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Sherman officials discuss disturbances, vandalism

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SHERMAN — Sherman officials are doing more to enforce the village's curfew and a village law that prohibits shooting within the village.

Mayor Colleen Meeder reported that there have been several complaints regarding youths causing disturbances and vandalism in the village. Also, there have been shots fired in the vicinity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant when contractors were working there, she said.

"We've had some young troublemakers who have been raiding people's gardens, putting street cones in French Creek and other mischief," Meeder said. "Jay (Irwin) spent some time fishing the cones out of French Creek."

Meeder said Greg Gorm-

ley, code enforcement officer, and Jay Irwin, wastewater treatment plant chief operator, have been in contact with the Sheriff's Office about ways to enforce the curfew.

The curfew for youths is 10 p.m. Meeder noted that it does not apply to family activities.

"The curfew is really for kids who are unsupervised," she said.

In other business, trustees agreed to add a new street, connecting Hart Street and Franklin Street, and to accept the community's vote for the street to be named Creekside Lane. They authorized the streets superintendent to add the new street to the Village of Sherman mileage inventory with the state DOT.

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Trustees also approved and authorize the mayor to accept the bid for the Screw Press, a portable dewatering component in the wastewater treatment process, as part of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Project. After receiving two bids, the village selected BPD Industries at a cost of \$314,500. This bid was recommended by Barton and LoGuidice.

"The screw press is the last major aspect of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project," Meeder said.

Board members also approved authorizing the mayor to purchase a trailer for the screw press from Reedy Branch Equip Cpo LLC, located in Georgia, for \$16,082, plus delivery costs. The choice was recommended by Irwin after reviewing three quotes.

Trustees approved a resolution following a public hearing which was held prior to the regular meeting of the board, regarding an amendment to the stormwater bond resolution.

Meeder reminded trustees that on July 7, 2020, they authorized the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$3.5 million to pay the costs of improvements to the village's stormwater management facilities.

"The original cost projection was done in 2019," she said. "Now the estimate is closer to \$5 million. It is time for us to amend the entire bond resolution."

Meeder emphasized, however, that raising the bond to \$5 million does not mean the village is committed to spending that much on the stormwater project. She explained that the wastewater treatment project was a necessity.

"I'm not saying that storm water is not a necessity but it's not like sewer, she said. "Stormwater is similar but if we get to a point that is not financially feasible, we can rethink things. We

are not going out and committing to a \$5 million burden on the community."

Meeder explained that there are multiple phases within the stormwater project, "two of which we will be applying for during the 2022 Consolidated Funding Application round."

The first of these applications will be to the Green Innovation Grant Program through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation for the Main Street Sherman Green Infrastructure Gateway Street Scape. This grant will be for \$2,286,900, of which the village of Sherman commits to a 10% in matching funds. The village commitment must be in cash.

The second application is for the Climate Smart communities Grant through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for the Community Nature Center Stormwater Pond Retrofit. This grant is for \$899,000, of which the Village must provide 50 percent. The village share, however, can be in cash, land acquisition or in kind services, Meeder said.

In a related matter, Meeder told trustees that the next thing is the New York Forward Application.

"Now we are preparing to put everything together. Sept 23 is the deadline," she said.

A letter of intent was submitted to the Dept. of State for the NY Forward application, encompassing the greater Main Street and business district area, stormwater, building improvements, and economic development initiatives, Meeder said.

Regarding the recent arrest of a former village clerk, Meeder expressed appreciation for the work of District Attorney Jason Schmidt's office in coordination with the County Sheriff Jim Quattrone and state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli's office in pursuing

the theft case.

"It had several challenges along the way - not the least COVID closing offices for an extended period," she said.

In another matter, Meeder praised the Sherman Day committee for their dedication and the success of the event.

"Sherman day was very well organized and executed," she said. Several trustees also commented on "probably the best Sherman Day ever."

Meeder added special kudos to the Sherman Day Committee.

"It was well attended and very well organized," she said. "I also want to thank the members and volunteers for their efforts in making this a great return to our community's most cherished event! I was excited to see all the people participating in the activities following the parade!"

Meeder also spoke with trustees about the issue of vacancy, foreclosure or abandoned property. The vacancy fine is \$750 the first year, and increases beyond that, she said. It is to prevent people from just leaving vacant houses, which can result in squatters, animals taking up residence and fire hazard, she said.

"A house that is vacant is rotting. We need to have safe, healthy homes," Meeder said. "For example, if you have a for sale sign on the building and the number given goes nowhere, is it really for sale?" she asked. "The fee (fine) has to be enough to deter you from leaving a house vacant."

One resident asked how the fees can be removed.

"I told him that the fees come from us and we're not doing it. I told him he is going to get another citation for this year and it is going to be more," Meeder said.