

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – June 21, 2023 -- 6:30 p.m.
Town Council Chambers

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.

Vice-Chairperson Stone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners Matt Beaupre, Jon Chase (6:37 p.m.), Mary Hillman, Morgan Matthewson, Deborah Schober, and Rocky Stone. Commissioners Noah Carver, Kevin Clang, and Kate Southard were absent. A quorum was present.

Town Council Liaison Lenny Bunnell was also present.

4. Adjustments to the Agenda. – *None*

5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit).

Vice-Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. Kathleen Calash, 122 Forsyth Road, Oakdale of the Montville Youth Football and Cheer remarked on a list of preparations requested and is needed prior to the start of the football season as follows:

1. Moving the bleachers near the concession stand on the other side of the field;
2. Installation of speaker shelves on the press box and the two (2) flag poles;
3. Installation of fencing around the field (tell us how we can help);
4. Lighting by the bathroom, playground, and access road for safety concerns;
5. Cutting the branches by the playground so lights can be seen during the games.
6. Three (3) persons currently have keys to the gate to the access road and direction is needed as to when it can and cannot be used, i.e., for deliveries and egress for ambulances.
7. Access to the bathrooms that were closed on three (3) occasions last year and one (1) time was on senior night when access was unavailable for a span two (2) hours.

This list was sent to Chairperson Southard and Vice-Chairperson Stone.

Chrissy Caplet of 43 Bashon Hill Road, Bozrah president of Montville Soccer League remarked on the impact of expanding Field #4 and how it would affect the soccer program.

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Kate Quinn of 299 Gay Hill Road, Uncasville who is on the Montville Soccer Board remarked about the access road that included frequent reminders to parents about driving fast on the road as some were almost run over. With 300 children present and nonresidents who attend the events the access road was open and not closed. She spoke about having open communication, closing of the access road, and having clearly identified parking areas that all can use and not select leagues. She remarked we are all one time who needs to work together.

Tina Correco of 199 Forsyth Road, Oakdale is a parent of soccer players and has been involved for the past 14 years in Montville. She remarked on how the soccer league pays and takes care of its needs just as the Town cares for the fields. She also remarked on the inappropriateness of the football league having asked for funds for expansion of the field for their super bowl, one (1) game a year, that they are not guaranteed to hold. T. Correco also spoke about the volunteerism of the soccer parents who paid for and installed a goal post for a flag and how it works together. She suggested that the football league instead makes use of the rear practice field for its games with some added measures and funds its league without asking for so much from the taxpayers.

Jessica Ziolko of 13 Salt Box Circle, Uncasville is a member of the soccer board who remarked about the proposed expansion of the football field and concern for how it would affect their soccer players.

Steve Smolen, 12 Damato Drive, Uncasville remarked on he and his daughter having played soccer at the field and of his coaching the game for the past two (2) years. He questioned the effect on expansion of the field which he uses 3–4 times a week and is a great size for children 8-10 years since a lot of running is involved. He also questioned the proposed changes to the field for one (1) game year but hoped that it would continue to be used for soccer practices and games.

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve:

- a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Matthewson to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2023. Discussion: A correction was noted by Commissioner Schober on Pg. 4, Item 17, “*Schober*” not “*Schroder*” and one by Vice-Chairperson Stone on Pg. 4, Item 13 “*Jenn*” not “*Jim*” Beaupre. **Motion to Amend** the May 17 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried. **Approval of Minutes as Amended.** Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7. Recreation Director’s Report June 2023.

Director Bushway summarized his report highlighting the tag sale, completion of the playground, the conclusion of the Carnival this week that cleared a profit of \$12,000, the beginning of Summer Camp on June 26, the start of the Farmers Market, and the 10-engagement Summer Concert Series. Vice-Chairperson Stone summarized the Director’s Report for the benefit of the public present. He mentioned a punch list of minor items to be completed by the contractor as well as proposed additions to the pickleball court.

8. Report from Finance.

Director Bushway reported some line items toward the end of the fiscal year must have funds to accommodate adjustments for items purchased that are on backorder. He did report the Department would be under budget for the current fiscal year. Vice-Chairperson Stone noted line cost overruns would be addressed at next month's meeting with the remaining year-end balance of \$23,000.

9. June Newsletter.

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported Director Bushway was unable to complete the newsletter that will be sent out by July 1st.

10. Parks and Facilities

a. Camp Oakdale Large Pavilion

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported on his early departure from the Public Works meeting and asked Town Councilor Bunnell if any decisions were made. Town Councilor Bunnell reported no decisions were made but three (3) bids would be sought by Public Works Director Carlson. Repairs will be done upon conclusion of Tuesday night events at the pavilion.

b. Handicap Parking at Camp Oakdale Fields

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported items from the last Commission meeting were also discussed at the Public Works Meeting concerning taking access keys away from organizations that use the park areas and allocating times with no public access for the drop off of supplies. The insurance carrier is concerned about cars on the access road with the exception of emergency vehicles. In addition, handicap spots will be added to the upper parking lot, improving access by the pavilion gate, and creating wheelchair accessible by having Public Works pave the area. Signage for no parking areas is also needed. All of this information will be included in the revised Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

c. MYFL Field Repairs

Vice-Chairperson Stone acknowledged receipt of the email from Kathleen Calash of the Montville Youth Football and Cheer as she reported on earlier in the meeting. Low cost doable items were recognized such as the purchase of new speakers instead of trying to house the existing ones. Preliminary work had been done by the Town Engineer CLA concerning field expansion—taking space from Field #4 and/or moving an existing field down so it does not affect the field. Public Works Director Carlson is working with CLA to recondition the field to the left, a wetland concern. A preliminary cost estimate is \$30,000 but is not known until full attention is known about the scope of the project and reviewed once obtained. Director Bushway spoke with the Planning Department regarding the wetlands area that would require a two-month process if approved and looked at the current GIS mapping. Another challenge is the unknown location for the power of the lights that can impact the fields and talk about more of them.

11. Unfinished Business.

a. Montville Carnival 2023

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Vice-Chairperson Stone reported on a few hiccups concerning the Carnival--the disappointing weather, having to move the fireworks, scheduling issues and understaffing that will all be improved upon for next year. The biggest disappointment was the lack of fried dough; a contract will not be signed should this occur again. Commissioner Beaupre reported on the social media comments about the event that included those about the lack of fried dough and the safety of the rides and positive ones about the fireworks. Ferris wheel rust and lap bars that opened as the ride moved were commented upon although the rides are inspected when set up. Vice-Chairperson Stone also reported that contact with ride vendors either garnered no follow up calls or they were already booked. Also, some type of entertainment is needed for high school students. Commissioner Matthewson reported that most carnival companies do not have ride companies; more will be done by the committee on this point.

b. Summer Concert Series

Director Bushway reported he has nine (9) of the 10 contracts for the series in hand. Vendors and food/dessert trucks are needed for the series. Information was received from Ledge Light Health District on the same. The series will take place at the large pavilion on Thursdays.

c. Farmers Market 2023

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported the Farmers Market season opened last night and there are themes for most of the dates.

12. New Business

a. Community Center Plan

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported the Committee met prior to tonight's meeting. Information was reviewed about the New London plan for a gymnasium, pool, recreation department and youth services spaces. Their space right now is at 35,000 square feet. A community center in Montville will have no space with a building and parking lot. Director Bushway will work with Youth Services to ascertain their needs and those of his department. Information will be sought from municipalities that have pools concerning management and rental.

b. CIP Items

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported finding out the Department has no CIP funds for the upcoming fiscal year. Feedback was received from Town Council Chairman McNally and the ARPA Committee to address preliminary design costs and funds for repairs to the large pavilion. Town Councilor Bunnell spoke with the Finance Director and learned every CIP has been pushed back due to insufficient funds. The Department CIP plan over five (5) years was reiterated for the record. Commissioner Chase remarked help must be obtained to get funds and how it will affect long-term improvement with LED lighting.

13. Communications.

Vice-Chairperson Stone reported he received an email from Public Works Director Carlson about funding obtained for a bounce back wall and a spot to put it. He will work with Director Bushway on the same. Small improvements concerning improvements for football were discussed. The Public Works Director also sent an email concerning damage at the large pavilion—a damaged bathroom with water running and a burned out well pump. The cost for

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a replacement pump will be obtained. Vice-Chairperson Stone also reported the Public Works Director will work with IT concerning the cost for security cameras; the previous ones were stolen according to Town Councilor Bunnell who reported the cameras will be tied in with Dispatch as Department fields will need surveillance and cost needs to be identified. Vice-Chairperson Stone also reported on an email received from Mayor McDaniel with feedback and praise about the tennis/pickleball courts. Security cameras to identify potential damage while people are playing and vandalism are concerns. Commissioner Chase reported seeing large dogs at the pickleball courts; Commissioner Beaupre deemed it was not unreasonable to post signs as they were at the Dog Park. Town Councilor Bunnell remarked on the ordinance for open space, C.G.S. Chapter 277 and suggested rules needed to be posted at the pickleball/tennis courts including parking. Commissioner Chase concurred with the posting of hours ice-Chairperson Stone reported on an email from Eagle Scout Tyler Lawton about the status of his Eagle Scout project—the field needs to be cleaned and he has plans for a grand opening—but he will be away for a month. Commissioner Matthewson suggested an official, formal ceremony be held upon completion of the project.

14. Remarks from the Public of Non-Agenda items (3-minute limit).

Vice-Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

15. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Bunnell.

Town Councilor Bunnell reported on and read into the record a portion of C.G. S. Chapter 277 regarding the Open Space Ordinance and noted the trail development by Eagle Scout Lawton is deemed Town property according to the ordinance. He reported he walked the 20-minute trail last week to view the amount of work done by Eagle Scout Lawton and encouraged the Commission to walk it. Signage was suggested regarding pets and to identify areas for parking. It is also needed to identify the conditions and use of the access road at the football field. Town Councilor Bunnell proposed the formation of a subcommittee to review the MOA for each organization that will use it for an eventual vote on the same by the Commission. The MOA will establish better communication with groups some of which was discussed with Public Works. Director Bushway will meet with CLA and the Public Works Director as the organizations need to be duly informed. Town Councilor Bunnell remarked he would be glad to help with the rewriting of the MOA.

16. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway.

Director Bushway remarked he spoke with Eagle Scout Tyler regarding his travels and his plans to post rules and regulations on his completed trail on the Mostowy Property according to C.G.S. Chapter 277, per Town Councilor Bunnell.

17. Remarks from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Chase remarked on his appreciation for the idea by Town Councilor Bunnell of forming a subcommittee for review of the MOI and signage tied to the open space and use ordinance. He suggested adding the formation of the subcommittee as an agenda item for the next Commission meeting. Town Councilor Bunnell remarked about firearms visible in society for good and bad but are prohibited in open space areas requiring posted signage for enforcement. Commissioner Matthewson concurred with the signage as suggested and even

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more the act of enforcement as a deterrent for damage to new Department items. Commissioner Beaupre appreciated all of the public who spoke this evening and also agreed with the formation of a subcommittee. Vice-Chairperson Stone thanked the public for expressing their concerns and opinions. He recognized the tough job ahead as well as compliance to the Town Charter to determine the needs for public areas, viewing of Department sites, and the search for funding. He also remarked on his contact with Aquatix to obtain prices for splash pads to utilize the land behind the tennis courts. Commissioner Chase remarked on his work with a Town regarding the issue for a lifeguard/monitor at a splash pad stating the Commission may need to consult with the Town insurance carrier for the same. He suggested having Director Bushway to check with them before rather than later. Vice-Chairperson Stone reported on his conversation with a parent in the Desjardins Park area. Commissioner Beaupre reported the concerns for the park include improvement to the basketball court and playground, the addition of picnic tables, and signage for the park from the road all of which requires funds. Director Bushway noted the park is currently used by children 2-13 years old in the small play space. Commissioner Chase suggested fundraising by the neighborhood for modest improvements.

18. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Matthewson to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,
Gloria J. Gathers
Town of Montville -- Recording Secretary/Minutes Clerk

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