

**Town of Montville Town Council
Special Informational Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 1, 2012
7:00 p.m. – Town Council Chambers – Town Hall**

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Buebendorf called the special informational meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. after establishing a quorum.

2. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor and support of our troops.

3. Roll Call

Present were Councilors Jones, McFee, Murphy, Tanner and Buebendorf. Absent were Councilors Caron and Longton. Also present was Mayor McDaniel, Assessor Lucy Beit and Ms. Jacqui Nichols, Mr. Jasen Lawrence and Mr. David Arnold from Vision Government Solutions.

4. Executive Session – none.

5. Communications pertaining specifically to matters which concern the Council.

6. New Business

a. Informational Forum Regarding the Town Wide Property Revaluation

1. Presentation by Town Assessor, Lucy Beit and Representatives from Vision Government Solutions.

Motion made by Councilor Tanner, seconded by Councilor Jones to hear the presentations from Vision Government Solutions and Town Assessor Lucy Beit, discussion, Ms. Beit stated her presentation will follow the presentation of Vision Government Solutions. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. David Arnold from Vision Government Solutions discussed revaluation, stating it is mandated by the State of Connecticut with a full revaluation every ten years including inspections and interim updates every five years. He indicated real property in Connecticut is assessed at seventy percent of its value. He explained the benefits of revaluation including correct disproportionate taxation, adjustments to value for market shifts, new construction and how to achieve the seventy percent State mandated assessment ration. A discussion was held regarding the revaluation process and he stated phases include data collection, sales analysis, model development and application, field review, informal hearings and assessment finalization. He discussed the data collection and explained information collected included interior data, exterior data, outbuildings and land characteristics. He discussed development of assessed values stating sales analysis is the review and analysis of sales, focusing on arms length sales between October 1, 2010 and October 1, 2011. The valuation model development is utilizing the sales data, valuation models that are developed in compliance with Connecticut State Statutes. He discussed the definition of market value and stated as written in the CAAO Handbook for Connecticut Assessors, “market value is the most probable price in cash that a property would bring in a competitive and open market, assuming that the buyer and seller are acting prudently

and knowledgeable, allowing sufficient time for the sale, and assuming that the transaction is not affected by undue pressure". He discussed the field review, explaining how to verify appropriate application of models, confirm data and value consistency and stated the field review is conducted by OPM certified appraisal staff members. A discussion was held regarding assessment finalization and Mr. Arnold stated property owners were notified of the proposed change in their assessment and informal meetings with taxpayers will be held. The final adjustments will be made as necessary and statistics generated and filed with the State of Connecticut. Ration testing standards were discussed and included the level of assessment with a prescribed range of sixty three to seventy seven percent with a current level of sixty four percent. The Coefficient of dispersion (COD) must be overall fifteen percent or less and the current overall COD is 8.64%. Price related differential range allowed is .98 and 1.03 with a current overall 1.01. Unsold property test range allowed is .95 to 1.05 with a current 1.01. He thanked the residents of Montville for their support and cooperation during this project and answered questions from the public regarding the revaluation of properties in the town and how it will pertain to individual properties.

Mr. Richard Gladue, 44 Cook Drive, inquired regarding an assessment of a certain piece of raw land and why it is assessed at much less than it is worth.

Councilor Murphy inquired how many homes were discovered to be underestimated in value during the revaluation process and it was determined Vision Government Solutions did not have this information readily available but that some homes were undervalued.

Mr. Arnold stated there were approximately five hundred homeowners that did not allow them access to inspect the properties and in these cases if the value was estimated and if they are contested they will request an inspection of the inside of the home to get a better estimate of value.

Ms. Beit stated the Board of Assessment Appeals forms are available in the office and online and homeowners have until March 20th to submit them. She explained the homeowners can request a hearing and once they have been heard a decision will be made by the Board of Assessment Appeals. She stated the grand list is down this year by 14.8% from last year's numbers.

Councilor Jones inquired regarding assessment, real estate exemptions and veteran's exemptions. Ms. Beit stated there are currently two hundred and forty one such exemptions in the Town of Montville and they include town property and non-profit organizations.

A discussion was held regarding the impact the AES Thames bankruptcy will have on this year's mill rate. Ms. Beit stated AES Thames has submitted the proper paperwork to claim personal property for last year and she accepted the numbers.

2. Public Comment

Mr. John Pool inquired if the town anticipates receiving money from AES Thames this year toward taxes owed.

3. Presentation by Mayor Ron McDaniel

Mayor McDaniel discussed the AES Thames closure, stating the property is owned by a company named RockTenn who are in the process of trying to find a company to take over the plant. He does not anticipate the town collecting money from the AES Thames as it is in financial straits and will be paying down debts in the order the bankruptcy court dictates it to do

so. He discussed the Montville Power Bio Mass project proposed for the town, stating it will generate jobs for the town if it is approved. He is pushing for this project to move forward.

Councilor McFee inquired if there will be a mill rate increase this year and Mayor McDaniel stated it is too early to determine a number for the increase as it all depends of factors pertaining to AES Thames.

Councilor Murphy suggested Mr. Gladue submit the property he is questioning to the Assessor so she can look into its value and give him an answer regarding its assessed rate.

4. Public Comment

Chairperson Buebendorf asked three times if there was anyone from the public who would like to come forward to address the Council.

7. Remarks from the Councilors

Councilor McFee discussed AES Thames and the impact the bankruptcy could have on the mill rate.

Councilor Jones thanked Vision Government Solutions for their presentation, stating it was very informative.

Councilor Tanner thanked everyone for speaking and thanked Ms. Beit and Vision Government Solutions for all their hard work preparing the presentation.

Councilor Murphy stated Ms. Beit, Vision Government Solutions and the Mayor did a good job presenting the facts and stated he hopes the revaluation will balance the numbers out.

Councilor Buebendorf thanked Ms. Beit, Vision Government Solutions and the public for coming out to speak regarding the revaluation.

Mayor McDaniel stated he is disappointed with the small turnout for the presentation and indicated he will look into posting the presentation materials on the website for residents who could not make it to the meeting to review. He stated this year is going to be a tough one financially for the town, he will have to make tough choices and get through it as best as he can. He stated the market is coming around and he hopes this is a good indication of a better economy in the future.

8. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Tanner to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m., discussion, none, voice vote, 5-0, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

Audrey Ulmer, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville