

TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMISSION
Regular Meeting – June 24, 2024 -- 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.

Vice-Chair Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Vice-Chair Stephen Stewart and Commissioners Brian Baker, William Bauer, Mickey Gillette and Karen Perkins. Chairperson Gary Murphy and Commissioner Traci Callaghan were absent. A quorum was present.

4. Alterations to the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to add New Business Item 13a, Discussion of Line of Duty for Emergency Responders. Discussion: none. Voice Vote: **5-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

5. Special Recognitions and Presentations. – None

6. Communications:

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

Vice-Chair Stewart confirmed the receipt of statistical reports by the Commission from the Public Safety departments for the month ending May 2024. Commissioner Perkins reported that she reached out to the Mohegan Fire Company; it is still trying to run their reports. The Vice-Chair noted that all the fire companies are using the same program and did not understand the delay in reporting.

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

- a.** The Regular Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to approve the PSC Regular Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2024. Discussion: Commissioner Baker noted mostly editorial changes to the minutes as follows: Pg. 7, Item C: “**rescue**” pumper not medium pumper; “**F550**” not F50; “**4,000**” lbs not 400,000; “**GVW**” not GVM -- Pg. 8, Item C, “**4,000**” lbs not 400,000; “**MVA**” not MDA; Insurance Services “**Organization**” not Offices—Pg. 9,

Item 14, “**donation**” not don. **Motion** by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to approve the amendments to the May 29, 2024, Public Safety Meeting Minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: **7-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried. *The original motion to approve the minutes “as amended” was not acted upon.***

8. Remarks from the Public. (Agenda items only—three-minute limit.)

Vice-Chair Stewart asked three (3) times for remarks. Montville Professional Firefighter/ Union President Tim Condon, 19 Olive Street, Waterford, CT, remarked on Agenda, Item 12a concerning comments made last month about the ability to comply with data requests and monetary concerns regarding this item. Firefighter Condon spoke of having met with Mayor Bunnell in early January about the idea to have the fire companies utilize the data system the Town currently owns so there would be no cost incurred.

9. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

Lt. Radford noted that Commissioner Gillette has the Police Department statistics for last month. He then reported on the noticeable higher rate of statistics for the Animal Control report that originally included the data for January thru May of this year. ACO Rebelo revised the report to include the stats from July to November 2023; no data was found for December 2023. The Lieutenant read the May Animal Control statistics into the record. See Agenda Item 10b for those statistics. He also reported that the High Risk Rural Road Speed Enforcement Grant concluded the end of May and almost \$49,000 was spent for grant activities and all enforcement actions. That included the purchase of four (4) new radar systems and enforcement action over 57 days by the Police Department for a total of 887 stops or formal enforcement action. Of that total, there were two (2) DUIs, seven (7) suspended licenses; four (4) uninsured motorists; 72 for speeding, 26 other citations issued and the remainder were warnings for speeding. The aim of the enforcement was to educate the public and slowing down the motoring public. Mayor Bunnell inquired if there were activity statistics for Gardner Lake, Lieutenant Radford responded that there were none but the PD has been utilizing the boat there on weekends. The Mayor noted it was as important as an alert to the public by providing visibility that all is safe on the lake. Vice-Chair Stewart asked if the radar units were vehicle mounted; the Lieutenant reported sophisticated mobile radar units were purchased that catch speeders coming, going, or standing still. There are also three (3) radar units on the side of roads that are moved periodically but one (1) is currently down due to damage to it. The Vice-Chair also commented on the nice newspaper article about the State PD Phlebotomy Program. Lieutenant Radford remarked that the program under the helm of the State is training interested law enforcement individuals to become nationally certified phlebotomists. This program is used for extreme case DUIs or when it needs to be done. The blood draws can be done by consent or by warrant at the PD and is then sent out to the State Lab for analysis. There are currently two (2) officers trained in the Department. The Program is in the beginning stages with 10-12 certified within the State and is supported by a State grant from which a phlebotomy chair will be purchased. As to whether this program is provided via mutual aid as questioned by Vice-Chair Stewart, the Lieutenant reported that American Ambulance is providing classes every two (2) weeks. The closest PD that has the program is in Hartford, per a question by Commissioner Perkins.

