

June 7, 2018

President Joe Russell called the regular meeting of the London City Council to order. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silent reflection.

CLERK CALLED ROLL: Henry Comer, present; Rex Castle, present; Brenda Russell, present; Rich Hays, present; Andrew Hitt, present; Josh Peters, yes; Anthony Smith, present.

MINUTES of the previous meeting were approved as received.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilman Peters announced there is a public service committee meeting on June 14, at 6:00 p.m.

Councilman Hitt informed that the next safety committee meeting is June 12, 7:00 p.m. and finance is Monday, June 11, 6:00 p.m.

Councilman Castle reported that he attended the June 27 city properties meeting but there were not enough in attendance to conduct business.

CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS:

Mayor Pat Closser gave his administrative report at this time. (attached)

He gave his condolences to Mayor Dave Eades, who passed away Tuesday, June 5, 2018.

President Russell asked how combining the service with help the city and improve services.

Mayor Closser replied that they would be able to have more people on the ground. They are currently being called off runs close to the scene. It is a safety issue. Everyone will be under one roof. For example, if there is a car wreck and they need fire and EMS. Right now, if they are called off, the Jaws of Life are needed, and they get a recall, it takes time and time is precious when talking about lives.

President Russell agreed with what was said. It deals with us pulling out. However, this legislation doesn't deal with us pulling out of the district. It is for putting up a levy to pull out later. He asked if there was any concern sending mixed messages to fire, ems, and citizens. "It sounds like a decision has been made to pull out."

Mayor Closser said the decision would be put to the citizens. Ultimately, it comes down to you guys. I can only propose what I and administration feel is best and where we can save money."

Councilwoman Russell commented, "Ultimately, the decision will be mine as a voter. Voters will make the decision to pull out and stand-alone.

Mayor Closser said if the citizens vote to drop the millage, down to two mills, then they are telling us they want us to secede from the district and save them money.

Councilwoman Russell ask, "Are you saying dropping the millage means we pull out?"

Mayor Closser replied, "Yes, now going to be funding our fire department for EMS services by dropping the three mills currently being given to the EMS.

Russell hoped this is going to be made plain and clear and that they understand what they are voting for. If vote for two mill, they are saying the EMS will pull out and be a stand along under the fire department.

Councilman Smith asked if there will be a separate EMS station or will they be under one roof?

Mayor responded, "One big department."

Smith asked if the department is trained more for fire then EMS.

Mayor Closser replied, more in the beginning, but everyone hired will be trained in both EMS and fire.

Smith opinioned that he is sure the EMS training is a lot different from the fire.

Mayor Closser noted that if you talk to these people (in the room) you'd find that they work at EMS and fire departments.

Councilman Comer said has we move forward, we want to make sure to be 100% clear. We need to know when the meetings are and get all the facts out. He felt that a few missing pieces from the last meeting are being addressed at this one. There were meeting invitations, but he did not know when they were.

Mayor Closser said they could not call in city council members because you get into the “sunshine law”. These pieces of legislation came from administration. If anyone has any questions, he asked to write them down, reach out to him directly, come in and talk to him.

Mr. Comer said he was not looking at illegal meetings, just wanted to be a part of the meetings. He said he wasn’t aware of the meetings before this one.

Mayor Closser said there was discussion in finance and safety meetings.

Mr. Comer replied he wasn’t aware of any of those.

Mayor Closser reminded that council and the public can attending the meetings.

Mr. Comer said if he had known what was on the agenda, he would have attended. He just suggested that from here on out, make sure everything is open and all information is being shared evenly across the board. Make sure everyone understands both side.

Councilwoman Russell said that we have a responsibility to find out what is going on. The door is always open. She pops in and everyone has the opportunity to do the same. If you do not understand, it is your responsibility to find out. Things are mentioned in finance at round table. This has been a topic for 20 years. Not sure why this was never brought forth by other administration. It’s been an ongoing topic. Probably more like an ongoing fight. It’s nothing new, but it is very serious. She recommended that people ask questions, find out what is going on. She said it is her responsibility as a council member.

