

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – September 18, 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 and Commissioners William Barlow, Jon Chase, John Plikus and Mary Hillman. Vice-Chair Matt Beaupre and Commissioners, Noah Carver, Morgan Matthewson, and Deborah Schober were absent.

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

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

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

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

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Barlow; seconded by Commissioner Plikus to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2024. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 5-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

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

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

7. Executive Session

a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of the discussion of documents containing attorney/client privileged communications provided in confidence and exempt from disclosure pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-200(6)(E) and 1-210 (b)(10) pertaining to legal advice to the Mayor regarding lease negotiations. Discussions to include members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, P & R Liaison Kate Southard, Town Attorney Mike Satti Mayor Bunnell.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Barlow to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of the discussion of documents containing attorney/client privileged communications provided in confidence and exempt from disclosure pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-200(6)(E) and 1-210 (b)(10) pertaining to legal advice to the Mayor regarding lease negotiations. Discussions to include members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, P & R Liaison Kate Southard, Town Attorney Mike Satti and Mayor Bunnell. ***The Commission entered Executive Session at 6:34 p.m. Chairperson Stone reported for the record the return from Executive Session at 7:23 p.m., with no votes taken.***

8. Recreation Director's Report September 2024.

Recreation Director Bushway reported on items from his September 2024 report as follows:

- The purchase order for the Desjardin playground equipment was signed by Mayor Bunnell prior to tonight's meeting. It will be sent out tomorrow morning and in 2-3 weeks will be physically here and installed. The bid specifications are done and the opening date for the bids is October 10, 2024 which the Finance Director sent to *The Day*. Chairperson Stone noted that the Commission was told last month that the Desjardin package was complete and would be sent; he expressed his frustration to Mayor Bunnell and noted that the project appears to be dragging on and the window of opportunity to contact asphalt plants will be closed by mid-November. Basketball baskets at will be replaced at Camp Oakdale but not at Desjardins Park.
- Two (2) signups for Trick-or-Trunk were received for the event on October 26 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. A week prior to the event, fundraising will occur for bags of candy at Stop & Shop. On that same night, Mohegan Fire Company will hold a Trick-or-Trunk at St. Bernard's which they have been doing for 3-4 years; they also have a trunk at the Parks and Recreation event.
- Pumpkin decorating will 50-60 kids will occur at Fair Oaks on Saturday, October 19 at 1 p.m. The event is free for residents.
- The Stryker Company wants to rent the large pavilion and the pickleball courts for an entire day as a company event. The hours are being narrowed down; Chairperson Stone remarked about getting effective times by posting on the apps.
- A call was received yesterday about some missing chips on pickleball courts that he will assess tomorrow.
- The lease for use of the gymnasium by the Bradley School was received that will be reviewed by the Mayor and the Town Attorney. Use is about 30 times per year on Tuesday or Thursday/.

9. Report from Finance.

Director Bushway reported that the finances are still looking good. He spoke with Public Works Director Carlson today who has \$3,500 to focus on the decorations for the front of the Town Hall, specifically new ornaments. Chairperson Stone reported there was discussion at the meeting about the condition of the American flags. It was also reported about a facility that forfeited its \$100 deposit; a note was written to them.

10. October Newsletter.

Chairperson Stone inquired about the software used to create the newsletter. Town Councilor Southard uses a software program called Canva, a great graphics program where Facebook posts, banners which she purchased and has 1 million templates; some she uses for the Farmers Market. The software cost is \$130 per year. The Chairperson remarked about having software tool to move things forward concerning the Department website; Commissioner Chase spoke of referring with the Town IT Department for help with its online presence and keeping the website fresh. Director Bushway reported about new floral arrangement classes noting that the pictures in the newsletter are simply examples and are not about the projects participants will be doing. Posting for these classes will be done at the Senior Center, in addition to a mass email with flyers and some left at the floral location. These events are well attended. Town Councilor Southard asked Director Bushway for full page add concerning the Farmers Market Holiday Market on November 16 at Tyl Middle School from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

11. Unfinished Business.

a. Discussion of projects and funding status:

1) Desjardins Park Basketball Court replacement

Chairperson Stone remarked that the Commission is aware of the status of this item.

2) Desjardins Park Playscape addition

Director Bushway reported that the purchase order for the Desjardins Park Playscape was signed and will be sent tomorrow morning and an estimated delivery time for the equipment is in 2-3 weeks.

3) Camp Oakdale Basketball Court replacement

Chairperson Stone reported that this item was discussed earlier.

4) Camp Oakdale Pavilion repairs

Chairperson Stone reported that the siding and trim at the Pavilion are almost done and white beadboard installed on the roof of the stage. Most of the electrical wiring work has been done but the outlets are not. The columns have been painted and the bathrooms will be painted the same color. The Chairperson reported he is in love with the field in the corner as the fence has been removed and it looks great.

b. Farmers Market update

Town Councilor Southard reported that the final Farmers Market for the summer season is Tuesday but a Holiday Market will be held at Tyl Middle School on November 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

c. Carnival Committee Update

Chairperson Stone reported that a firm contract for the 2025 Carnival had not yet been received from the vendor.

d. Job Description Committee

1) Carver, Chase, Hillman, Stone

Chairperson Stone remarked that this line item has not yet been initiated.

d. Website Improvement

Chairperson Stone remarked that Mayor Bunnell had asked him to speak with IT Director O'Neill to move the process along for improvements to the Department website.

