

**Town of Montville**  
**Ad-Hoc COVID-19 Impact Study Committee**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
**May 9, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Town Council Chambers – Montville Town Hall**

**Town of Montville has lifted the mask mandate effective Monday, February 28, 2022 throughout Town facilities in coordination with our schools. Although the mask mandate has been lifted, Uncas Health strongly recommends that all individuals, both vaccinated and unvaccinated, continue to wear masks indoors.**

1. Call to Order  
Chairman Mandler called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call (Councilors Caron, Mandler, and McNally)  
Present were Councilors Mandler and McNally. Absent was Councilor Caron.
4. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2022  
Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
5. Remarks from the public relating to matters on the agenda with a 3-minute time limit  
Leonard Bunnell, 5 Little John Drive, commented on the lack of specificity for item 7(b) on the Agenda. He stated that items on Special Meeting Agendas should specifically state what the Committee will be discussing and/or voting upon to provide the public with ample notice and speak on those matters.  
  
Ronald Stone, Oakdale, concurred with Mr. Bunnell, adding that it is difficult to provide any comments for such a generically termed item. It is his understanding that the funding for certain previously approved items might be eliminated. As a member of the Parks & Recreation Commission, he reported that the funds that were allocated for the tennis/pickleball court project were insufficient. As such, the Commissioners sought and received additional funding from the State for the remaining amount, allowing them to complete the project. He respectfully requested that the Committee maintain the funding for the project as approved.
6. Old Business – *none*
7. New Business
  - a. Review and Possible Action on Phase I recommendations  
Chairman Mandler reported that an e-mail was sent out to all of the Department Heads requesting the status of the items that were approved for funding. Unfortunately, after

one month, little to no response was received for approximately \$1.8 million of the funds that were allocated. He felt that the lack of or inadequate responses was disrespectful.

Councilor McNally stated that, initially, the Parks & Recreation Commission requested \$368,000.00 to repair the four (4) existing Camp Oakdale tennis courts. As discussions transpired, it was requested that funding be considered for the tennis courts at the high school. Following a series of conversations, it was agreed to move forward with the project at Camp Oakdale and propose the issuance of a bond for the school upgrades which would include the tennis courts. Meanwhile, the Commission applied for and received a \$500,000.00 State Grant, in addition to the \$368,000.00 already allocated for the project. Since its introduction, the project has been expanding and funding is needed elsewhere. As such, he is proposing that the Committee vote to reduce funding for the item by \$268,000.00 and allocate \$200,000.00 of those funds to the Board of Education.

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to reduce the allocation of funds for Phase I of the Camp Oakdale Tennis Courts by \$268,000.00 and allocate \$200,000.00 to the Board of Education. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

b. Review and discussion of ARPA Funding Requests

1) \$1,000,000.00 Distribution to 2022/2023 budget

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to allocate \$1,000,000.00 to the FY2022/23 General Government Budget.**

**Discussion: The allocation of funds was requested by the Mayor and discussed and supported by the Finance Committee. The one-time funds will help lower the mil rate, benefitting the Town's taxpaying residents. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

2) \$100,000.00 to fund HR position

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to allocate \$100,000.00 to fund the Human Resources position. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

3) \$26,100.00 P&Z for replacement vehicle

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to allocate \$26,100.00 for a vehicle for the Planning & Zoning Department.**

**Discussion: The Department currently has no Town vehicle. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

4) \$53,000.00 FM office for replacement vehicle

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to deny the allocation of \$53,000.00 for a replacement vehicle for the Fire Marshal's office. Discussion: The denial was based on the former Public Works Director's comments stating that the vehicle is not in need of replacement. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

- 5) Consider \$1,000.00 donation to Mr. Tyler Lawton, Troop 93, for walking trail project, as presented to Town Council.

**Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to allocate \$1,000.00 to Scout Tyler Lawton's Troop 93 Walking Trail Eagle Scout Project. Discussion: Councilor Mandler commented on the impressive presentation provided by Scout Lawton regarding his plans for the project which will benefit the Town's residents. The funds will be provided to the Troop. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

8. Remarks from the Public with a 3-minute time limit

Leonard Bunnell, 5 Little John Drive, commented on the reduction of \$268,000.00 for the tennis courts when little to no response was received regarding the status of \$1.8 million in funds that were allocated for various projects. He stated that three (3) estimates for the project were provided to the Committee and the funding was subsequently approved by the Town Council. He questioned what additional information was needed and the Committee's truthfulness and legality of their actions.

Ronald Stone, 8 Fawns Meadow Road, expressed his disappointment with the Committee's decision to reduce the amount of funding for the tennis courts and questioned the reasoning behind their action. \$368,000.00 in funding was previously approved and the cost of the project increased due to the changing state of the economy. The Commission was able to seek out and receive additional funding, allowing them to expand the project to include tennis and pickleball courts and a practice area. He wished that more timely notice regarding the pending action could have been provided to the Commission.

Kate Southard, 89 Wildwood Lane, questioned why the motion was not clearly stated on this evening's agenda, per Robert's Rules of Order with respect to Special Meetings. She stated that the cost of the project was estimated at \$360,000.00 when the Capital Improvement Project was approved. Since that time, the cost for the project has increased leading the Commission to reach out to the State's legislators to seek and receive additional funding. She hopes that the Committee will reconsider its action.

Leonard Bunnell, 5 Little John Drive, stated that the timing of the Special Meeting during which a vote is taking place to amend one of the resolutions the Town Council would be voting on immediately following this meeting precludes the public from commenting (s) on

the item. He disagreed with the orchestration of the action, adding that many members of the public are in favor of repairing the Camp Oakdale tennis courts. The Parks & Recreation Commission is complying with the Town Charter and determining what is best for the Town in terms of its recreational facilities. He also stated that it was his understanding that the ARPA Funds were not to be allocated for salaries. He reiterated his opposition to the Committee's handling of the item.

9. Remarks from the Councilors

Councilor McNally responded to the comments, stating that the project continues to be funded with \$50,000.00 more than their original funding request. Additional funding could be considered as part of Phase II of the ARPA Funding for the additional pickleball courts. The Agenda clearly reads "Review and Possible Action on Phase I recommendations" (Item 7(a)), meaning that any Phase I funding recommendations would be discussed and actions could be taken. The Committee is only a recommending body to the Town Council who approves the allocation of the funds. In addition, because there was a loss of revenue, it is acceptable for the Town to allocate funds for any purpose, including salaries, per the Town Auditor and Attorney.

Councilor Mandler stated that the Committee did its best to allocate the ARPA Funds as best and fairly as possible. Previously approved funding has not been defunded or canceled. He added that the Committee was not informed regarding the \$500,000.00 Grant that was received by the Parks & Recreation Commission and, as a result of the additional funds, the project has expanded beyond what was previously discussed and approved by the Committee and the Town Council. He felt that the additional cost of the project due to its expansion was the responsibility of the Commission. He expressed his support for the project.

10. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor McNally, seconded by Councilor Mandler, to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 2-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING CAN BE FOUND ON THE TOWN'S WEBSITE LOCATED UNDER RESOURCES**