Mayor Closser shared that council members will pop in. Mr. Pyles stops in. He appreciates him coming in and wanting to know more. Many people here tonight that have things to say. We might not agree with different opinions, but all want what is best for citizens of London. Citizens will make a decision for themselves.

Councilman Hayes wanted to know if we are going to build a new building.

Mayor Closser said the county auditor would divvy up EMD’s property, equipment, money and things. There are a couple of different options. Best case, we will get the ODOT building for the street department. The fire department will get the entire building on East High Street. The city owns land on the south end of town where a small building can be built to have coverage on both ends of town.

Mr. Comer said he felt a lot better tonight with the information being presented. Other meetings did not give these details brought to us this evening. More of a blue print was discussed.

Mayor Closser said this is why he is laying it all out for them. He didn’t want to overwhelm everyone at the last meeting. He wanted to break it down in sections as to why they want to secede. He will have more information at the June 21 meeting.

Councilman Peters asked he if will have numbers at the next meeting.

Mayor Closser said he has them all now, whatever you want.

Councilman Castle said numbers would be good for the next finance committee meeting and for the public hearing.

The streets will be closed due to the Strawberry festival. He wondered if the date or venue should be changed.

Mayor Closser said he didn’t want to change either. Ninety-eight people are allowed in the building. He said that he would like to personally leave it here. If it is moved, there could be at least one person showing up here.

Mr. Castle pointed out that on the other foot, comments might be made that it was planned when someone cannot make it here!

Mayor Closser said it is city council’s decision.

Mr. Castle replied he was just rebutting the Mayor’s comment.

President Russell will not be here at the next meeting.

Mrs. Russell did not want to change the date as not everyone has access to communications. “We’ll just have to deal with the Strawberry festival. Leave the same date and time.”

Safety Service Director Mosier announced that the drainage issue taken care of at St. Rt. 56 and Mariemont Avenue.

Mayor Closser reminded that the outdoor movie series has started and that the next one is a week from tomorrow. Paddington II will be shown.

COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: none

AUDIENCE CONCERNS: President Russell reminded everyone wishing to speak that there is a five-minute rule.

Madison Count Emergency Medical District Chief Robert Olwin addressed city council. (Attached presentation)

Carla Blazier, 206 S. Union Street, addressed council. She is retired from EMS but continues to work part-time training employees. She found it very telling that the Mayor outlined taking over the EMS under the Mayor's "fun facts". She assured that it is anything but fun. It's tragic losing a three-month-old baby. It's rewarding when lives can be saved. It can be frustrating when you try every treatment you can think of on a 19-year-old trauma patient. Yet, rewarding when the parents come and thank them for keeping him alive long enough to say good-bye. It is terrifying when your own 13-year-old son has a lawn mower accident or you are performing CPR on your husband in another state. It's highly stressful when working on a teen driver. "As you can see, it is not fun."

Her next topic was money and what operations would be like. Figures were asked for it at the last meeting but haven't been discussed. She wanted to know how she was going to get them as a private citizen. The money will not be seen until 2020. Where will it come from in the meantime while the city is gearing up and building up equipment? Are we going to be paying five mill to cover until city can get adequate to start making runs? How long is that period going to be?

Madison County EMS employ people who want to do EMS. Fire fighters are made to do EMS. Lieutenants have average of 15 experience. The department has taken a third person off the med unit and put the most experience in a chase car for calls that sound serious. This is a savings with only two people on a truck, but if the third person is needed in the car, they are there. The EMS responds to the hospital to take persons to specialized care. The chief is a paramedic. He is able to respond to a scene, can jump on truck, or can go on call himself. There are three fully staff medical teams with one or two paramedics.

She said, "Ask yourself, looking at the new proposal, will those things still be in place?" The EMS has won the "star of life" two years in a row and a "home town hero" award. She has 42 years of service in EMS, working full time in the field for 35. She does have her fire fighter certificate, but does not want to do it full time. She provides training for the EMS staff.

"We don't do this job for the money or fun. We love EMS; it is a part of what we are. It's what makes are department so great!"

Councilwoman Russell corrected that the Mayor's topic was not under "Mayor's fun fact". It was under his administrative report.

Mayor Closser added that the "fun fact" was to save citizens money, but that he may not have announced that it was his administrative report.

