto reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on February 1, 2024. Councilperson Hooper asked about the bed tax. Finance Director Lewis stated Administrative Assistant Saffell sent the papers to them again today.

Councilperson Hooper stated she would like to schedule a Municipal Concerns Committee meeting. She will contact Councilpersons Ty Danison and Jeff Danison to schedule a meeting.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution No.24-7 and declaring an emergency. Seconded by Councilperson Bethel. All Council voted "yes" except for Councilperson Spencer who abstained. Motion carried. Resolution No. 24-7: **A RESOLUTION ASSESSING COST OF WATER AND WASTEWATER CHARGES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Councilperson Welsh made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-7 as read. Seconded by Councilperson Bethel. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution No. 24-8 and declaring an emergency. Seconded by Councilperson Bethel. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution No. 24-8: **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF NEW LEXINGTON AND BLOCK CONTRACTORS TO PERFORM SECURING 49 WINDOWS AT THE FORMER LEMPCO PROPERTY AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Councilperson Welsh made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-8 as read. Seconded by Councilperson Welsh. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Bethel made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution No. 24-9 and declaring an emergency. Seconded by Councilperson Welsh. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution No. 24-9: **A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE LIMIT ON COMPENSATORY TIME FOR ALL FULL TIME PERSONNEL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Councilperson Bethel made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-9 as read. Seconded by Councilperson DePinto. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Bethel made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution No. 24-3 as a seconded reading. Seconded by Councilperson Welsh. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution No. 24-3: **AUTHORIZATION TO WRITE OFF NEW LEXINGTON, OHIO WATER UTILITY DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLES.** Councilperson Danison made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24-3 as read. Seconded by Councilperson DePinto. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Mayor Thompson entertained a motion to adjourn.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilperson Ty Danison. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.



Mayor



Council Clerk