Fire Marshal Report

Fire Marshal Barnes reported Fire Marshal Statistics for the month ending May 30, 2024, as follows:

Fire Marshal's Office Activity	May 2024
Inspections of Businesses and Apartments	39
Fire Investigations	0
Incident Responses Q64 (Deputy Fire Marshal Meigel)	7
Requested to the Scene Q54 (Fire Marshal Barnes)	38
Burn Permits Issued	11
Illegal Burn	0
Construction Project Inspection	4
Emergency Management Obligations	12 hours

The Fire Marshal reported on the evaluated Millstone drill held on June 4 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Two (2) evaluators were from FEMA and the other from Dominion Millstone; the scenario was hostile action based and centered at Millstone. A debriefing of the drill was held on June 10 at Fort Trumbull and FEMA and Dominion Millstone gave Montville high marks. One question occurred during the scenario whereby Montville got the question correct but the response was questioned by the FEMA evaluators. Contact was made with the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) who supported Montville who then got credit for the question. Fire Marshal Barnes also reported on the hiring of new Firefighter/EMT Darren Jones who is a Town resident with 10 years of experience having worked previously for the Mashantucket Pequot Fire Department. In relation to the Millstone drill, Vice-Chair Stewart questioned if there were any plans to provide monitoring of the fire/police outside of the EOC. The Fire Marshal responded that he was waiting for something in writing from his caplet but remarked since the PD is now independent it along with the volunteer firefighters would take direction from the EOC.

10. Committee and Liaison Reports:

a. Report from Fire Department Liaison. (Perkins)

Commissioner Perkins reported having forwarded the monthly reports she received to the Commission and that she had spoken with the Mohegan Fire Company again today concerning its monthly report. She also remarked on having sent the Commission incident reports on data for the paid firefighters prepared in February 2024 and asked whether they thought it was of interest. Vice-Chair Stewart commented that he wanted to take a look at the report; Commissioner Perkins asked if the Commission wanted an explanation about the report. Vice-Chair Stewart concurred. The Commissioner asked Montville Firefighter Union President Condon to come forward to explain the numbers; he stated that the report dates back to when Town Councilor Yuchniuk was on the Commission. The report is a breakdown of career staff, information that is vetted each month with the CAD system. An issue for the Commission, was taking the data reported by each fire company and then incorporating it into hard numbers

with high reliability. Firefighter Condon noted that some data does not add up due to the breakdown of each individual fire company having been requested to similarly respond to calls. He used the EMS calls as an example stating the numbers will not total as the fire companies were each requested to respond. He remarked on the rise in EMS calls due to the closure of the Montville company due to the radon issue. It was explained that the report tracks data--the location of fire calls as well as hazmat, mutual aid, and EMS calls. Transport calls and who completed them are tracked by the career staff and volunteers. More data than what has been mentioned is being tracked by using the Google created data sheet that was created by career staff and reviewed every few days for accuracy. It was explained that more information can be tracked which T. Condon explained, i.e. the time and location of calls for example. Per a question by Commissioner Perkins, Firefighter Condon remarked that the CAD program tracks calls and the times but is not set up to track the data needed and the ESO program that is used by the Fire Marshal is used for inspections. The data has also not been reviewed by the Fire Chiefs. As to Dispatch, the ESO program has a CAD link attached to Dispatch so a dispatch will never be missed. Also, additional burdens to those entering the data was not an option particularly since reports must be submitted to the State of Connecticut as well as the federal government. By having career and volunteer firefighters input the data each can see the input data and have a hand in creating it while the Fire Chiefs can get information from it as well. The ESO program can scan information from the fire companies and it can be verified and locked for use. The Google data report does not have that option but serves as a link. Firefighter Condon is trying to advocate use of the ESO via its link to the CAD system at no additional cost—currently \$8,000 per year--since the program is already available. Mayor Bunnell remarked that in reality the cost is new as the program had not been in use in the past. Firefighter Condon explained that the issue concerning the data for reporting involves the four (4) fire companies and combining all four (4) data screens into one. The plan is to introduce new data screens with a program that will remain in the Town and not be sent to the FBI. The Google data report will be shared but not to the public until there is a high rate of accuracy. A meeting was proposed to discuss and formulate reporting parameters as the Town does not have one entity that oversees everything. Per Vice-Chair Stewart, it was agreed that the Commission would like to see a report monthly with everyone involved in the process. Commissioner Baker wants to see that the data is vetted by the Fire Chiefs. Mayor Bunnell questioned the data for mutual aid; Firefighter Condon remarked the Town uses the Mohegan Tribe and the figures are on the report under EMS Transports. The aim to get a data set that is highly accurate and this current report is to drive interest.