President Russell said, "Point taken. It is a serious issue."

Mr. Doug Pyles, 323 Bishop Drive, addressed council. He noted that he has been coming to the meetings for the past 12 years. He said he saw this current power play coming way back when, when this council was talked into approving the strengthen ordinance for the fire department which included paramedics. There was no justification for paramedics at that time. However, I saw the path being argued by the fire department. It is a power play.

He explained that he lives in the condominiums off Keny Boulevard. There are 300 condos, around 500 people, and a large percent of them are elderly. We used EMD probably more than another area.

He pointed out that this is being presented as a big saving for property owners. "I took my tax bill from last year. I represent the taxes of 300 houses out there. Currently, we pay \$82.38 for EMS district per year. One mill reduction amounts to \$27.46 per year. That results in \$2.28 per month I would save. I am not willing to give up \$2.28 to make sure I have quality care and equipment if my wife had a heart attack. I am not willing to give up \$2.28 to have a fire truck show up if my neighbor has a stroke, or has the current years' experience. They practice their arts and crafts every day and have the equipment to respond. I am not willing to give up the quality of service that our folks need. That's a cup of coffee to go with a service that is unproven and does not have trained people or equipment."

He went on to say that, he didn't think fire could support EMS with a two-mill levy. "I think they are going to have to draw on some of their current income tax money to support it. They cannot put three trucks out and people for two-mill levy. I think they will be coming back for more money."

"I hope you take this seriously. Moreover, if it is passed, and put out to voters, I will personally talk to everyone in the condominiums and see if we can vote this down. This is not in the best interest of the citizens of London. Where that \$200,000 savings comes from, is not residents like me saving \$2.28 per month. Seriously consider. I won't be at the next meeting. Please look at the current level of service we get.

He also said that the other thing that is going to happen if London pulls out of EMS, is Madison county EMD will be destroyed as an entity without the income from London. "Why take a good, working entity and break it down or destroy it, and replace it with something that has not been proven.

Steve Scaggs, 531 Circle Drive, addressed council about a few things that were said by Mayor Closser at the last meeting. He said the comment was made that a small amount of people may opposed it. He hoped to prove him wrong. Mayor Closser has said they would provide a better service. Didn't say "equal", said better. The Mayor talked about three transport trucks. He asked if that was three maned trucks. He asked if there were going to be two people assigned to those trucks 24/7 or just sit in an empty truck and pulled off an engine... if you have that.

"There are lots of questions that need to be brought out in public and not settled behind doors. I want the people to know exactly what they are getting. Look at both entities and compare the protocols. Tells us the difference. The number of paramedics on staff. These are legitimate questions. The number of runs you can cover at this time, if all went out at the same time. And, with the number of runs we have in this community, it's not out of the realm of possibility. How many runs are you going to be able to handle if you take over?"

"Are you using new or used trucks? I know new ones can break down too. With used there is a better chance they will break down. What is going to be your transport policy to Columbus? What is your criteria of how and when you can do that? They have criteria. These are very important issues in this community."

"When you have fire runs, are you going to pull people off of medics? It happens in other communities and that concerns me. If you pull someone off that medic.... you no longer have three, you no longer have two. Questions need to be answered. Need to know the plan in public."

"There is talk of new station. There's to be a savings and it will cheaper with a levy. It may be in the start, but don't know where it's going from there. This entity has proven since 1996, that they have not raised your millage."

"When are you going to take over? Everyone is saying it will be determined. If the levy passes in November and you take over in January, good luck putting it all together in two months. I would be impressed."

"What type of equipment will be on trucks? If they have better equipment. However, when you say "better", what kind of equipment do they have, what kind of equipment are you going to have. Let the people know that we are not going to hide anything that we are going to bring it all out."

"What type of training does London have what type of training does Madison have? What are the qualifications of those doing the training?"

"Most fire departments have rotation basis for medics. Squad one day, fire next. If you are pulling your best medics off on and putting them on fire truck, that medic is not going to help me if they are on the truck. Down there, I know they are on the squad."

He referred back to his days on council, when they gave a 5% raise to medics to do nothing. "I am a little nervous about what the contract negotiations will be when they actually have to do dual roles.

Mr. Scaggs directed to the Mayor, "If this is being done because we got have two people that can't play well together, I am disappointed that you that you didn't at least try to fix that problem before you went this direction. That's pathetic. Put them both in a room with a couple of ball bats and tell them not to come out."

He finished with, the main thing he wants, if this thing goes farther, is for council to have all questions answered that come in. "If questions cannot be answered, I would either table it or hold it until you get

questions answered. Because if you cannot answer for the public, then the public is going to think that obviously the opinion of the public doesn't matter. "I would like to see it spelled out."

Larry Ealy, 1486 Guenther Rd, Trotwood, Ohio, reminded that he was at council a couple of weeks ago presenting his governor campaign race. He explained that he had placed signs at the church, which were now missing, and he wanted them returned. He saw Mr. Henry Comer removing one of the signs.

Councilman Comer explained that it is not a church, but his private property day care center. Permission was not asked to place the signs on his property. He instructed Mr. Ealy to seek permission before placing any signs on any private property.

Mr. Comer further explained that he was republican and Mr. Ealy is a democrat and that he does not share the same views and that he told Mr. Ealy he would not support him.

Mr. Ealy wanted the other signs returned. Mr. Comer did not know where the other signs were.

President Russell asked that this be discussed after city council. He understood the importance of retrieving campaign signs.

Shirley Litchfield, 204 East First Street, addressed council. She explained that the squad removed her from the front of this building, after the special meeting. She was having a stroke and her heart was in danger too. She thanked the best, kindest, loving man that ever stuck her with a needle. They knew what they were doing. They were totally prepared and did not hesitate with what to do. "Thank you, you are the best. I would put them up against anybody, any time. They come to my home tell me what is safe for me. They will come to your home and do the same. They gave me a push button device to come pick me up! I know whom I can count on! Greatly appreciate them!"

OLD BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION 135-18 Sponsored by President Joe Russell, Rex Castle, Rich Hays, Andrew Hitt, Brenda Russell. A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NECESSITY TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES Motion by Russell to place on second reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. President Russell explained that this legislation would put, on the November ballot, a request for a levy to secede from the EMS to the fire department. It will raise two mill for the fire department. There is a public hearing June 21st.

LEFT ON 2ND READING.

RESOLUTION 136-18 Sponsored by: President Joe Russell, Rex Castle, Rich Hays, Andrew Hitt, Brenda Russell. A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE NON-COLLECTION OF THE 3 MILL LEVY FOR THE MADISON COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISTRICT Motion by Castle to place on second reading, second by Russell. Clerk read. President Russell explained that this would take the three mill (2.8) of the current levy from EMD district. There is a public hearing June 21.

LEFT ON 2ND READING.

Council member Smith asked Chief Olwin how qualified he would be and prepared if the shoes were on the other foot and he had to prepare for fire department by January.

Chief Olwin replied that he has 13 years' experience running a fire department before came here. "I would put my certification up against your current chief."

Councilman Castle asked about the timing as it appears we will be in the rears if we don't receive the funding until 2020 when we cancel the three mill. If it passes, there is not date when the three mill is cancelled.

Safety Service Director Joe Mosier said it would be cancelled after the first of the year.

Steve Scaggs added the property taxes are a year behind and will be paid out of another year.

NEW BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE 137-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle AN ORDINANCE VACATING AN ALLEY Motion by Hays to place on first reading, seconds by Hitt. Clerk read. Castle explained that the alley hasn't been used in years and is landscaped.

A public hearing is scheduled for the July 19 meeting.
LEFT ON 1ST READING.

