

CHRIC Lauds Success Of Sherman Project

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SHERMAN — Joshua Freifeld, executive director of Chautauqua Home Rehabilitation and Improvement Corp., told village of Sherman trustees at a public hearing in June, that Sherman's 2023 housing rehabilitation project was a great success.

Freifeld, who attended the public hearing via zoom, reviewed the process of the project, in which qualifying low income households are able to have structural improvements done on their homes with funding from CHRIC. "It's been a successful project and one of the ones we've gotten the farthest with," he said.

Sherman was awarded a total grant of \$488,250 for the Housing Rehabilitation Project. Freifeld said that figure includes administrative costs for the project. Out of \$400,500 which was budgeted, \$391,150 has been allocated so far for repair on seven homes, he said. This breaks down to an average of \$57,120 per household.

Freifeld noted all seven households that received assistance are low income. A surprising fact, he said, is that all seven have female head of households, he said.

The work on five of the homes has been completed, Freifeld said, and the last two are underway. "I'm excited to finish the last two projects and close it out," he said.

Sherman Mayor Colleen Meeder echoed Freifeld's excitement, adding that she hopes the last two homes will be finished by the end of July.

Meeder and Freifeld noted the project was slightly delayed by the passing of Eileen Powers, former Director of Housing Rehabilitation Services for CHRIC.

Freifeld said Sherman should be able to apply for the second round of funding and that his would work with the village in order that more households might benefit from the project. "With what we have accomplished through this project, we are confident about going back and helping you apply for the next round of funding," he said.

Also in the public hearing, Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief Operator Jay Irwin told trustees that the plant "is up and running" and the project is nearing completion. "As of today, we are operational," he said. "One of the best things is that we have a Glasgow Ultraviolet system for purification."

Irwin said the use of ultraviolet for purification instead of chlorine and salt is very important. "We don't have to worry about chemicals going into French Creek now," he said.

Irwin also told trustees that the screw press is ready and should be in use by the end of June or early July.

Meeder noted that the plant is 44 years old and, due to a lot of co-funding, the average cost per year for residents should average \$834 with this 2023 \$4 per month increase. "One of the huge benefits we have is that, as a small rural community, we are able to get these Rural Development and Community Development Building Grant funds," she said.

In a related matter, Meeder noted that there is \$49 million available from the federal government for CDBG projects. "This is federal money administered by New York State," she said.

Meeder said improvements to the stormwater infrastructure in the Main Street business district are estimated to be a \$2 million project. She noted that CDBG covers infrastructure beneath the ground, as well as sidewalks and trees affected by the construction.

Meeder said this project is really necessary because the whole area from the athletic field to Hart Street is crumbling.