

Town of Montville Public Safety Commission
310 Norwich New London Turnpike
Uncasville, Connecticut 06382

860-848-3030

**Town of Montville
Public Safety Commission –Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 22, 2010 -7:00 p.m. Town Hall - Town Council Chambers**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jetmore called the regular meeting of the Public Safety Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Allyn, Butterworth, Jetmore, Loiler, McNally and Wehner. Also present were Mayor Jaskiewicz, and Town Council Liaison, Candy Buebendorf.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. January 25, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner McNally, seconded by Commissioner Wehner.
Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

b. February 3, 2010 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner McNally, seconded by Commissioner Wehner.
Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

5. Communications

Chairman Jetmore read into the record the following correspondence:

1. An email dated February 18, 2010 addressed to Donna Jacobson, Chairperson of the Montville Town Council from Commissioner Wayne Scott stating his intent to resign from the Public Safety Commission due to family health issues and increasing hours on the job making it difficult to attend meetings on a regular basis. Chairman Jetmore stated Commissioner Scott has served his Commission and town well over the years and thanked him for his service and wished him well in the future.

2. A letter dated January 26, 2010 addressed to Mayor Jaskiewicz from Keith Truex, Chief of the Chesterfield Fire Company, Inc. recommending a list of individuals that should be officially commended by the Town of Montville for their efforts to rescue a citizen from a swamp located off of Fire Street on December 23, 2009. Mayor Jaskiewicz stated individuals listed on the bottom of the letter will be sent letters of commendation for their efforts in the rescue from his office.

6. Remarks from the Public – none.

7. Remarks from Department Heads

Lt. Bunnell of the Montville Police Department submitted copies of the monthly statistics for the months of January and a portion of February. He discussed the high rate of DUI arrests made since January 1st and stated this can only be accomplished by staffing appropriately. He discussed the interviews scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday for the entry level police officer position. He updated the Commission regarding the status of field training and officers on and returning to duty.

Ray Occhialini, Fire Marshal, distributed a statistic report for the month of January. He stated during the month of January there were one thousand six hundred and forty one administrative calls received, two hundred and twenty five fire department responses for all four fire companies, three fire investigations, sixty inspections and two plan reviews. He attended meetings for the Public Safety Commission, CERRIT, Tri Town LEPC and witnessed fire drills at Tyl School, Montville High School and Murphy Schools. He discussed the 2010 Millstone special needs for the town for CTDEMHS. He stated they have begun house numbering verification and lettering notification to homeowners so residents can be found in a case of emergency and will issue letters to violators who do not comply. He stated he will begin inventory and photographing all abandoned dwellings in the town in the month of March and will provide a copy of each report made to the fire departments and enter the information with the photographs into the computer aided dispatch program in case of fire on the property.

Mayor Jaskiewicz requested copies of the reports of the abandoned properties with the photographs to forward to the Planning Department to identify blight.

8. Reports from Committees

a. Reports from Public Safety Commission Liaisons

Commissioner Jetmore discussed the Building Committee, stating it continues to meet and is moving along.

Commissioner Wehner discussed the Tri-Town meetings, stating the final meeting of the preliminary phase will take place on Tuesday. He suggested the Commission members

look over the materials provided to them at the last meeting and to bring up any questions or comments they would like to address at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

9. Unfinished Business
 - a. Discussion and review of Public Safety budgets
 1. Animal Control
 2. Mohegan Fire Department

Chairman Jetmore suggested this item stay on the agenda for discussion at next months meeting due to the absence of a representative to discuss the budget with the Commission.

- b. Discussion Regarding the Fire Department Capital Improvement Plan for 2009-2010.

Chairman Jetmore suggested the Commission members look over the materials presented to them regarding the Capital Improvement Plan and to bring questions and comments regarding the document to the next regularly scheduled meeting for discussion.

Commissioner McNally volunteered to keep track of and report back to the Commission regarding the Capital Improvement meetings.

- c. Discussion regarding traffic lights on Route 32 in the event of power loss

Chairman Jetmore stated this item was brought up for discussion originally by Councilor Geary and since that time he has been in contact with Lt. Bunnell and Sgt. Collins and the Mayor regarding this issue. He stated there are fourteen lights on Route 32 and in the event of a power outage there should be a procedure for motorists to follow. Lt. Bunnell stated it is still a law that motorist must stop at a light even if it not is service, and stated if the manpower is available the police officers can bring in portable stop signs in the case of a power outage. It was the consensus of the Commission to authorize Mayor Jaskiewicz to write a letter to the State DOT informing them of the Town's intent for traffic control during a power outage and to consult with the Town Attorney for opinion and clarification regarding liability issues during a power outage.

10. New Business
 - a. Discussion regarding re-assignment of liaisons

Chairman Jetmore suggested this matter remain on the agenda for discussion at the next regularly scheduled meeting due to the loss of one of the Commission members this month.

b. To consider and act on a request from the Building Official to increase Building Permit fees.

Vernon Vesey, Building Official was present to discuss the proposal with the Commission. He stated he hopes to present these proposals to the Town Council at their March meeting.

Mr. Vesey discussed an increase to building permit fees to bring them into line with the surrounding area towns. He stated currently fees are eight dollars per one thousand dollars of construction value. The proposed fees are ten dollars per one thousand dollars of construction value. He stated there are thirteen towns in the Montville area that have fees higher than the Town of Montville. The proposed increase would put Montville in line with these rates. There are towns that have lower rates but do not offer the services that Montville does and most of those towns are utilized on a part time basis. The towns that have higher rates would remain higher even after the proposed increase. He explained the increase is only two dollars but would be a tremendous help in reducing the burden of the taxpayers to support the budget. He explained it is not an increase to anyone who is not using the service and will help to generate revenue to the town. The fees only affect the people who are utilizing the services of the Building Department. Mr. Vesey distributed copies of information requested by Commissioner Butterworth regarding the difference between the budget and the revenues generated in the Building Department and the numbers reflect an approximate thirty thousand dollar increase in revenue with the two dollar increase implemented over the course of a year. This is money the department would not have to request next year. Commissioner Butterworth suggested a three dollar increase in the permit fees to make the department self sufficient, collecting as much as required to operate the department without asking for money from the town to operate. He indicated there has not been an increase in building permit fees for at least five years.

Motion made by Commissioner McNally, seconded by Commissioner Loiler to forward the request for the Building Permit Fee increase to the Town Council with recommendation for approval by the Public Safety Commission. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

c. To consider and act on a request from the Building Official to establish a refund policy for the return of permit fees collected.

Mr. Vesey discussed the need to implement a policy for building fee refunds for the Town of Montville. He explained the policy he has drafted states permit fees will be refunded in accordance with the following; all requests for return of permit application fees must be in writing and signed by the applicant; refund of fees must be approved by the Building Official; refund of fees paid by check will not be made sooner than fifteen days from receipt of the check. He explained if no action has been taken on an application the applicant will receive all of the fees paid returned minus a ten dollar administrative fee, if a plan has been reviewed but the permit has not been issued all fees

will be returned minus a ten dollar administrative fee and plan review fee, if the plan review has been completed and the permit has been issued sixty percent of the total fees will be returned to the applicant and if the plan review has been completed, the permit has been issued and the inspections have been done there will be no refund for building permit fees.

Mr. Vesey discussed a proposal to implement a re-inspection fee as a penalty for residential and commercial construction that requires multiple inspections. His hope is the extra fees will discourage re-inspections. This proposal will allow one free re-inspection per permit. A discussion was held regarding the length of time it takes to inspect a property. Mr. Vesey suggested a flat rate as a fee for re-inspections. Mayor Jaskiewicz stated the Planning & Zoning Department utilizes a similar plan in their office.

Motion made by Commissioner Butterworth, seconded by Commissioner Wehner to forward the request to establish a refund policy for the permit application fees and the request to implement re-inspection fees to the Town Council with a recommendation for approval from the Public Safety Commission. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

d. To consider and act on a motion to set the dates of Tuesday, February 23, 2010 and Wednesday February 24, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the position of Police Officer for the Town of Montville.

Motion made by Commissioner Jetmore, seconded by Commissioner McNally. Discussion: Commissioners Jetmore and Wehner indicated they are available to attend the interviews. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor, motion carried.

e. To consider and act on a motion to enter into discussions relative to dispatcher assistance to the Town Police on the radio and telephone.

Lt. Bunnell stated the issues with the dispatchers are procedural issues that have been ongoing for over a year. He discussed telephone communications, stating the police telephone lines have to be answered in the absence of a police clerk. He discussed issues with greeting visitors at the public safety building, radio communications, in house administrative assistance and in house data entry. Lt. Bunnell expressed concern regarding the lack of communication between dispatch and police officers when calls come in through the dispatch center. He stated calls that are police related are transferred to the CSP at Troop E and no information received by the town dispatcher is offered or passed on from the dispatcher to the town police at any time. This delay of information has the potential of causing harm to one of the officers or the citizens who has called the incident in. He stated officers currently must wait until the information is repeated to a CSP dispatcher or trooper before the town police officer is contacted. He indicated the citizens of Montville deserve better and it would not be that much more work or effort for the dispatchers to communicate with the police in the best interest of the town by relaying

information as they get it as a courtesy to everyone involved. He indicated the Mayor's directive is not being followed and he would like to see the problem resolved as it is an officer safety issue. He wants to be assured that the police can count on emergency information being transferred as soon as it is available. He stated the residents of Montville deserve better than they are getting.