RESOLUTION 138-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Hitt to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. Castle explained that these funds need to be transferred to buy a small backhoe for the sanitation department.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Russell. Roll to suspend: Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes. **SUSPENDED.**

Motion by Russell to adopt, second by Hays. Roll to adopt: Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes. **ADOPT.**

RESOLUTION 139-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. The sanitation department's co-insurance line is running low, as there have been a lot of claims made.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Hays. Roll to suspend: Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes. **SUSPENDED**

Motion by Russell to adopt, second by Hitt. Roll to adopt: Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes. **ADOPTED.**

RESOLUTION 140-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Hitt. Clerk read. Castle explained that this money was already appropriated for the skid steer and just needs to be transferred.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Russell. Roll to suspend: Peters, yes; Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes. **SUSPENDED.**

Motion by Russell to adopt, second by Comer. Roll to adopt: Smith, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes. **ADOPTED.**

RESOLUTION 141-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by Russell. Clerk read. Castle explained that this money is owed for the water plant and needs to be transferred.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Hitt. Roll to suspend: Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Anthony, yes. **SUSPENDED.**

Motion by Hays to adopt, second by Comer. Roll to adopt: Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Anthony, yes; Comer, yes. **ADOPTED.**

RESOLUTION 142-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AUDITOR'S WARRANT FOR PAYMENT Motion by Henry to place on first reading, second by Hays. Clerk read. Castle explained that this is to pay for the skid steer.

Motion by Henry to suspend rules, second by Hays. Roll to suspend: Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Anthony, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes. **SUSPENDED.**

Motion by Russell to adopt, second by Castle Roll to adopt: Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Anthony, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes. **ADOPTED.**

RESOLUTION 143-18 Sponsored by: Rex Castle A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AUDITOR'S WARRANT FOR PAYMENT Motion by Castle to place on first reading, second by Russell. Clerk read. Castle explained that this was a timing issue and the bill needs paid.

Motion by Castle to suspend rules, second by Hays. Roll to suspend: Hitt, yes; Peters, yes; Anthony, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes. **SUSPENDED.**

Motion by Comer to adopt, second by Hays. Roll to adopt: Peters, yes; Anthony, yes; Comer, yes; Castle, yes; Russell, yes; Hays, yes; Hitt, yes. **ADOPTED.**

ORDINANCE 144-18 Sponsored by: Rich Hays. AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ADOPTING THE CITY OF LONDON POLICY AND PERSONNEL MANUAL Motion by Comer to place on first reading, second by

Hays. Clerk read. Hays explained that he had been looking this over. There are typos, things that could be written better, etc.

President Russell will send out reading assignment sections to council members. He asked that once they receive the assignment, to have any corrections ready by the next meeting.

LEFT ON 1ST READING.

ROUND TABLE: Mr. Comer was glad to see there was more representation with the EMS and more of a blue print discussed this evening. He was glad to hear the EMS side.

He gave his condolences to the Eades family. He shared that Mayor Eades helped him in the race against Mr. Closser. Eades really laid a lot of ground rules for the city.

Mr. Castle thanked all for coming in and speaking on EMS district. He gave his condolences for Dave and his family.

He shared that Dave was his neighbor for many years and was instrumental in him filling his spot on council.

He reminded everyone of the finance committee meeting on June 11. He invited all council members, as the EMS will be discussed.

The next city property meeting is June 27.

He attended the first Friday movie series, which almost got rained out.

Mrs. Russell thanked the EMS for showing up this evening and all the information shared. She would like a copy of other presentations.

"Gods comfort with the Eades family" She and Dave would visit at the senior citizen's center. She thanked all for coming in and bringing information. "I will make the most informed, honest decision that I can make."

Councilman Hays thanked the EMS for all they do "You're the best. Thank you for saving my friend. Don't know what we would do without you."

Condolences to the Eades' family. My friend. They shared many conversations about the navy and horses He was a good man!"

He reminded everyone of the next finance committee meeting. There is the new M&M restaurant in town. Good food, good atmosphere.

Councilman Hitt thanked everyone for the input from the EMS and Mr. Scaggs. He would like a copy of what was presented. It would be useful to have to gather information before a decision is made.

Councilman Peters thanked everyone for coming in this evening, as there was a lot of great input. He gave his condolences to the Eades' family.

Councilman Anthony thanked everyone for coming in this evening and providing the great input. He gave his condolences to the Eades' family.

He noted that there's been a lot of concern with utilities being raised. This needs to be taken into consideration.

Chief Olwin asked for a public records request for all hand written notes taken between Safety Service Director and Mayor.

President Russell said a verbal request should suffice.

ADJOURN Motion by Russell to adjourn.

Arlene Duffey, Clerk of Council

Joe Russell, President