

TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMISSION
Regular Meeting – March 27, 2023 -- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

MEETING MINUTES

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comments by the Chair of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced.

1. Call to order.

Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners William Bauer, Traci Callaghan, Mickey Gillette, Gary Murphy, Thomas Pedersen, Karen Perkins, and Stephen Stewart. A quorum was present.

4. Amendments to the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette for discussion of the letter from the Career Firefighters for institution of the policy for after incident analysis, as New Business, Item 12.b. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote. *In Favor:* Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed:* none. 7-0, vote. Motion carried.

5. Communications:

- Copies of monthly statistics reports from Fire Departments, Fire Marshal, Police, Animal Control and Building Official.

Chairman Murphy confirmed the receipt by the Commission of the statistical reports from all departments for February 2023.

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve minutes:

- a.** The Regular Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to approve the February 27, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7. Remarks from the Public.

Chairman Murphy asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

8. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

Lt. Radford reported there were 782 calls for service by the PD for the month ending February 28, 2023. There were also 24 infractions, 0 juvenile summons, 9 misdemeanors, and 93 written warnings for a total of 126 citations.

Fire Department Report

The Fire Department statistics from Fire Marshal Barnes for the month ending February 28, 2023, reported 246 total calls for service.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports:

a. Report from Fire Department Liaison. (Perkins)

Commissioner Perkins read statistics into the record for the fire companies for the month ending February 28, 2023, as follows:

Montville Fire Company (February 2023)

Incidents:	Total
Fire Calls Total	38
Motor Vehicle Accidents	14
Wires Down	3
Chimney Fires	2
Fire Alarms	3
Structure Fires	4
Auto Fires	1
Brush Fires	1
Tree on a house	3

Chesterfield Fire Company (February 2023)

Incidents:	Total
Canceled : Dispatched and cancelled in route	7
EMS Calls: Excluding vehicle accident w/injury	14
Fire : Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined	1
Building fire	1
Chimney or flue fire, confined to the area	1
Motor Vehicle: Accident with injuries	3
Accident with no injuries	1
Other: Medical assist, EMS crew	8
Rescue or EMS standby	3
Power line down	3
Overheated motor	1

Oakdale Fire Company (February 2023)

Incidents:	Total
Canceled: Dispatched and cancelled in route	6

EMS Calls: Excluding vehicle accident w/injury	14
Fire: Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined	35
Chimney or flue fire, confined to the area	1
Building fire	1
Motor Vehicle: Accident with injuries	6
Other: Smoke scare, odor of smoke	4
Electrical wiring/equipment problem, other	2
Carbon Monoxide detector activation, no CO	1
Cover assignment, standby, move-up	1
Alarm system activation, no fire, unintentional	

Mayor McDaniel asked whether these reports will be emailed to the Commission; Commissioner Perkins will do so. Town Councilor Yuchniuk asked about the reports; Chairman Murphy reported on the fire departments’ use of a new CAD system that became operational yesterday and will be okay for next month’s reporting. Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked he typically reports Commission data to the Town Council and asked who would compile the data. Commissioner Perkins reported receipt of the data this afternoon, but assured that next month’s report will be compiled numbers, not separate reports, and added she did not report on the data submitted by the Fire Marshal as she did not understand it. Chairman Murphy also noted the Fire Marshal cannot access compiled data.

b. Report from Animal Control. (Callaghan)

The statistical reports for the month ending February 28, 2023, submitted by ACO Swanson are as follows:

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (February 2023)

	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded	9	88
# of Animals Sold as Pets	2	48
# of Animals D.O.A.	1	1
# of Animals Euthanized	2	3
Total Complaints Investigated	83	692
Total Animal Bites Investigated	0	8
Total Infractions/Summons	1	4

Town of Salem Animal Control Report (February 2023)

	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded	0	2
# of Animals Sold as Pets	0	1
# of Animals D.O.A.	0	0
# of Animals Euthanized	0	0
Total Complaints Investigated	4	33

