

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – January 17, 2024 -- 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-Chair Stone called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners William Barlow, Noah Carver, Jon Chase, Mary Hillman, John Plikus, Deborah Schober and Vice-Chair Rocky Stone. Commissioners Matt Beaupre and Morgan Matthewson were absent.

Town Council Liaison Kate Southard and Director Peter Bushway were present.

4. Adjustments to the Agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Carver to move up Item 11a to 5a. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Commissioner Carver; seconded by Commissioner Barlow to correct Item 11c to read, "2025 – 2029", not 2024 – 2029.

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

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

5a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Elect the 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Officers as follows: Chair: Rocky Stone, Vice-Chair: Matt Beaupre, Secretary: Morgan Matthewson.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Carver to elect 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Officers as follows: Rocky Stone, Chair; Matt Beaupre, Vice-Chair; Morgan Matthewson, Secretary. Discussion: Vice-Chair Stone reported that Commissioner Beaupre offered to take on the vice-chair position although he will be absent from 3-4 meetings for coaching commitments.

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

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of December 20 , 2023.

.....
Motion by Commissioner Carver; seconded by Commissioner Barlow to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 20 2023. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor.
Motion carried.

7. Recreation Director's Report January 2024.

Recreation Director Bushway remarked on the item on his report regarding The Spotted Donkey Mini Donuts food truck and their request to setup at the Community Center on Saturday mornings. His questions were whether the Commission wants to open the location to other food trucks and possible parking concerns with rentals and special events on that day. Per questions/concerns from the Commission, the Director responded the food truck would stop serving at 1:00 p.m. (Hillman); whether a fee would be charged, concern from others who may have an issue, and whether the food trucks have a 365-day license (Schober); a limit to two (2) trucks per weekend (Barlow); a limit to one (1) truck with a charge of \$25 (Stone); and to establish rules and procedures and would the Commission take responsibility (Chase). Per discussion, Director Bushway remarked that birthday parties at the Center are held at 10:00-11:00 a.m. or 4:00-5:00 p.m. and parking would need to be designated if a food truck is scheduled. There are 40-50 spaces in the front and along the side of the center; the rear has plenty of parking space. The Commission will consider the request once policy has been established. It was also noted that dogs are prohibited from being on playing fields and was discussed couple of years ago when smoking on recreational property was discussed. Also discussed was recreational use of Palmer Field as it was used in the past and a request to rent it for K9 Frisbee Toss and Fetch.

8. Report from Finance.

Chairperson Stone remarked on the reallocation of funds by the Finance Department. Director Bushway noted the rentals line item would be adjusted at the end of year, not monthly, to compensate for the return of \$50 of the initial \$100 rental deposit, line item 911.50. A transfer will also be needed for line item 175.48. Commissioner Chase commented on the moving around of funds as being a mechanism of the Charter when written not an indication of the exclusive responsibility of the Commission.

9. January Newsletter.

Director Bushway noted there are not a lot of special event activities in February. He reported he will make calls in February for summer camp counselor positions to determine in advance whether any of counselors need to take time off during the summer. There are 22 counselor positions and most are college students; most high school students do not have enough experience but interviews are conducted with them. The Director also reported on preparation for the Easter Egg Hunts—the cost of the eggs are split with the Masons who help spread them. Five thousand eggs are usually found within 10 minutes in the three (3) fields for 2-year olds, 3-5 year olds, and 6-10 year olds, respectively, with the presence of the Easter Bunny. A Flashlight Hunt involves 50-60 kids searching for eggs which have numbers inside of them for prizes.

10. Unfinished Business

a. Discussion of projects and funding status

Chairperson Stone remarked that this item would be tabled for discussion of the budget. He also noted there is currently \$125,000 available for repair of Camp Oakdale large pavilion.

b. Dance Room Update

Director Bushway reported that the renovations to the dance room are done with the mirrors and bars having been installed today. A party that was planned for the reopening of the room as a thank-you to the Commission and the Town Council has been postponed.

11. New Business.

a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Elect the 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Officers as follows: Chair: Rocky Stone, Vice-Chair: Matt Beaupre, Secretary: Morgan Matthewson. **This item was moved up on the agenda.**

b. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve the 2024-2025 Recreation Budget.

Motion by Commissioner Schober; seconded by Commissioner Carver to approve the 2024-2025 Recreation Budget. Discussion: Chairperson Stone remarked that Director Bushway prepared the budget and the descriptions for clarity once it is sent on to the Finance Department. Director Bushway added the budget also goes to the Mayor and the Town Council. He referred to the revenue side of the budget stating summer camp is currently \$70/week. With the minimum wage increasing by \$0.69, he proposed consideration for an increase in the camp fee to \$75, given it was last increased in 2017. There is also \$5,000 for scholarships for summer camp, a line item passed by the Commission last year however, the Finance Committee decided to remove this funding as it could be put back into the budget or go along with not collecting it. Chairperson Stone remarked this matter was discussed at length last year and it was agreed not to collect it. Town Councilor Southard concurred this item was proposed last year stating it was decided not to increase the summer camp fee \$5.00. Director Bushway explained summer camp provides breakfast, lunch, eight (8) hours of care, and transportation if needed. The camp averages 215 children per day but 230 kids are signed up. Parents with multiple children have an issue with the cost and can qualify for grants with the Town Social Service. The Director reported that Finance wants the budget this month. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor:* Commissioners Barlow, Carver, Chase, Hillman, Plikus, Schober and Stone. *Opposed:* none. 7-0-0. **Motion carried.**

c. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2025-2029.

Motion by Commissioner Schober; seconded by Commissioner Carver to approve the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2025-2029. Discussion: Chairperson Stone remarked on the handout, Montville Parks Improvements, he prepared of Department projects, funded and unfunded, and the status of them. He noted the \$125,000 for the Camp Oakdale large pavilion and that Public Works is working with a contractor to redesign the pylons to meet the current budget. He has heard there are issues with the roof that will be included in the CIP. Commissioner Chase remarked the roof concern had to do with a stage area that was built by volunteers. He added the Commission spoke last month about the small pavilion that was built at the same time as the large pavilion and to consider review of it as a priority and high on the list for CIP next year. Town Councilor Southard noted the Public Works Director was not at its last meeting but she will bring up discussion of the small pavilion at this month's meeting. Moving high priority items to the top of list over speculative ones were proposed by Commissioner Chase. Chairperson Stone was under the impression that the Commission and Public Works would work together on these projects and

Town of Montville – Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2024

.....
noted the \$400,000 will not stay at that price nor does he know the content of the Public Works bid. The Chairman also explained that Desjardins Park was taken off the CIP and put on a Low SIP Plan. Per a question from Commissioner Barlow about the status of the projects, Chairperson Stone remarked we are ready to get work done and will have to go out to bid on the projects. It is hoped that two (2) of them, the large pavilion and Desjardins Park, will get done. Repairs to the asphalt at the basketball court, a standard of \$350,000, was mentioned. The Chairperson also reported the Commission was told to add back items 2 and 3 back on the CIP and noted it would be good if Director Bushway and Public Works Director Carlson could work together. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor:* Commissioners Barlow, Carver, Chase, Hillman, Plikus, Schober and Stone. *Opposed:* none. 7-0-0. **Motion carried.**

12. Communications. -- *None*

13. Remarks from the Public of Non-Agenda items (3-minute limit).
Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Southard.
Town Councilor Southard remarked that the budget process this evening is the most painless she has seen. She also reported she spoke with Town Councilor Caron regarding the John Carlson matter. Lastly, the Dance Program will have its celebration of completion of the renovations this Sunday, January 21st at 2:00-3:00 p.m.

15. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway.
Director Bushway remarked he spoke with Public Works Director Carlson about the lights at the pickle ball courts. In order to save a \$400 monthly bill for electricity and the hit to this budget, the Public Works Director will have those lights turned off. If there is an outcry, they will be turned back on. Commissioner Chase proposed turning off the lights for the winter months; Chairperson Stone noted the public should be notified of the same.

16. Remarks from Commissioners.
Commissioner Chase remarked on an issue last year about the unrestricted access to the field across from the Farmers Market that was a solid waste area and had cars going in and out of it. There was discussion about having Public Works restrict the area with a fence to make it better for the Farmers Market. Commissioner Carver remarked on options to conserve energy via Energize CT to promote green energy and save costs for the Town. Commissioner Barlow remarked he was learning the Commission processes and noted the budget approval went well. Commissioner Plikus asked whether the Commission knows what is important to the public; Commissioner Carver noted there is a public comment section on the Department website and the public can come to the meetings for comment. Chairperson Stone remarked the Commission was appointed by the Town Council and it could do whatever it wants and the public is welcome to attend meetings. Also, per the Charter, the Commission is authorized to work on park-owned items. Commissioner Chase commented on the dance parents who came to a meeting to expression their concerns about the condition of the dance studio. Further, the Commission has established a polity to care of what it has and when the public asks, the Commission tries to respond. Per a Facebook poll, 1-6 issues seek to get public input. Director Bushway noted the parents of the Desjardins Park neighborhood

Town of Montville – Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2024

.....
came forward in addition to the community suggestion for a splash pad. According to Chairperson Stone, successful projects will come from widespread public support i.e., a community center with or without a pool was mentioned. He added the best option is what we can sell to the public that it will eventually have to pay for. Commissioner Chase added the situation is varied depending upon the nature of the project and where the money is coming from; some can be done with voluntary help or a State grant. He noted he appreciated the question from Commissioner Plikus.

17. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Carver; seconded by Commissioner Barlow to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor. **Meeting adjourned.**

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.**