

**Town of Montville**  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes for September 21, 2016**  
6:30 p.m. – Montville Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

1. Call to Order  
Chairman Scott LaVallie called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.
2. Roll Call  
Present were Commissioners Matt Beaupre, Joseph Berardy, Eileen Cicchese, Nancy delaCruz, Ryan Hartman, Kerri Lawton, Karen Perkins, Scott LaVallie, and Kristin Ventresca. Also present were Parks & Recreation Director Peter Bushway, Town Council Liaison Laura Tanner, Town Council Chairman Joseph Jaskiewicz, and Town Councilor Billy Caron.
3. Adjustments to the agenda – *none*
4. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the agenda with a three-minute limit – *none*
5. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
  - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2016  
Motion made by Commissioner Cicchese, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz, to accept the Minutes with the following amendment:  
page 4, item 9(d) Carnival Review, second paragraph, second to last sentence:  
... she will be discussing the possibility of scheduling next year's Carnival on the same weekend ~~during the Fourth of July weekend~~ with the Mayor.  
Discussion: None. Voice vote, 9-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
6. Director's Report for August/September 2016  
The Commission reviewed the preliminary numbers for this year's Summer Camp Program. Contrary to the past years' programs, the Camp generated approximately \$3,000.00 this year. A record number of 340 children attended the Camp during its six-week period and Director Bushway was able to secure additional counselors from Norwich's Summer Youth Employment Program and volunteers to care for and lead all of the children. Though they encountered some spatial challenges at Tyl Middle School, the Program went well.  
  
Director Bushway distributed a sample of the signage they are currently investigating for Camp Oakdale. Half of the sign would be covered with Plexiglas and would include interchangeable information while the other side would include more permanent information, i.e., the rules of the park. Two signs, located near the fields, are being proposed. He is waiting to receive estimates for the signage. An additional *No Symbol* sign, stating that no alcohol, smoking, etc. is allowed, will be posted at the parking lot

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entrance. Commissioner Lawton raised the issue regarding the continued lack of signage banning dogs from the fields at Camp Oakdale and the possibility of posting pet waste stations at the trail heads and, possibly, along the trails. Director Bushway stated that pet waste stations may be purchased using moneys in the Department's Equipment Fund.

With regards to the time constraints posed by the Youth Center's move into the Fair Oaks Community Center, Commissioner Ventresca reported that wrestling will now be held at St. Bernard School and the Girl Scouts are having issues reserving times for their meetings. Both Chairman LaVallie and Director Bushway were unaware of these issues. To their understanding, per an e-mail received by Youth Services Coordinator Barbara Lockhart, who has stated her willingness to work with any individual or organization that is requesting access to the building, had resolved all existing timing issues with all of the individuals/organizations, including wrestling.

Some of the Commissioners were also unaware that the facility would be locked and the public would be required to be buzzed in in order to gain access prior to 6:00 p.m. for security reasons. The need for such security and having a Community Center that is closed to the public was discussed. The issue of the lack of communication between the Department, the Officers, and the Commission was raised. The calendar for the facility is arranged by the P&R Department and any conflicts are presented and discussed with the Youth Services Coordinator. Chairman LaVallie reiterated that the Fair Oaks Community Center is not a P&R facility and, as such, they do not have any control over the building.

In response to Commissioner Perkins, Director Bushway stated that he and the Montville Rotary are in the process of investigating the possibility of rescheduling Montville Race Day to September or October in an effort increase the participation for these events.

7. P&R Newsletter for October 2016

In response to Commissioner Perkins, it was stated that the Youth Basketball Program for Grades 1 and 2 is a separate program that will be promoted in January.

8. Reports from Finance

In response to Commissioner delaCruz, refunds for Camp were provided for various reasons, including those who scheduled trips/vacations. Refunds were provided for those who were unable to attend by the week. Those openings were made available to those children who were on the waiting list.

In response to Commissioner Beaupre, the payment made for golf, which they are no longer hosting, is an older payment.

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9. Unfinished Business

a. Future of Fair Oaks Community Center

The Community Center Building Committee has drafted a survey comprised of approximately 20 (twenty) open-ended questions and will be sent to the Town Council for approval. The purpose of the survey is to gauge the general interest and needs of the public. Following the survey's final approval, the Committee will decide on the means of distribution. Commissioner Ventresca encouraged the Commissioners to attend their meetings, which take place on the first Wednesday of every month. She also suggested changing the name of the item on the agenda.

b. Camp Oakdale

The new, ADA-compliant locksets for the new bathrooms have not yet been installed. Those who go to the bathroom must remember to unlock the door prior to leaving so that it is accessible for the next person. The football program, which is currently actively utilizing the bathrooms, has been provided with a key should an individual be unable to enter the bathroom. With the exception of one of the toilets overflowing due to an excessive use of toilet paper, the bathrooms have been working well. Porta-potties are available on site should the bathrooms be inadvertently locked.