Total Animal Bites Investigated	0	2
Total Infractions/Summons	0	0

Commissioner Callaghan remarked she had nothing to report.

c. Report from Police Department Liaison. (Gillette)

Commissioner Gillette remarked he had nothing to report.

d. Report from Building Department Liaison. (Stewart)

The Building Department statistics report for February 2023 was submitted as follows:

2022-2023 Building Department Report												
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Permits Issued	110	107	171	188	117	205	111	123				
Pending Permits	159	87	143	136	127	136	102	95				
Inspections	187	197	167	193	120	127	139	120				
Plan Reviews	62	70	67	71	57	70	62	69				
CO's	5	4	0	0	2	1	2	3				
Violation Notices	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	2				
Unsafe Notices	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	1				
Blight Identified	182	184	188	199	201	203	195	205				
Blight Abated To Date	454	454	459	467	479	478	487	491				

Commissioner Stewart read the statistics for the month ending February 28, 2023. He inquired/questioned if an Asst. Building Inspector will be or had been hired. Mayor McDaniel reported the COG did a search and had recently lost its regional enforcement person, but he has asked the Town HR Director to follow-up with COG for the names of its candidates.

10. Remarks from Fire Chiefs.

Chief Keith Truex of the Chesterfield Fire Company concurred with the remarks from Chairman Murphy about the new FD reporting system working on it with EMS Charts. He and the other fire chiefs continue to work to send out a final tally but noted the report format used this month is not the final version. The Chief also commented on the proposed policy for after incident action that was deemed by the Town Attorney in a written decision to be under the purview of the fire chiefs; a memorandum concerning the same was sent to the Mayor. Chief Truex noted operational control belongs within the fire department where it should be.

11. Unfinished Business.

- a. To consider and act on a motion to approve future Commission Committee Assignments.

Chairman Murphy reported no meeting was held.

- b. Report from Town Administration on the progress of the formation of the Montville Police Department.

Mayor McDaniel reported on the formal acceptance by Wilfred Blanchette, a retired CSP, as the first police chief for the Town of Montville who will officially be sworn in on Monday as an officer and begin his duties that will include the review of documents. PD Chief Blanchette will initially split his time as he wishes to officially witness his 1st class graduate from the Academy, an honor mutually agreed upon.

- c. To Consider and Act on a Motion concerning possible action on the water tank installation problem at Millwood on Old Colchester Road.

Chairman Murphy reported there were no new updates to report and last month no connections were made at the site. Fire Chief Messier reported the drafting part was replaced by Fire Chief Turner almost two months ago but the parts needed for filing the tank have not. The tank is also currently full.

- d. To Consider and Act on a Motion concerning the need for a written Career Firefighter Out-of-Station Policy.

Chairman Murphy reported on his belief that the fire chiefs should write the out-of-station policy and send it to the Commission for review or recommend that it be reviewed. Commissioner Perkins asked whether dispatch knows the location of firefighters when they leave the station; Chairman Murphy responded affirmatively stating 99% of the time as opposed to 80% two (2) months ago. The Chairman voiced it is wrong for a paid firefighter to leave their station for a nonemergency without checking with their Fire Chief or the Mayor and suggested that they sign in/out on the radio when leaving and returning so that it will be recorded. Commissioner Callaghan asked whether the situation refers to someone walking into a fire station for help and finding no one there. Chairman Murphy referenced obtaining fuel as a necessary reason for a paid firefighter to leave a station, not having lunch or picking up t-shirts, stating it would leave the Town open for a serious lawsuit given the time it takes to travel from one side of town to the other thus creating liability concerns. Furthermore, there is no existing policy as stated by the Fire Marshal; the policy is only verbal. Commissioner Perkins questioned whether the issue is a personnel matter and under the auspices of the Mayor. Per Chairman Murphy, the fire chiefs and their deputies have commanding control and it falls on them to know the whereabouts of their paid staff. Also, per the union contract, fire chiefs can dictate response policy and be kept in the loop at all times. Commissioner Stewart commented on Item 11.e noting both items are incorporated under the same policy with the suggestion of having the fire chiefs draft the policy making it consistently applicable in all four (4) fire stations and to all volunteers. Commissioner Bauer posed to the fire chiefs whether they would be willing to take on the task of creating the policy and whether a draft would be available for review at next month's meeting Commissioner Perkins asked whether radio transmission would fall under the purview of the radio subcommittee.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to recommend sending a letter to the fire chiefs create an out-of-station policy and radio transmission procedure

