

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – April 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.

Chairperson Stone called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Chairperson Rocky Stone, Vice-Chair Matt Beaupre and Commissioners William Barlow, Noah Carver, Mary Hillman, Morgan Matthewson, John Plikus, (7:02 p.m.) and Deborah Schober. Commissioner Jon Chase was absent.

Director Peter Bushway, Town Council Liaison Kate Southard and Mayor Lenny Bunnell were also present.

4. Adjustments to the Agenda.

Motion by Vice-Chair Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Hillman add to New Business Item 10.g, Food Truck Regulations. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

Motion by Commissioner Matthewson; seconded by Commissioner Barlow to add New Business Item 10.b.1, The Parks and Recreation Commission hereby resolves to recommend to the Town Council to use \$25,000 from the Special Revenue Account, #79999-53038 to be used in conjunction with previously allocated CIP funding to contract with Silver and Petrucelli to prepare preliminary cost estimates and feasibility analysis for the Community Center options. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

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

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

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

- a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Carver; seconded by Commissioner Matthewson to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2024. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 7-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

7. **Recreation Director's Report April 2024.**

Recreation Director Bushway summarized items from his March 2024 report as follows:

1) A tiny robot for playing field maintenance is scheduled to arrive on Friday, April 26. Rental for the machine is \$1,500 for the months of May and June and will be paid for out of the Public Works budget. If the machine is purchased, the \$41,400-plus cost would come from Public Works CIP. The Board of Education may look at the machine as well.

2) St. Thomas More School wants to use the Department soccer fields for two (2) games.

3) Budget review with the Finance sub-committee went well. The line item for parttime staff was increased to \$9,500. Per a question by Chairperson Stone, it was reported that the Large Pavilion was removed from CIP and will be repaired and paid for from the Public Works Department budget. Mayor Bunnell remarked that it was good news as the work will actually be completed and also reported the contractor for the project is ordering the material he needs. Chairperson Stone asked if the work at the Large Pavilion would interfere with the Farmers Market; Director Bushway did not know but he has the schedule for activities. The Chairperson remarked that the work needs to be done.

4) As to the Animal Shelter support group event at Fair Oaks on May 1, Chairperson Stone asked if dogs were allowed as Fair Oaks is a public area. The Director noted the area that will be used by the group would not be considered child friendly. Director Bushway reported that Animal Shelter Group for the event will have two (2) food trucks present and asked for portable potties and other items that they will provide.

5) The lineup and schedule for the Free Summer Concert Series at the Large Pavilion has been confirmed.

6) The fireworks contract for the Carnival has been received and the date for the Carnival inspection has been scheduled.

7) A few more interviews for summer camp have been completed. More quality individuals are applying i.e., paraprofessionals.

8. **Report from Finance.**

Director Bushway remarked there was nothing surprising to report about Department finances and everything is on target. The Finance Committee is aware of the summer camp salary shortfall. The Director also responded to the Chairperson that he was happy with the Easter Egg Hunt stating it went well—200 kids attended the afternoon egg hunt and 59 kids were at the evening event that had a maximum limit of 60 kids.

9. **April Newsletter.**

Director Bushway reported that yoga will start next week and 16 persons have signed up to attend. Chairperson Stone inquired about signup for dance; the Director reported that dance is preparing for a recital and is not open to the public. The Chairperson remarked that there would be a summer dance class beginning June 3rd for four (4) weeks and asked Director Bushway to make sure the information for the class is included in upcoming events in the newsletter.

10. **Unfinished Business.**

- a. Discussion of projects and funding status

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Report was made by Chairperson Stone that no items were taken off the upcoming budget but the Finance Director put the brakes on the basketball court project. Director Bushway reported that the project is out for quotes but he does have specifications. The pricing for the basketball project was in the CIP for \$38,000. Two hundred thousand dollars was in the CIP for three (3) items for Desjardins Park; \$160,000 - \$165,000 was allocated for two (2) basketball courts. Chairperson Stone confirmed that the Commission voted on \$300,000 for the CIP and if any changes were made the Commission should have been notified of it. Mayor Bunnell noted that any changes to the CIP has to go to the Town Council and did not recall what Finance did with the CIP.

b. Community Center Exploratory Committee Update

Commissioner Barlow reported on the request for \$25,000 each from two (2) accounts to get a cost estimate for the Community Center. Attempts are being made to set up a meeting with an engineering company to determine how the funds, \$50,000, can be used and options for the same. Director Bushway will be scheduling a meeting with the engineering firm. Commissioner Barlow remarked questions to be asked are price per square foot, what can fit into the space and to obtain an opinion whether to rehabilitate the existing center or to build a new one. Chairperson Stone stated there is \$25,000 available from the CIP from two (2) years ago but \$50,000 is needed for a cost estimate and feasibility studies to determine if facilities will fit into the current footprint. Securing the additional \$25,000 from Special Revenue may be possible. Town Councilor Southard posed the question for additional funding from the Town Council but it was not an option. Commissioner Barlow remarked if the motion by the Commission is approved it will be forwarded to the Town Council. Chairperson Stone noted that upon their approval the funds should be made available within a month.

b.1) The Parks and Recreation Commission hereby resolves to recommend to the Town Council to use \$25,000 from the Special Revenue Account, #79999-53038 to be used in conjunction with previously allocated CIP funding to contract with Silver and Petrucelli to prepare preliminary cost estimates and feasibility analysis for the Community Center options. **Motion** by Vice-Chair Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Barlow. Discussion: none. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor:* Commissioners Beaupre, Barlow, Carver, Hillman, Matthewson, Plikus, and Schober. *Opposed:* none. **8-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

c. Farmers Market Update

Commissioner Matthewson reported that at the recent Committee a vote was made to approve vendors for the upcoming season. She will contact the food trucks and vendors for the months of June, July and August and she needs to meet with Director Bushway regarding Uncas Health.

d. Carnival Committee Update

Commissioner Matthewson reported that bands and food trucks have been secured for the Carnival in addition to a petting zoo that will be present on Saturday and Sunday for the event. The contract with the new carnival company was approved, signed and returned to the company. Chairperson Stone thanked Commissioner Matthewson for all of her work finding a new carnival company noting that the rides are in better condition and a Ferris Wheel and fried dough will be available, items missing from the former company. Vice-Chair Beaupre questioned if advertising would indicate there is a new vendor given criticism in the past from attendees. Commissioner

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Matthewson confirmed that it would in addition to the use of credit cards at the event. An ATM will be provided and one will be available near the food vendors noted Director Bushway. Town Councilor Southard remarked she was waiting for the signing of the contract with the new carnival company before starting to post on the Carnival Facebook page. Director Bushway reported Mayor Bunnell signed the contract 2-3 weeks ago. Spearheaded by Commissioner Schober, the Commission discussed methods for obtaining an accurate account of attendance—the pros and cons of using wristbands, stamps, and clickers were considered as it was noted by Chairperson Stone that vendors asked for that data. The Chairperson also mentioned that a more define entrance will help with tracking attendees.

e. Facility Walk Arouns

Chairperson Stone remarked that the walk arounds were considered for completion by next month. Vice-Chair Beaupre indicated he may not be a next month meeting and per approval of the Commission presented handouts on his review of Desjardins Park. He noted that the Park has been included in the CIP for additional playground equipment and for refinishing the surface of the basketball court as it is rough shape. He visited the park on April 2nd and noted the park sign and that cleanup was needed as a result of the persistent rain as some areas are washed out and sand is on the courts. He also noted the playground pictures included in his handout were taken two (2) years ago. Chairperson Stone's last conversation with Public Works Director Carlson was last fall; he asked Director Bushway to contact him about the cleanup. Commissioner Carver reported he did his walk around prior to the meeting and sacrificed the finish on his shoes and further was put to shame by Vice-Chair Beaupre's report; therefore, he will report next month. Commissioner Schober reported on the Dog Park that she noted is nice but needs more benches and some picnic tables. She also noted the pickleball court is brand new. Director Bushway confirmed for Chairperson Stone that the lights are back on at the pickleball court. The Chairperson commented on scheduling for the court the failure of some to coordinate with the Team Reach on the same. Vice-Chair Beaupre reported that he saw a posting on Facebook regarding Team Reach. Chairperson Stone noted their schedule shows play is open on the 20th although a tournament is scheduled for that date. Vice-Chair Beaupre stated he would contact them. The Chairperson also noted there are 524 pickleball members listed on Team Reach.

f. Horton Trail Discussion

Chairperson Stone reported that as of today Parks & Recreation has no involvement over Horton Trail. The trail was taken away by a motion of the Town Council at its meeting last month. The Chairperson sent communication to Mayor Bunnell to have the Town Attorney provide a written opinion on the motion and whether it was in compliance with the Town Charter.

g. Food Truck Regulations

Chairperson Stone remarked on the food truck regulations and asked that the Commissioners provide their feedback on them to Director Bushway by the end of the week.

11. New Business.

a. Job Descriptions Sub-Committee

Chairperson Stone reported that he had asked Director Bushway if he had job descriptions for the part-time Parks & Recreation staff and they do exist. The Chairperson asked to form a sub-

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committee to review possible changes to the job descriptions. He noted there is no urgent timeline and maybe one to two meetings will be needed with the intent to have them reviewed by the end of this year. The Chairperson remarked that Commissioner Chase would be a good participant for the review and asked for volunteers for the sub-committee. He also asked Director Bushway if he would help guide the sub-committee when he is available to attend. Chairperson Stone will communicate with the volunteers, Commissioner Carver and Commissioner Hillman via correspondence that will be sent.

12. Communications. -- None

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

Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. Mayor Bunnell remarked that the Town Council very much appreciated Director Bushway's report that was well prepared and factual.

14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Southard.

Town Councilor Southard remarked that she would send an email to Public Works Director Carlson regarding the washout and cleanup at Desjardins Park. She also reported that Mayor Bunnell had just received a response to a text message sent to Public Works Director Carlson who replied that only the columns at the Large Pavilion will be repaired. The project will take a little more than two (2) weeks to complete and any events at the venue should be easily worked around. The Town Councilor also remarked that she will put a motion on the Town Council agenda for the \$25,000.

15. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway.

Director Bushway remarked that a few weeks ago he and Public Works Director Carlson were asked to look at a metal pavilion off of Pink Row. The pavilion, although worn in a few places, was found to be useful in Town. Director Carlson disassembled the pavilion that is 20-feet wide and 45-feet long and has a metal, corrugated roof, pillars, and open sides. A possible location for the pavilion are near the pickleball court for shelter while players wait. Commissioner Schober and Vice-Chair Beaupre considered the Dog Park as it has no shade or benches. Chairperson Stone asked that a price be obtained for a concrete pad for it. Other possible locations were the playground at Camp Oakdale where the small garage is located that needs to come done or near the soccer fields. The Chairperson noted Director Carlson was good at pervious surfaces as he does not want concrete or blacktop. Town Councilor Southard asked about locating the pavilion at the Dog Park but was told although there is no shade there is not a real flat area there.

16. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Carver remarked that it was good to see Town Councilor Southard and always a start and end of a day to see Mayor Bunnell.

17. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Matthewson; seconded by Vice-Chair Beaupre to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 8-0-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

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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.**