Due to the drought conditions, the fields have been experiencing some difficulties. Field 2 is scheduled for re-seeding. The new lighting has been working well. One more day of softball is remaining in the season. The Public Works Department has requested Commissioner Perkins remind them of the locations for the two (2) remaining benches. The possibility of acquiring flat benches for the basketball courts was raised. Approximately 12 (twelve) boards were replaced on the bleachers.

Basketball stencils were purchased for the repainting of the court at the Desjardin Park and, possibly, Fair Oaks. The soccer and football fields are lined by the Public Works Department.

c. P&R Website (Commissioner Lawton)

Commissioner Lawton introduced the possibility of hiring a webmaster to design their webpage and having the P&R Department make regular updates. Currently, the page includes outdated information. Commissioner Perkins suggested contacting the High School for any students interested in the project or, possibly, having students design the webpage as a class project.

d. Dog Park Committee Update

The Dog Park Committee held a successful raffle fundraiser, raising nearly \$8,000.00 of their \$10,000.00 goal. The Tag Sale also went well. It was clarified that over \$10,000.00 in total has been raised by the Committee to date. Commissioner delaCruz stated that it was a nice day and the Committee did a nice job on the event. It was also very nice to see the Mayor in attendance.

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e. Basketball Program (Commissioner Beaupre)

Commissioner Beaupre stated that he had heard a number of positive comments regarding the Basketball Clinic. Though the Middle School Basketball Program has been cut from the budget, the schools are seeking to pursue involvement through an intermural Program. There is currently no fifth grade program. In addition, they are investigating the possibility of starting their own organization/club for competitive basketball, similar to football, wrestling, soccer and lacrosse.

Director Bushway reported that they have requested the use of Tyl Middle School rather than St. Bernard School to host the Basketball Program for Grades 1 and 2 due to scheduling conflicts that occurred during the last session causing the program to be extended from eight to nearly twelve weeks. A maintenance fee of \$50/hour will be charged. In response to Commissioner Perkins, who questioned whether it would be more cost efficient to hold the program on a weekday rather than a weekend, it was stated that the revenues received from the program can be allocated to the maintenance fee. In addition, the parents of the children spoke positively of holding of the program on Saturday mornings rather than on a weekday afternoons or evenings. Furthermore, they might be able to share the fees with another group who wishes to utilize the gym for less than the minimum time because they would have already met the three-hour minimum requirement.

10. New Business

a. Trailer for stage

The Public Works Director is continuing to investigate the purchase of an 8' x 12' trailer in which to store/transport the recently acquired stage. The cost, which is estimated at \$3,000.00 will be funded by the Commission's Special Revenue Fund.

b. Possible purchase of more rigid outdoor movie screen (Commissioner Hartman)

While a successful Movie Night was held with an estimated 123 people in attendance, Director Bushway, Commissioner Hartman, and members of the Public Works Department had some issues setting up the inflatable screen due to light winds. He would like to continue hosting the event as he feels it is a valuable event for families and proposed the possibility of purchasing a more rigid outdoor movie screen for future events. He estimates that a 10' x 16' screen will cost approximately \$300.00 to \$500.00. Commissioner Hartman will research possible screens and present them to the Commission.

c. 2017 Summer Concerts

Commissioner delaCruz questioned whether the Commission should continue to host the Summer Concert(s), based on the lack of interest. It is estimated that approximately 300 people attended the Wicked Peach Concert, while 116 people attended the re-

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scheduled Frankie Justin Lamprey Concert. Chairman LaVallie felt that because the Commission is trying to set a trend, they have invested the funds for the new stage, and the donations cover most of the cost of the band, they should continue hosting the Summer Concerts. It was agreed that advertising is a key issue and needs to be increased. Putting their efforts into hosting one Summer Concert or hosting one Summer Concert with two acts were also presented and discussed. Two possible bands for the 2017 Summer Concert(s) are *Darik and the Funbags*, who are available on July 8 and, possibly, July 22, and *Malaena*. Commissioner Lawton also introduced the possibility of increasing the number of food trucks or organizations selling food. She also discussed and recited an excerpt of a letter she received from Republican Town Committee Member Thomas McNally regarding the possible passage of a policy providing non-profit organizations preference over other businesses at community events. Based on her experience, food trucks will not agree to attend/sell at an event, depending upon the number and type of competition they are presented. The dates of next year's Summer Concert(s) will be finalized at the next meeting.

d. Email from Councilor Tanner

Chairman LaVallie reviewed the contents of the e-mail regarding the Fair Oaks Community Center and the involvement of the P&R Commission or lack thereof in the decisions that were made.

He took exception to a number of items contained in the e-mail and expressed his dismay that the issues were raised in an e-mail, without providing an opportunity for the Commission to adequately discuss the issues without, possibly, resulting in any FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) violations. Councilor Tanner stated that, because there was no regularly scheduled Commission meeting in August and Youth Center's anticipated move to the Community Center, she opted to present the item(s) in the form of an e-mail. She also provided the Commission with the information, as requested, and, with that, an opportunity to schedule a Special Meeting to discuss the issue(s), should they feel it necessary. She added that, had the Director properly communicated with and advocated for the Commission, these issues could have been avoided.

In discussions regarding the approval of the plan, Chairman LaVallie did recall reviewing the allocation of space, but did not recall any discussion revolving around the times during which the rooms would be reserved for Youth Services. It was and is his understanding that, as a Town facility, the use of the Community Center is under the Mayor's jurisdiction and not that of the P&R Department or Commission. While the Director was involved in the meetings regarding the use of the facility, any final decisions are made by the Mayor.

Town Council Chairman Jaskiewicz stated that the allocation of the space and the times were noted on the plan that was presented to the Commission. He recalls requesting the

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Commission to approve the plan, in its entirety, on a number of occasions. The Plan has been in existence since 2003. He questioned as to whether the Director adequately conveyed the discussions he had regarding the Community Center with the Commission. He also disagreed that the Commission has no control over the facility, stating that P&R has been scheduling the use of the building for numerous years.

*Commissioner Lawton departed from the meeting at 7:40 p.m.*

Commissioner Cicchese recalled the Mayor's statement that P&R does not have any control over the building. Town Council Chairman Jaskiewicz cited Resolution 2003-64 approving the use of Fair Oaks School as a Community Center. He also recalls a resolution being passed by the Town Council providing P&R with control of the facility for the purposes of assigning rooms. Chairman LaVallie stated that access to the building by P&R is necessary, but is now restricted due to the utilization of the building by the Youth Center, making it difficult for the Department to schedule rooms. In addition, the assigning of rooms, he felt, does not constitute having control of the building.

Town Council Chairman Jaskiewicz, who has been involved in the process since its inception, stated that, while they may not have entire control over the facility, they do have some, by resolution. He reiterated his constant requests for the Commission to formally approve the plan, as it was presented, and which included the times during which the designated rooms would be reserved for Youth Services in an effort to avoid the issues that have arose. Commissioner Ventresca recalls conversations centering on the use of the gymnasium and the library. Commissioner Perkins felt that the Director was not adequately conveying his discussions with the Mayor and the Youth Center to the Commission. Chairman LaVallie stated that he met with the Town Clerk regarding the Community Center and she was unable to locate any existing resolution assigning control of the Facility to the Parks & Recreation Department.

Town Council Chairman Jaskiewicz stated that he was also unaware that the building would be locked and any guests would need to be buzzed in prior to entering the building. Commissioner Berardy proposed the need to have, in writing, a statement regarding P&R's authorization for the control and scheduling of the facility. Commissioner Cicchese found exception to the disparaging remarks made by Councilor Tanner regarding the Director in the e-mail. Chairman LaVallie felt that the e-mail also accuses himself and Commissioners Hartman and delaCruz, as well as Director Bushway, of not relaying pertinent information to the Commission. To which Councilor Tanner responded that she was merely stating her observations during their meetings and the lack of knowledge regarding various items of some of the Commissioners. She stated that an informational e-mail may be sent to the Commissioners, without violating any FOIA violations, keeping them informed of P&R

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happenings. Because the Commissioners are actively involved within the Community, it is important that they be apprised of any Parks & Recreation happenings so that they can adequately convey information to the public and, perhaps, clarify any misunderstandings; it is the job of the Officers is to inform the Commissioners. Commissioner Beaupre added, as an example, the revival of the Summer Basketball Clinic, which he believes was not discussed with or relayed to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Perkins noted and gave permission to read a letter that she sent in response to a letter of complaint sent by Chairman LaVallie. Town Council Chairman Jaskiewicz stated that he would like to clarify and resolve the issue(s) and improve communications. Chairman LaVallie felt that the purpose of their monthly meetings is to communicate and discuss and relay information and felt that the role of the Commission is not be involved with the day-to-day workings of the Department. Commissioner Ventresca felt that Councilor Tanner's e-mail was an informational e-mail and their adverse response against her does not represent her position as a Commissioner. She appreciated the e-mail as she felt and agreed that the Commission should function and work together as a Commission.

Motion made by Commissioner Perkins, seconded by Commissioner Ventresca, to continue the meeting to 8:15 p.m. Voice vote, 4-4. Voting in Favor: Commissioners Beaupre, Delacruz, Perkins, and Ventresca. Voting in Opposition: Commissioners Berardy, Cicchese, Hartman, LaVallie. Motion failed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

11. Communications
12. Remarks from the Public
13. Remarks from the Commissioners
14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Laura Tanner
15. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted by: Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING IS ON FILE IN THE MONTVILLE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE.**