

VILLAGE OF NEW LEXINGTON COUNCIL MEETING

May 1, 2023

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 Susan Goodfellow, James Welsh, Janie DePinto, Susan Boyle, and Debra Hooper. Also present were Administrator Emmert, Police Chief Ross, Finance Director Lewis, and Fire Chief Fain. Absent were Councilpersons Jeff Danison and Dan Bethel.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to excuse Councilpersons Danison and Bethel from the May 1, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Councilperson Boyle. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to approve the minutes for the April 17, 2023 meeting with corrections as read. Seconded by Councilperson DePinto. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Council Clerk Spohn presented Council with a resolution assessing cost of water and wastewater charges. Spohn presented Council with a letter from the Ohio Department of Commerce regarding the applied for liquor permit for LA Extravaganza LTD. The letter asked Council if they would like a hearing regarding the permit. All Council agreed no hearing was necessary.

Administrator Emmert asked Council if pool rates for the 2023 season would remain the same. Mayor Thompson stated he thought the rates and wages should remain the same for the 2023 pool season. Emmert stated Dave Ratliff will be managing the swimming pool for the 2023 season. Lifeguard training will be offered on May 17, 2023. Emmert stated he would like to promote Jenny Saffell to Administrative Secretary with a \$1.00 increase on her wages. Council agreed to the promotion and Emmert stated he will bring a resolution to the next meeting for the position. Police Chief Ross gave Emmert a message from a resident concerning no crosswalk on Carroll Street by Kroger's. Councilperson Welsh reported since the paving was completed on Brown Street there is no longer a crosswalk by the Courthouse and the parking spaces are not marked. Emmert stated he will get this resolved.

Clay Hooper addressed Council concerning a water bill. Hooper stated this is not about a tenant that used water but a bill on one side of a duplex that was not occupied. Hooper stated he called the water department in October of 2022 to have the water shut off. In November Hooper was informed it could not be shut off because it was a duplex, and it only has one shut off valve. Hooper stated he received a bill in February for the side of the duplex that was not occupied. Hooper stated he was informed the duplex would be shut off if payment for the unoccupied side was not paid by March 1, 2023. Hooper stated the water clerk told him they could plug the meter on the unoccupied side. Hooper questioned why he was not told this in October. Hooper stated Administrator Emmert was not waiving the bill. Hooper stated the bill was \$238.30 and he paid \$200 towards the balance because he has a tenant moving in. Hooper asked Council to waive the bill since there was not water usage. Mayor Thompson stated since he made the attempt to have

the water shut off, he feels Council should help him out. Finance Director Lewis stated she and Administrator Emmert had a meeting with Attorney Barclay regarding adjustment of water bills because it is getting out of hand. Councilperson DePinto asked Council what their thoughts were on refunding Hooper.

Councilperson DePinto made a motion to refund Clay Hooper \$200.00 and credit the past due account \$38.30 for the water bill on the unoccupied duplex. Seconded by Councilperson Welsh. All Council voted "yes" except for Councilperson Hooper who abstained. Motion carried.

Mayor Thompson reported he attended a meeting at the Workforce Development for the Appalachian grant funding. Thompson stated he attended the tree planting ceremony at the Arethusa Springs Park for the Arbor Day Celebration. Thompson stated they are going to place the Tree City flag at the park. Thompson asked Council if he could be reimbursed for the solar light he purchased for the park. Council stated "yes".

Finance Director Lewis reported the 2023 budget has been certified by the Perry County Auditor. Lewis asked Council if the Fire Department and the Police Department could start taking care of doing the research for their own departments for equipment purchases. Lewis stated she emailed Council a letter she received from Health Resource Services Administration stating the Village had to pay back \$11, 592.37 for noncompliance of grant money that was to be used for COVID expenses. Lewis stated the Council minutes from when this money was received states it was deposited into the Fire/EMS fund. Lewis stated a portal was required to be set up to report how the money was spent. This needed to be completed by September 30, 2021. Mayor Thompson stated Heidi is going to file an appeal. Once the appeal has been decided then if needed the Village will consult with legal counsel. Lewis stated legally the money would have to come out of the fund it was deposited into. Councilperson DePinto asked about reporting of ARPA funds. Lewis stated her and Heidi have no access to the portal. Heidi is working on getting them access to do the reporting. Lewis stated Rockwell did the reporting through the State of Ohio but not the federal government, but they kept changing the rules as to what needed to be done at that time. Heidi is going to do all of the reporting once she is given access to the portal. Mayor Thompson asked Lewis if we could order a recording device to record the Council meetings when the internet is down.

Police Chief Ross reported 8,113 calls for service this year. Ross stated he spoke with Keer automotive today about the cruiser that was ordered last year. Ross stated they have a build date of the end of May. Ross reported he has promoted Officer Arnold to sergeant. Ross stated there are no automatic defibrillators in the building and he would like to purchase them for the police cruisers. He is currently looking for a grant for this. Ross stated he attended the Earth Day Celebration at the New Lexington Elementary School, and it was a great success. Councilperson DePinto asked if he had ordered his radios yet. Ross stated "yes".

Fire Chief Fain reported the department had 26 fire runs and 161 EMS runs in the month of April.

Councilperson DePinto stated she was approached at Kroger's by a member of Pike Township, and they stated they were not interested in putting on a levy to help the parks. DePinto stated she thinks it would be a good idea to ask Win Waste Innovations for help with things that need repaired at the swimming pool.

Councilperson Goodfellow stated the banners, and the football field are looking really good.

Councilperson Welsh stated the new roof on the shelter house and restroom at the park look great. Mayor Thompson thanked the Public Service Department for all their hard work at the park.

Mayor Thompson stated Bill Padgett approached him about placing panther paws on Mill Street down to the football field. Thompson stated the Community Club is hosting a side by sided ride in June and Thompson asked if they could park their side by sides at the park. All Council agreed.

Councilperson DePinto stated if anyone has any issues reading the Financial Reports that Finance Director Lewis does a great job of explaining how to read them.

Councilperson Welsh made a motion to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution No. 23-14 and declaring an emergency. Seconded by Councilperson Boyle. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution No. 23-14: **RESOLUTION ASSESSING COST OF WATER AND WASTEWATER CHARGES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.** Councilperson Welsh made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 23-14 as read. Seconded by Councilperson Depinto. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Mayor Thompson entertained a motion to adjourn.

Councilperson Goodfellow made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilperson Boyle. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 PM.



Mayor



Council Clerk