

Village of Sherman –Regular Board Meeting
Village Office-111 Mill St
January 2th, 2019

Members: Mayor Meeder Trustees: Gratto, Higginbotham, Reyda and Ayers
 Others Present: Jay Irwin, Clerk Ramm, Donnie Wagner, Mike Przepiora, Mark Freligh, Tom and Janice Sweatman, Jacquie Heising, Cherokee Heising, David & Deb Prenatt.

Mayor Meeder opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and lead everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

RES 2019-01-02.1:

Motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on December 5th, 2018.

Moved: Trustee Ayers

Seconded: Trustee Gratto

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

MAYORAL ADDRESS:

In light of the newly structured water and sewer bills Mayor Meeder addressed the NYS requirements and Median Household Income (MHI) which is what NYS deems as affordable. In order to meet New York State grant funding requirements our average bill is supposed to be between 1.5% and 2% of the Median Household Income (MHI) for water AND sewer. These are two completely separate utilities and together they should be between 3% and 4% of the MHI. NYS determined in 2015 that the MHI for Sherman is \$35,000 per annum. This means that the NYS affordable average for water and sewer combined should be between \$1,050 and \$1,400 per annum. Mayor Meeder gave examples from actual bills. The first sample (a single retired resident) was \$79.40 per month which would average \$952.80 per year which is below the minimum affordable average. The second sample (a couple) had a bill of \$109 per month which would average \$1308 for the year, which falls within the required range. The third sample (a family) had a bill of \$120 per month which gives them a \$1440 annual cost which is just above the expected average. Mayor Meeder discussed Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) and explained that the biggest change to the water and sewer bills was with multiple dwellings. The fourth sample was a multiple dwelling unit with a monthly cost of \$77.50 which would average \$930 per year for one dwelling which is under the required minimum affordable average. In response to a question Mayor Meeder stated that these monthly amounts do include the monthly base charges for water and sewer.

Mayor Meeder noted that it was recommended that the Village spread the sewer cost equally between every dwelling which would have been \$620 per dwelling per year. Currently we have the sewer base at \$40 per month, totaling \$480 per annum plus the usage which we reduced from \$7.60 to \$4.00 per 100 gallons. There is still a sewer usage component, where most municipalities only have the set charge.

Mayor Meeder recapped why the village had restructured the water and sewer rents laws. She explained that the original charges where set up in 1979 and the lack of increase of revenue meant that there were no reserves built up and in fact these charges didn't even cover the running costs of the plant, which is 40 years old and in dire need of repairs. She added that the number of

dwellings in the community had decreased over the years reducing the revenue further. She added that NYS offers \$750,000 in unmatched funds which we applied for last year. The grant was denied because our water ~~and sewer~~ (RES.2020-02-05.5) rates are far below what NYS deems as affordable. The residents have to pay the minimum before the State will consider any future assistance.

A grant 'application' is a process. Once the application document is submitted, the grant agency can no longer consult with the applicant about eligibility. The 'denial' as indicated above came in May 2018 in the form of a verbal expression of our ineligibility primarily because of our water rates; it was not a formal written denial. Therefore, the Village pursued a Drinking Water and Stormwater Study with CDBG under their recommendation; the actual application document was submitted in July 2018, awarded in December 2018, for \$52,500 - including the \$2,500 Village match (paragraph added as per RES 2020-02-05.05).

Mayor Meeder commended the previous trustees who had the foresight 40 years ago to build the sewer plant, which is why we are so far ahead of our neighbors. Communities that are installing sewer facilities now are looking at \$1400 per EDU per year just for sewer, while ours is less than half of that. She concluded by stating how good it is that the billing has worked out exactly as projected.

SEWER STUDY:

Mayor Meeder explained that last year we received a grant to study the sewer system, which involved the smoke testing and checking every sewer line, etc. The sewer collection system was found to be in almost perfect condition except for a few gutters and sump pumps that were wrongly hooked in, but these have been removed. The actual system was put in with PVC 40 years ago and is in good shape. This is enormously valuable. We now have a complete sewer plan and will begin applying for funding and grants to implement it.

WATER AND STORMWATER STUDY:

We have just been awarded a \$50,000 grant to do a full water and stormwater study. This is very exciting since stormwater has no revenue source other than taxes, so any grants we receive for this is good. This study will only cost \$2,500 of taxpayers' money and as with the sewer study, will highlight issues and faults in our systems.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The Village was also awarded a grant for \$18,000, with a Village match, to do a comprehensive plan. More details will follow as this plan gets underway.

WATER AND STREETS REPORTS FROM DPW SUPERINTENDENT:

Mr. Crane told the trustees that the pothole in front of the bank has been fixed. He added that they had installed four new water meters and planned to continue with new meter installations. In response to a question about the installations Mayor Meeder explained that there were a few residences/buildings that had no meters for example, one of the parsonages. Any residence without a meter was previously billed the minimum but now with the new law every residence/building has to have a meter. Some meters will be new installations, but most installations are replacements of old/faulty meters.

that Mr. Wagner did not have a public laundromat. It didn't have enough washing machines and was primarily for the use of his tenants who did not have washers or driers in their apartments.

Motion to move into executive session to discuss a legal matter at 7:55pm.

Moved: Trustee Higginbotham Seconded: Trustee Gratto

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

Motion to exit executive session and adjourn the regular board meeting at 8:37pm.

Moved: Trustee Reyda Seconded: Trustee Higginbotham

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

Next meeting will be on February 6th, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Ramm

Clerk/Treasurer