

**VILLAGE OF SHERMAN**  
**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE RESTORE NY COMMUNITIES’  
INITIATIVE GRANT APPLICATION AND SPECIAL BOARD MEETING.**  
**Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:00pm**

Mayor Meeder called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and lead everyone in the pledge of allegiance. Board members Colleen Meeder, Ryan Sanders, Dennis Watson, Gary Emory and Danielle Crane; Clerk-Treasurer Jeanette Ramm; Nicole Cleary and Emily Dewindt from Barton & Loguidice; and twelve residents were in attendance. (Attendance list attached).

Motion to suspend the Special Meeting and enter into the Public Hearing of the Village of Sherman’s Application to the Restore NY Communities Initiative Grant.

Moved by Trustee Emory      Seconded by Trustee Crane  
Ayes: 5      Nays: 0      Carried

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The mayor opened the public hearing with information on the Restore NY Communities’ Initiative Grant opportunity provided by New York State’s Empire State Development Corporation, which provides up to \$2M in grant funds for a community of our size, with a minimum of a 10% match from the project / property owner. The \$1,000,000 construction project with a \$900,000 application is for the property located at 124 East Main Street, Sherman in the downtown business district. It was previously used as a garage repair shop for heavy equipment, but was the original historic 1929 Main Street Theatre. The two story 23,000 sq ft building situated on 1.25 acres includes the parking lot and runs adjacent to the trail and French Creek. The property is listed with the Chautauqua County Real Property Tax Office as parcel number SBL 328.11-2-8 with a current assessment of \$63,000. The building is vacant, deteriorating, and in dire need of rehabilitation. This is a commercial property that is presently vacant, and under contract to be purchased by Heather and Kevin Gorée of Agape Mas, LLC.

The mayor continued by showing pictures of the gymnasium equipment that would be installed for “Play with a Purpose”, the trademark of the WRTS Franchise.

Heather and Kevin Gorée, from Clymer, NY were sad to miss tonight’s meeting, but were on their way to Long Island with Family for a funeral. Heather and Kevin look forward to joining the Sherman Community with this new child-centered, family-oriented opportunity.

We Rock the Spectrum (WRTS) Kid’s Gym was founded to provide a place for children of all ability levels to play and grow together. As the only kid’s gym that offers an inclusive philosophy, WRTS encourages all children to explore their uniquely designed sensory equipment, which is specifically created to aid children with sensory processing disorders and other disabilities.

Research continues to prove that all children are able to benefit greatly from this top-of-the-line play equipment! By allowing children of all ability levels to play and interact together, learning will organically unfold. Families will be simultaneously supported, too.

WRTS welcomes OT, PT, speech therapists, and School Districts, as well as offering a variety of classes and other fun seasonal events. They are also planning on having STEM rooms available which offer a host of other benefits.

There was no negative feedback, and comments involved a lot of interest and excitement. Questions included the distance of this WRTS from other locations, the closest gym being in Erie, PA; and where the gym equipment would primarily be located within the building, which will be the old Theatre section with STEM rooms being in the west wing. Residents were excited that the property would be cleaned up and developed. The repurposing of this vacant building into a sensory gymnasium was very well received, one resident jokingly asked if adults would also be allowed to use the equipment. The general enthusiasm led to residents speculating about other schools using the gym, and the additional traffic into the village and how that would benefit this small rural economy. The school is the main attraction for this ‘bedroom’ community, so having a business here that serves those same children and families is definitely welcome. It was stated that there are few opportunities for children, who are not involved in sports, to experience the social rewards of group interaction outside of school, and this safe play area will provide for that need. It is not only the physical benefits of the gymnasium, but the social interaction children need outside of school hours, and this gym will provide both physical and social activities. Another positive response was that having an indoor children’s playground would be extremely beneficial during the long winter months.

The mayor wrapped up by saying that Heather’s experience as a teacher and educational networking, along with Kevin’s administrative background in insurance, making him knowledgeable about budgets and construction, make them a great team and perfect fit. They have already demonstrated a commitment to the community through their involvement with 5&2 Ministries and have received substantial support for this project of bringing a fully engaging center for all children and families to enjoy.

Motion to close the public hearing of the Restore NY Grant Application and return to the Special Meeting of the Board.

Moved by Trustee Emory      Seconded by Trustee Sanders  
Ayes: 5      Nays: 0      Carried

**RES 2024-05-16.1: APPLICATION TO RESTORE NY FOR 124 EAST MAIN ST.**

**WHEREAS** the Village of Sherman is eligible for grant funding under Round #8 of the Restore NY Communities Initiative Municipal Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS** the Village Board has considered proposals that qualify for funding under the program and selected one project to be included in an application that will be submitted to Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) as follows:

**Redevelopment of 124 East Main Street, Sherman, NY. The project will rehabilitate the vacant 23,000 square foot property into a youth recreational and learning center with gymnasium and STEM rooms under a program called “We Rock The Spectrum”;** and

**WHEREAS** this project is consistent with all existing local plans, the proposed financing is appropriate for the project, the project will facilitate effective and efficient use of existing and future public resources so as to promote both economic development and preservation of community

resources, and the project develops and enhances infrastructure and/or other facilities in a manner that will attract, create and sustain employment opportunities in the Village of Sherman.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Village Board hereby supports and will sponsor an application for Restore NY funding for 124 East Main Street, Sherman, NY and will administer the grant in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations established by ESDC; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Mayor is authorized to sign the applications and any agreements required by ESDC for grant funding that results from the application.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**WHEREFORE**, the foregoing Resolution was put to a vote of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Sherman by a motion from Trustee Crane and seconded by Trustee Watson on May 16, 2024, the result of which vote was as follows:

Colleen Meeder, Mayor	<u>Aye</u>
Ryan Sanders, Deputy Mayor	<u>Aye</u>
Gary Emory, Trustee	<u>Aye</u>
Dennis Watson, Trustee	<u>Aye</u>
Danielle Crane, Trustee	<u>Aye</u>

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

**RES 2024-05-16.2: AUTHORIZE ESDC PAYMENT**

Motion to approve and authorize the mayor to send a payment of \$500.00 to Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) for the Application to the Restore NY Communities Initiative Grant Program.

Moved by Trustee Sanders    Seconded by Trustee Emory  
Ayes: 5    Nays: 0    Carried

Motion to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board, to be followed by the Second and Final Complete Streets Workshop.

Moved by Trustee Watson    Seconded by Trustee Emory  
Ayes: 5    Nays: 0    Carried

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanette Ramm  
Clerk-Treasurer

**Next Regular Meeting: June 12, 2024.**