Montville Fire Company (May 2024)

Cancelled Incidents:	Total
Calls	5
EMS Calls	7
Fire Calls	0
Motor Vehicles Calls	3
Other Calls	10
Total Calls:	25

Mohegan Fire Company (May 2024) – No Report

Incidents:	Total
Cancelled Calls	
EMS Calls	
Fire Calls	
Motor Vehicles Calls	
Other Calls	
Total Calls:	

Oakdale Fire Company (May 2024)

Incidents:	Total
Cancelled Calls	18
EMS Calls	39
Fire Calls	1
Motor Vehicles Calls	4
Other Calls	12
Total Calls:	74

Chesterfield Fire Company (May 2024) No Report

Incidents:	Total
Cancelled Calls	
EMS Calls	
Fire Calls	
Motor Vehicle	
Other Calls	
Total Calls:	

b. Report from Animal Control. *(Callaghan)*

The May 2024 Activity Reports for the Towns of Montville and Salem submitted by Police Officer/ACO Bruce Rebelo was read into the record under Agenda Item 9 by Lt. Radford as follows:

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (May 2024)

Activity	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded:	7	95
# of Animals Sold as Pets:	4	55
# of Animals D.O.A.:	0	4
# of Animals Euthanized:	0	0
Total Complaints Investigated:	63	678
Total Animal Bites Investigated:	0	19
Total Enforcement Action:	2	19

Total Other Calls for Service:	63	286
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Town of Salem Animal Control Report (May 2024)

Activity	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded:	2	13
# of Animals Sold as Pets:	1	1
# of Animals D.O.A.:	0	0
# of Animals Euthanized:	0	2
Total Complaints Investigated:	8	53
Total Animal Bites Investigated:	0	3
Total Enforcement Action:	0	1
Total Other Calls for Service	0	0

Vice-Chair Stewart reported on Commissioner Callaghan being out of the state and whether someone should take her place in the interim. Mayor Bunnell remarked that he would have the PD report and would mention it in his report to the Commission as to the Animal Control facility. Also, Lt. Radford did provide information in his report.

c. Report from Police Department Liaison. (Gillette)

Commissioner Gillette reported the Police Department statistics for the month ending April 30, 2024, as follows:

Police Activity	Total
Total Calls for Service	1263
Citations:	
Infractions	38
Juvenile Summons	2
Misdemeanor	12
Written Warning	281
Total Citations	333

Vice-Chair Stewart inquired if Commissioner Gillette would obtain year-end statistics for the Police Department; Commissioner Gillette agreed to get the data.

d. Report from Building Department Liaison. (Stewart)

2023-2024 Building Department Report												
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Permits Issued	123						93	86	92	116	85	
Pending Permits							80	89	103	92	123	
Inspections	147	149	80	125	126	103	96	117	109	116	114	

Active Blight	215							TBD	230	236	242	
Blight Abated To Date	519							TBD	519	524	526	

Vice-Chair Stewart read the Building Report statistics into the record and remarked that he hoped the reports will continue. Commissioner Baker inquired whether the report could be broken down by residential, commercial and industrial to know how things are going or headed.

11. Remarks from Fire Chiefs.

Vice-Chair Stewart requested that Commissioner Perkins contact the Fire Chiefs to get their input on ongoing matters.

12. Unfinished Business.

- a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve a Policy to systemize and retain firefighter data to observe trends and effectiveness.

Vice-Chair Stewart noted this Agenda item had already been addressed. Mayor Bunnell asked Commissioner Perkins to contact the Fire Chiefs to review information and get their input and/or suggestions. The Vice-Chair remarked that the aim was not to point fingers.

- b. Fire Companies Radio System Upgrades. *(Baker)*

Commissioner Baker remarked that he had nothing new to report other than what was said last month. He noted that Fire Chief Messer had mentioned funding. Mayor Bunnell reported that the Finance Director has an answer to one question that at least a portion of funds is available. Lt. Radford remarked that there is a way to integrate the fire dispatch system until the upgrade for it occurs.

13. New Business.

- a. Discussion of Line of Duty for Emergency Responders.