12. New Business.

a. Discussion of development of a Parks Master Plan.

Chairperson Stone remarked that the facilities spreadsheet was a result of the walkarounds by the Commission but the idea of a Parks Master Plan was originated by Commissioner Plikus. The Chairperson proposed sending the spreadsheet around so the Commissioners can prioritize items on it and to tally votes on what the Commission feels should be done. He also reported having spoken with Public Works employees Matt and Tom noting his belief that the list was shared with them by Mayor Bunnell and the employees wish to be involved. Commissioner Chase reported that the stumbling block would be the issue of comp time and the position of the former finance director. Chairperson Stone noted that Public Works Director Carlson has attended prior Commission meetings and spoke of hiring professional help to create a plan from a rough plans and to bring projects to fruition, i.e. identifying trails, handicap trail and plans for Schofield Park. Commissioner Chase remarked that time was spent at times and recently about a master plan for the pavilion area and not just fields to implement in stages but does think moving forward with a specific plan versus an overall plan would help with progress. A master plan would cost money, take time and is past the budget process according to Chairperson Stone who also noted that the focus has been mainly upon maintenance. Commissioner Chase also noted that the central park area surrounding the pavilion needs work and that the decisions in the past may have been short-term making it difficult to move forward as to the way things should proceed. Commissioner Plikus remarked that a lot of money has been invested and an end goal should be made. Chairperson Stone send out the spreadsheet for prioritization purposes and this agenda item will be placed under Unfinished Business.

b. Discussion of rental rates for Pickleball Courts.

Chairperson Stone reported that this line item was brought up by Director Bushway regarding the Stryker Company for their rental of the large pavilion and pickleball courts on October 5th for a company event. Director Bushway reported the company has no office in Town and that pickleball courts are generally in use from 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. He noted that pricing for rentals has not changed in 14 years and should be brought in line with that of the high school. Currently, the Stryker Company charges \$25 for two (2) hours a game. The Chairperson remarked that the rental rates should be higher as Director Bushway feels that should be charging more Per an internet search, Commissioner Plikus reported the rate should be \$145 to break even with costs in 2010. Commissioner Chase remarked whether the pricing structure take into account residents for family reunions and a distinction between residents and nonresidents. Director Bushway reported he would be attending a meeting in the area with other area Parks & Recreation departments and he will ask the question posed by Commissioner Chase, but said we want people to use the facility but not price them out. Chairperson Stone noted the pickleball courts should be kept open in the mornings, 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. and the Stryker Company could then rent it from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Commissioner Chase questioned whether there are circumstances where organizations rent a facility and then charge participants; Chairperson Stone reported that there were three (3)

occasions when attempts were made to rent the courts, all school-based, but they fell through and no policy exists. Commissioner Plikus suggested contacting other towns about their charge for similar venues; Director Bushway reported he floated a price of \$350 and there was no pushback about that cost.

13. Communications.

Chairperson Stone reported on a call received from the mother of a girl scout for a handicap swing at Fair Oaks. He also shared that there is a list of scout projects in general.

14. Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit).

Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. Mayor Bunnell was given the opportunity to speak having not been in the chambers. He proposed the development of a plan or goal for different uses and upgrades for the Recreation facilities and suggested the development of a RFP to determine costs that would be forwarded to the Finance Director. The Mayor noted that discussion regarding Camp Oakdale has been piecemealed for years about changes and remodels. He also mentioned that other Town Departments have line items for consulting fees and responded to Director Bushway that it was not something that CLA will do.

15. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Southard.

Town Councilor Southard remarked that the Town Council approved the composition of the Community Center Building Committee and a member from the Commission has been asked to be on it. She asked that this item be added to next month's agenda. At the Public Works meeting, she will report on the condition of the American flags and having employees Matt and Tom be a part of the process. Chairperson Stone will try to attend that meeting. The Town Councilor also reported that Mayor Bunnell just handed her the lease for use of the Parks & Recreation gymnasium by the Bradley School. One change was made concerning the timeframe, 8:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday and/or Thursday.

16. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway.

Director Bushway reported on receiving a call from Public Works Director Carlson about a meeting on Friday morning, September 20 to determine the best location for Parks maintenance building at Camp Oakdale. The best location was deemed to be to the side or behind the soccer shed between Field 1 or Field 2. The size of the maintenance building is not known yet but will be larger. The current shed will be used for storage; some maintenance vehicles are being parked outside. Chairperson Stone remarked that the building will be longer and narrower than originally planned. Comments have been made by Town Councilor Southard and Town Councilor Caron about the fact that the building is not done yet.

17. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Chase remarked that he appreciated the comments by Mayor Bunnell regarding a direction for Camp Oakdale.

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18. Adjournment.

Motion by Chairperson Stone: seconded by Commissioner Barlow to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 5-0-0, 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.**