

Joint Meeting of Town of Montville Public Safety Commission and Town Council  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Monday, November 26, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.  
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

**I. Call to Order**

Commissioner Jetmore called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of our military.**

All stood and pledged the flag followed by a moment of silence in commemoration of armed forces.

**3. Roll Call**

Present at the meeting were Commissioners Loiler, McNally, Wehner and Jetmore. Absent were Commissioners Allyn, Butterworth and Moran. Also present was Mayor Ron McDaniel and Town Councilors Jones, Longton, Tanner, McFee and Council Liaison Candy Buebendorf. Absent were Town Councilors Caron and Murphy.

**4. Remarks from the Public**

Resident Jon Leonard, a Town dispatcher, remarked that he did not read the entire Montville Public Safety Plan (“PSP”) but indicated that there are some inaccuracies in it particularly regarding the radio system and as such the plan was a waste of money.

Resident Bob Manfredi described the new Public Safety Building as “the best looking in town, a Taj Majal” that would require more staffing for its 360-day a year lockup facility and an independent police force with additional costs for three (3) meals a day, laundry, medical insurance, janitorial services and clothing. He added that the proposal for an independent police department should be decided by referendum. B. Manfredi concluded that Montville is not a high crime area and said “enough is enough.”

**5. Special Recognitions/Presentation**

Tom Weber and Gerald Aponte of Almont Associates gave a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed Montville PSP that includes nine sections—the overall plan; and service area profile; fire emergency services; staffing; training; life safety/fire prevention; building department; emergency management; dispatching; and fire finance. The plan was formulated from meetings with police and fire officials and the results of a survey that determined what does and does not. Additionally, the Town of Montville, its operations and demands, were compared to like communities, the towns of Mansfield and Manchester.

The Almont Associates representatives spoke about implementation of the PSP and referenced some of the 154 recommendations identified in the report such as follows: a) the police department should become an independent entity within 3-5 years; b) a police chief should be hired; c) develop a training plan, often at no cost to the Town; 5-year equipment plan, staffing plan for police and fire officials and end of life plan for equipment with natural replenishment; d) creating a unified budget for fire and ambulance services; e) a compensation plan for volunteers; f) separate ambulance services from volunteer firefighter duties; g) consolidation of the fire departments and h) examination costs for a Resident State Trooper (“RST”) program versus a Town police chief.

6. Questions and Answers by the Public Safety Commission and Town Council -- None
7. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute limit

Resident Julius Jurkowicz, a former Public Safety Commissioner, commented that the proposed PSP was not new nor was the idea of a police building new as one was originally proposed 20-30 years ago. He added that Montville was no longer a rural town and that a police department should have been in place when the Mohegan Casino was built. J. Jurkowicz also said that looking to the future for a police department would cost more and stated it would be a matter of time before the Town was sued. He suggested that residents should have saved money for taxes to support a police department and that those who cannot should move out of the town.

Resident Dick Wilson, a former member of the Charter Commission, commented consolidation of the fire stations and hiring a police chief was proposed in 2009 and rejected then and will be again. He surmised that residents do not like change or anything that will increase their taxes. He therefore suggested that the PSP be put into a time capsule until the year 2050.

Resident Tony Siragusa, a WPCA Commissioner, referenced that the plan identified too many pumpers and recommended that they be traded for the proposed additional engines. He added that training is needed as indicated in the report.

Rick Sagun, a resident, commented that an independent police department is not appropriate at this time given the money owed to Rand Whitney and for the public safety building.

Resident Jamie Knighton said that Montville is not a high crime town and questioned why it needed so many police officers. She also questioned the cost paid for the study and the one-week time period spent collecting data. She suggested that the comments/recommendations regarding additional training were a scare tactic. J. Knighton also said that each fire department had been purchased and asked if the Town would buy them and the ambulances that were owned by each fire company. She also said that training records did indeed exist and that EMT training was voluntary. She added that the Animal Control facility was understaffed and was in need of repair.

Town Councilor Rosetta Jones stated that she did not vote for the plan because she did not think that anything would be done. She said that she hoped that the recommendations will be used to bring the departments into compliance. She also asserted that residents want to know that they are valued given the unsettling situations that have exhausted Town monies. R. Jones suggested that the recommended policies and procedures without costs be implemented and then move toward removal of the RST program within 3-5 years.

Charles Nicholson, a 32-year resident, thanked the Town Council, the Police Department and the Public Safety Commission for their efforts and Almond Associates for their prospective. He then addressed two items in the plan—he did not realize that the mayor acts as police chief and that Montville is one of very few towns with its size that still uses the RST program. He also reference drug trafficking, the transient population in town, and preparations that need to be done prior to ridding the Town of the RST program.

Commissioner Russ Wehner commented that the Commission would take the time to review the plan given that it had looked at the cost for an independent police department. He added that the salary for a police chief would probably be less than anticipated.

Resident Bob Manfredi questioned why a town of 17,000 residents was embarrassed with the RST program. He asked the Almond Associates representatives for highlights of its recommendations and the time frames for each. G. Aponte said they were listed in Section 9 of the report and identified as low, medium and high priorities. B. Manfredi added that the unions wanted more but there is no more to give.

**8. Remarks from Commissioners and/or Councilors**

Commissioner Jetmore thanked everyone for coming out this evening. He said the Commission would work hard to implement what it could from the plan and review it in its entirety. Commissioner Jetmore also thanked Almond Associates, the Mayor and the Town Council.

Mayor McDaniel said that he would look into the reason why the meeting notice got out late.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by: Gloria J. Gathers/Recording Secretary