Firefighter Condon referred to CT Public Act No. 24-16, specifically Section B, concerning the authority to declare that a firefighter, police officer or emergency service personnel died in the line of duty. Section B refers to the death of uniformed paid or volunteer firefighter death caused by a cardiac event, stroke, or pulmonary embolism that occurs not later than 24 hours after such firefighter concluded a shift or training. The chief of the fire department shall have the authority to determine whether the firefighter died in the line of duty unless a local charter or ordinance in effect on October 1, 2024, provides authority to a different individual or entity to make the determination. The declaration by a chief will not be used as evidence for a workers' compensation claim under Chapter 568. This public act was approved in May 2024 and Firefighter Condon noted that career staff needs someone to declare for them as there is not a chief of agency given there are four (4) individual fire stations. It is also not the intent to have the Mayor make the declaration due to legality and workers' compensation concerns. Firefighter Condon requested that the Commission make recommendation to the Town Council to assume authorizing the position so that career staff get equal coverage under the public act. Mayor Bunnell asked

the Commission to recommend an ordinance if they see fit. Firefighter Condon noted the tight timeline and considerations such as legal review. Commissioner Baker asked the Mayor if it would be possible to draft the proposed ordinance before the next Commission meeting. Mayor Bunnell asked who is the fire official in charge whereby Firefighter Condon referenced Section B of the public act that underlines authority to the fire chief. The Mayor noted that Section B states chief not officer in charge. Commissioner Bauer asked whether one of the fire chiefs could be declared; the Mayor remarked that it is a legal matter. Firefighter Condon also referenced that there are four (4) fire station contracts and failure to resolve the issue will be a quagmire as to who declares for the career staff. The Mayor suggested a motion recommending that the Town Council authorizes an ordinance pertaining to Public Act 24-16, Section B to support career staff accordingly. Vice-Chair Stewart noted there is no distinction between the firefighters and the EMS; Firefighter Condon said the matter is limited to discussion of career staff. **Motion** by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to recommend that the Town Council authorizes an ordinance pertaining to career firefighters as identified in Public Act 24-16, Section B. Discussion: none. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor:* Commissioners Perkins, Stewart, Bauer, Gillette and Baker. *Opposed:* None. **Vote: 5-0-0. Motion approved.**

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

Firefighter Condon remarked on comments made by Commissioner Baker at a previous meeting concerning turnout gear specifications and confirmed per firefighter regulations that any questions/comments should be directed initially to the Commission, not to the Town Council.

15. Remarks from the Mayor.

Mayor Bunnell remarked that the four (4) fire companies are now using PSTrax software to document and record equipment checks that replaces the paper system. Currently, there are now five (5) applicants in a long list of others for Building Inspector Trainee. The position is entry level hired through the SCCOG. Training for the position will be for three (3) weeks in Town with the trainee working with a Building official. Once the trainee passes the State test for commercial properties, he or she will be an entry level Building Inspector III. Thereafter, the candidate will be able to work toward taking the residential property test. The position for Building Official is posted on Indeed and elsewhere that gives time for the trainee to build experience with commercial properties and others to keep he/she on once trained. Vice-Chair Stewart remarked that per its policy the Commission has historically been involved in public safety interviews. The Mayor remarked it would be problematic as the trainee is being hired by SCCOG and once the trainee completes training and passes the State test the Town is authorized to recommend three (3) candidates although there is only going to be one (1) per the signed contract with the SCCOG. The Vice-Chair noted that conducting interviews is part of Commission rules and procedures and asked whether a resolution needed to be approved. The Mayor conceded inclusion of the Commission to be a part of the trainee interview. Commissioner Baker clarified with Mayor Bunnell that SCCOG will hire the trainee and once the trainee passes the State test the Town will hire and pay the salary of the trainee. As to the Animal Control Facility, Mayor Bunnell declared that the water at the facility is not contaminated nor is it killing dogs. The sign posted there about the same has been removed.

The water is potable and has been sampled several times and although there is a high content of sodium in the water it is still within allowable limits. Previous bids for the Animal Control are under review by architects in consideration of CHRO and prevailing wage. Lastly, the Mayor authorized a change to the turnout gear that will match with similar colors and specifications.

16. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Sabilia was absent from the meeting.

17. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Baker thanked the Public Safety team for the jobs they do. Vice-Chair thanked all public safety responders and wished everyone a safe and happy July 4th holiday.

18. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0-0, all in favor. **Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

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