applicable to career and volunteer firefighters that does not interfere with the existing union contract and have a draft available for next month's Commission meeting. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote. *In Favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: Commissioner Gillette. 6-1, vote. Motion carried.

- e. To Consider and Act on a Motion concerning the Radio Transmission Policy for all emergency vehicles when leaving the station for nonemergency business.

This item was discussed under Agenda Item 11.d.

- f. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve the FY 2023-2024 Public Safety Budgets, specifically the Fire Department FY2023-2028 Capital Improvement Budget pending information on various items.

Commissioner Stewart summarized the FD CIP noting replacement of a 1991 Pumper at Montville at a cost of \$850,000 and a 1997 Rescue at Chesterfield for \$625,000; no other items are included. In 2025-2026, replacement of a 2004 Aerial M15 at a cost of 1.5 million is included but no other equipment replacement until 2029-2030. In off years, replacement of turnout gear is ongoing as it is only good for 10 years and air packs are planned with some being replaced now. Commissioner Stewart noted the problem is these items cost a lot of money and although he is not aware of the NFPA requirements equipment replacement requires approval based on a proposal. The cost may require moving one piece of equipment further out on the CIP or combining two (2) options into one (1)—replacing the 2009 Rescue with a rescue/pumper since less first responders occupy the cabs of equipment—since the fleet needs to be maintained. Chairman Murphy noted having the CIP makes it easier to qualify for Town, State, and Federal grants as they come available. Commissioner Stewart added that ordering a pumper today would mean a 2-plus year wait for delivery and an ambulance would be a 1- 1 ½ year timeframe. Chairman Murphy agreed with reducing the cab size for equipment given most first responders arrive separately at a scene in their own vehicles.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Perkins. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote. *In Favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, vote. Motion carried.

12. New Business.

- a. To Consider and Act on a Motion for Commission support of the July 1, 2023, celebration of the formation of an independent police department and swearing in ceremony of the first Town police chief.

Chairman Murphy referenced the email from Town Councilor Yuchniuk that all should have received regarding the July 1 celebration. Commissioner Bauer asked for clarification about the support requested of the Commission. Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked the Commission was an important, integral part of the celebration. He explained the auditorium would be sectioned off to include friends and families, dignitaries from other towns in Connecticut, Town and State political figures, and for citizens. Handouts will be given out and cake will be available according to Town Councilor Yuchniuk.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to have the Commission support the July 1, 2023, celebration of the formation of an independent police department and swearing in ceremony of the first Town police chief. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

- b. To Consider and Act on a Motion for discussion of the letter from the Career Firefighters for institution of the policy for after incident analysis.

Chairman Murphy remarked on his belief that the fire chiefs should decide how and when after action plans should take place per their bylaws and SOPs. Some reviews can be very difficult given the circumstances of the incident and may be violent, involve a fire or an ambulance call with known friends or family or the death of a child that may require professional intervention. Also, some incidents cannot be discussed in a public forum and instead require a private setting. Phases of grief was also mentioned in addition to different ways to address it. Commissioner Stewart remarked the Chairman was going off subject; the Chairman asked that he be allowed to complete his thoughts. Commissioner Perkins asked FF and Union President Tim Condon if he would speak on the purpose for his letter; he briefly explained the State policy requirement for critical incident stress debriefing or PTS reviews by organizations that employ firefighter personnel but focused his explanation on after incident analysis. This analysis does not involve a right or wrong way or a change in apparatus to accomplish however the Commission has statutory authority for oversight. Using the Fitch Hill Road incident as an example, T. Condon identified the purpose for the debriefing for an after action report with all responders in the room to review right and wrong measures for improvement and then drafting a report so that everyone is involved or provides feedback for the process. Afterward, everyone gets a copy of the report that can trend data for the firefighters and the Commission for applicable changes or discern the need for more training. The FD does not do or keep trending data but there is hope for a collaborative effort by the firefighters, fire chiefs, volunteers and the Commission to provide oversight and tools for improvement.