Ray Occhialini, Fire Marshal, discussed the issues between the dispatch center and the police department. He stated it is the responsibility of the resident state troopers to answer their telephones, not the dispatchers. If they can not do so there should be funding for an additional person to answer the telephone or to hire additional dispatchers so that there can be more than one of them on each shift. He discussed greeting people at the door, stating it is a bad idea and is a safety risk. He discussed pooling resources to help each other out in the future if there is funding for a Public Safety building. A discussion was held regarding CAD entries. A representative from the Union was present to discuss union labor issues and he stated there is a meeting scheduled with the Mayor to discuss the issues on Monday.

Chairman Jetmore inquired if there was a happy medium everyone could live with and discussed setting goals, making a plan, additional staffing and training requirements.

John Leonard, a dispatcher for the Town of Montville spoke regarding the issues between dispatch and police. He stated a policy has been in place for ninety days and the management does not want to discuss why it is not being implemented. He stated he does his job and does not want to be grouped in with all of the dispatchers who are not doing their job properly. He discussed the need for adequate staffing especially during peak hours when two people are needed. He stated at this time he is on a twelve hour shift by himself and it is impossible for him to answer both dispatch and police lines at the same time, especially in a case of an emergency when the center is inundated with telephone calls.

Commissioner Butterworth inquired regarding 911 training and what training is required to be a dispatcher. He indicated the town will someday get itself in trouble if a call is dropped or not handled properly and he indicated adequate staffing would help out with this problem.

Mayor Jaskiewicz stated talks regarding this issue are heading in the right direction and he hopes to smooth this all out during the meeting on Monday. He indicated the calls that are in dispute are not 911 calls, they are coming in through the 7510 line.

Lt. Bunnell indicated he is hoping for a policy that is enforceable and he would like to know that someone is looking out for the people of Montville and that he can count on dispatch to inform police of ongoing situations as they happen.

Sgt. Collins stated this is about the people of the town, not fire vs. police. He indicated the citizens are not getting the service they deserve and he needs to know that dispatch is

willing to help out in the case of an emergency. He stated it would be really simple for the dispatcher to push a button to get in touch with police to give them a heads up when they receive an emergency 911 call that requires police attention. He hopes the Mayor will direct the dispatchers to do this for the good of the citizens and the safety of the police officers.

Chairman Jetmore suggested a motion stating the Public Safety Commission recommends any emergency or 911 calls requiring police assistance the dispatcher must give the local police a heads up.

A discussion was held regarding an amendment to paragraph #8 to read all emergency calls whether by the routing line or by 911 when determined to be a police matter shall be promptly forwarded to the state and local police for dissemination. Mayor Jaskiewicz indicated he will work out the wording with the Union representative on Monday.

11. Remarks from the Public

Donna Jacobson, Chairperson of the Montville Town Council, spoke in regards to the dispatchers and police issue. She indicated per Charter, the town does not need to meet with the Union to adopt a policy, the Public Safety Commission has the authority to adopt a policy and then bring it to the Town Council for approval.

Dick Wilson stated the decision to adopt a policy is not that of the Mayor but that of the Public Safety Commission per Charter.

Donna Jacobson recommended Mayor Jaskiewicz send a letter to the State DOT regarding the blinking light at the corner of Trading Cove and Route 32 because it is a hazard to anyone trying to get out onto Route 32. Mayor Jaskiewicz indicated he will send a letter.

12. Remarks from Mayor Jaskiewicz

Mayor Jaskiewicz discussed the issues with the police and dispatchers and stated he hopes to work everything out between all parties. He clarified the issues with the answering of telephones is not with the 911 lines.

13. Remarks from Town Council Liaison, Candy Buebendorf

Councilor Buebendorf stated she will forward the proposed fee increases and re-inspection fee request from Mr. Vesey to the Town Council.

14. Remarks from Commissioners

Commissioner McNally stated he hopes everything will work out with the dispatchers and police.

Commissioner Jetmore thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

15. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner McNally, seconded by Commissioner Wehner to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Audrey Ulmer, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville