

Town of Montville
Town Council
Special Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2024 – 6:15 p.m.
Montville Town Hall, Town Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chairman May called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present were Councilors Jaskiewicz, Lathrop, May, Southard, and Yuchniuk. Absent were Councilors Caron and Sabilia. Also present was Mayor Leonard Bunnell, Sr.

4. Remarks from the public relating to matters on the agenda with a three-minute limit
Gary Murphy, 55-D Laurel Point Drive, Oakdale, spoke in favor of the Ordinance. As a former Fire Chief who has had to declare the death of a Firefighter in the Line of Duty, he stated that there are many organizations that will assist them with the process, which is not difficult but involves several steps. In addition to the Town, there are also State, Federal, and other benefits available for the families of a fallen Firefighter, EMT (Emergency Medical Technician), or Fire-Police to help ease the resulting financial burden.

Timothy Congdon, President, Montville Firefighters Union, thanked the Town Council for introducing the Ordinance and expressed his hopes that the legislators will continue to address issues related to Emergency Services. In response to Mr. Matthew Suarez's comments during the Public Hearing, he explained that the Public Act addresses the EMTs, Fire Police, and Police Departments.

5. New Business

- a. **THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to approve and adopt the ordinance titled "An Ordinance Regarding Authority to Declare Line of Duty Deaths of Firefighters" as heard at the Public Hearing held on Monday, September 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in Town Council Chambers at Montville Town Hall. (Councilor May)

Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Southard. Discussion: Councilor Jaskiewicz thanked Mr. Murphy for his comments and stated his support for the Ordinance. Discussion ensued regarding clarifying the Ordinance by defining the term "firefighters" to include Firefighters, EMTs, Paramedics, and Fire-Police. Councilor Jaskiewicz expressed his concerns regarding the legality of amending the Ordinance after being introduced to the public. Chairman May clarified that the Ordinance would remain as presented and the Resolution would be amended. The Councilors agreed that their understanding of the term "Firefighters" in the Ordinance includes Firefighters, EMTs, Paramedics, and Fire-Police and to waive the thirty (30) day waiting period before the Ordinance becomes effective. The Resolution was re-stated as follows:

Resolution #2024-85. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES to approve and adopt the ordinance titled "An Ordinance Regarding Authority to Declare Line of Duty Deaths of Firefighters" as heard at the Public Hearing held on Monday, September 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in Town Council Chambers at Montville Town Hall. "Firefighters" defined as EMT's, Paramedics and Fire Police.
(Councilor May)

Roll Call vote, 5-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilors Jaskiewicz, Lathrop, Southard, Yuchniuk, and May. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution adopted.

6. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute limit

Matthew Suarez, 18 Cranberry Drive, thanked the Town Council for adopting the Ordinance and amending the Resolution. He explained that he raised the issue of including those who work as an EMT or Fire-Police based on other Ordinances in the Town, including the Stipend Program, which included the positions.

Gary Murphy, 55-D Laurel Point Drive, Oakdale, stated the importance of having all of the Fire Companies become members of the Connecticut Firefighters Association, which provides additional financial benefits to the families of firefighters.

Timothy Congdon, President, Montville Firefighters Union, thanked the Councilors for passing the Resolution and adopting the Ordinance. He also stated his understanding of Councilor Jaskiewicz's comment and, as the Chairman of the Public Safety Commission in the Town of Waterford, they grappled with the same question and, under their Attorney's advisement, as long as an item is discussed in public and was modified based on the public's comments, there would be no issue. He also introduced the possibility of a career firefighter who volunteers for another town and is called to the town where he/she is employed through mutual aid.

Chairman May proposed requesting that the Public Safety Commission formerly and clearly define and include the EMT, Paramedics, and Fire-Police under the term "Firefighters". He also requested that the Commission address and comment on where the responsibility lies in cases where a firefighter serves as a volunteer after serving the Town as a career firefighter and in situations involving Mutual Aid. He also added that, traditionally, Ordinances are reviewed and vetted by the Town Administration/Rules & Procedures Standing Committee but due to the emergent timeframe, the Committee was bypassed.

7. Remarks from the Councilors and the Mayor – none

8. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Lathrop, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING CAN BE FOUND ON THE TOWN'S WEBSITE LOCATED UNDER RESOURCES – MEETING RECORDINGS