Per follow-up by the Commission through questions and responses, such as who would be a part of the process that would be determined by the policy, who should prepare the draft for which drafts exist and should come from the fire service who have experience in writing them; and the need for policy to address issues to prevent unhelpful feedback (arbitrary online posts) were discussed. The idea is to gather everyone together in a structured format, nonarbitrary or self-congratulating, to improve, handle and monitor the process for after-incident analysis in a constructive way. **Motion** by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to have the Commission send a letter to the fire chiefs to create policy for and to encourage post incident analysis including when to hold after action review and incorporate all interested parties in the process. Discussion: Chairman Murphy explained Oakdale company debriefs on Monday maintenance nights and the method by New London to meet for 10-15 minutes before returning to their station. Those not available on the Monday date at the Oakdale company are supported by professionals they can call. Commissioner Stewart remarked the debriefs typically occur after an incident to give time for thought for everyone. Roll Call vote. *In Favor:* Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed:* none. 7-0, vote. Motion carried.

13. Remarks from the Public. (Non-agenda items only—three-minute limit)

Chairperson Murphy asked three (3) times for remarks. Matt Suarez of 18 Cranberry Drive remarked on an Internet blurb he researched from a government website regarding the standards for after action reviews that included they be conducted as soon as possible if not immediately after the incident, the leader should skillfully facilitate, reinforce respectful disagreement; keep it focused on the what not the who, make sure everyone participates, pay attention to the time, incorporate clear ground rules, encourage candor and openness, that all participants have equal ownership, focus on improving performance, keep discussions confidential and end it on a positive note. He also remarked on Item 11.d and agreed that firefighters should not be away from their station for an inordinate amount of time but questioned the practice of training. It was explained that yesterday the companies were at Chesterfield station conducting training and questioned the issue concerning training out-of-town.

Rob Forrester of 831 Chesterfield Road and Asst. Fire Chief at Chesterfield addressed the thought process for the CIP explaining he travels a lot to different apparatus manufacturers and looked at rolled over fire trucks. It was explained that having custom built cabs for fire apparatus is a safety situation as well as a cost to a taxpayer but are stronger than a commercial cab. As a taxpayer, he is aware of the cost.

Kimberly Doyle of 19 Sharp Hill Road remarked she works in early childhood development and is required to call DCF given specific circumstances and reflect on what happened. She remarked on the discussion regarding the after action report and spoke of their process commenting that not one firehouse is going to be same nor have the full picture in a timely manner unless talks are done. She spoke of coming together at the after action reviews that requires self-reporting and not a lot from staff to discuss and understand for positivity and changes for the betterment of all.

14. Remarks from the Mayor. *This item was moved up on the Agenda after Item 12.b as the Mayor had to leave the meeting early.*

Mayor McDaniel remarked that he and Lt. Radford set aside time to assist the Town of Southbury today who are looking to attain an independent police department. Information was provided to the Town and it was encouraged to reach out with questions to him or Public Safety.

15. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Yuchniuk thanked the Commission for its support of the July 1st celebration and will be in touch as the date gets closer.

16. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Perkins remarked on the Radio subcommittee that will meet at the Public Safety Building on Wednesday, April 5 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Stewart remarked on the productivity of tonight's meeting and discussion about a lot of things going on in Town. Commissioner Bauer thanked the Town Council for the invite to the July 1 celebration.

Chairman Murphy remarked should the fire chiefs need help to notify him or Commissioner Stewart.

17. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0; all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Clerk, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN
OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**