

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Special Meeting – October 9, 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 6:32 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 (6:40 p.m.), John Plikus, Mary Hillman and Deborah Schober. Vice-Chair Matt Beaupre and Commissioners Noah Carver and Morgan Matthewson were absent.

Also present were Director Peter Bushway, Town Council Liaison Kate Southard and Mayor Lenny Bunnell (6:42 p.m.).

4. Proposal from Bill Mikuliewicz, Disc Golf Baskets

Bill Mikuliewicz, who was a former golfer, made a presentation to the Commission about putting disc golf baskets behind the tennis/pickleball courts, an unused area that has lights. There would be three (3) baskets in green and a semipermanent pole with cement. He stated that this was a donation at no cost to the Town as he does not get paid for it. Liability is also not an issue as he installs the baskets at 32-33 inches in height. Disc golf also known as disc frisbee would allow kids to play year round. The Commission will consider and make a decision on this matter.

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 September 18, 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Barlow; seconded by Commissioner Plikus to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2024. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 5-0-1, Commissioner Chase abstained. 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. **Recreation Director's Report October 2024.**

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

- The bid opening for the two (2) basketball courts at Camp Oakdale is tomorrow October 10. A call came in today from the company that did the tennis and pickleball courts; it is willing to lower its cost although their offer was \$50,000 over budget. The company also did not submit a bid per Chairperson Stone.
- The picnic tables are being painted at Camp Oakdale in addition to the bathrooms and doors. The inside of the roof has been power washed and stained. The concrete will then be power washed and the lighting completed.
- The bid opening for the Desjardins Park project is October 15, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the office of the Finance Director and the public is welcome.
- On Saturday, October 19 from 8 a.m. – 12 noon candy donations will be accepted at Stop & Shop followed by pumpkin decorating at 1 p.m. at Fair Oaks.
- There are currently 22 trunks participating in Trick or Trunk with political, fire and police signups on October 26th.

Chairperson Stone requested that CLA updates its maps to include the Mostowy Property as there is no information on the Town website. Since the survey is complete, it is easy to do a map with preferred means of entrance, per Commissioner Chase. The Chairperson also noted that the kiosks are now in place and would be a good place for trail maps.

8. **Report from Finance.**

Director Bushway reported that there are no surprises regarding the financials as it is still early in the fiscal year. He is also working with the Treasurer regarding clarity of the Special Revenue Fund. Chairperson Stone reported on the \$25,000 in ARPA funds regarding plans for the Community Center and also noted that if there are open items there is a deadline coming up for use of those funds.

9. **November Newsletter.**

Recreation Director Bushway remarked on the Holiday Memorial Tree that will occur after the Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony on December 8th that will be included in the newsletter and sent via mass email. Only seven (7) individuals signed up for the wicker basket with fall flowers class on October 22 and there was one (1) signup for the floral orchid class on November 12. There are ten (10) signups for the floral centerpiece class on December 10; the wreathmaking class is on December 3rd. Town Counselor Southard noted there is a wreath next to the centerpiece class and a centerpiece next to the wreath class descriptions in the newsletter. The Holiday (Farmers) Market will be held on Saturday, November 16 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Tyl Middle School. The Director also reported that the high school will use four (4) days for basketball and volleyball at Tyl on a Monday (basketball) and Wednesday (volleyball) for two (2) weeks. Also noted was the start of dance classes that Chairperson Stone remarked should be promoted as well as other programs. Commissioner Hillman remarked that it should be a standard that we include all

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programs in the newsletter regardless of the number of persons who sign up; Commissioner Plikus agreed.

10. Unfinished Business.

a. Discussion of projects and funding status:

1) Desjardins Park Basketball Court replacement

Chairperson Stone remarked that the Commission is waiting on the bids.

2) Desjardins Park Playscape addition

Director Bushway reported that the playscape should be shipped any day now and the company will ship them by trucks and unload it at the address.

3) Camp Oakdale Basketball Court replacement

Chairperson Stone reported that this item was discussed earlier.

4) Camp Oakdale Pavilion repairs

Chairperson Stone reported that this item was discussed and remarked that once the electrical work is completed most of the work will be complete. The parking lot still needs work, and it was discussed that nails and tacks on the tables will no longer be allowed. Mayor Bunnell remarked that it took four (4) hours to remove them. A policy was discussed and Director Bushway agreed to provide materials for balloons etc., but the Commission discussed damages, pre and post inspections for which someone would be paid to complete, and/or pictures sent by contracted individuals. Damages and replacement of property would be included in the rental contract.

b. Job Description Committee

1) Carver, Chase, Hillman, Stone

Chairperson Stone remarked that this line item will be started soon.

c. Website Improvement

Chairperson Stone remarked that website improvement is an ongoing effort.

d. Parks Master Plan

At the last meeting, Chairperson Stone mentioned committing all ideas to paper and sending a status list of the walkarounds to the Commission for review and consideration. Commissioner Chase spoke of discussion at the last meeting concerning a broad review of plans and an interest in the Camp Oakdale park center. He referenced the comment by Mayor Bunnell last month regarding an architectural plan for the same in addition to a continued plan for beautification, not on a piecemeal basis but obtained with an RFP. Chairperson Stone remarked that an architect will not know the intent of the Commission nor identify items for a master plan. Commissioner Barlow suggested getting ideas from an architect as to the design and thereafter proceed as the Chairperson proposed. Commissioner Plikus suggested preparing a conceptual drawing of a goal of what the Commission wants and also referenced the planting of trees in appropriate areas, so they do not have to be moved in the future if in the wrong spot according to Commissioner Chase. Chairperson Stone noted that the intent of the walkarounds was for that purpose. The Commission discussed at length design of a public space; having an architectural plan as a guideline to bid on the plan; and the need for someone to create what the Commission wants identifying particular areas. It was noted that the only items remaining for architectural completion are improvements to the parking lot and landscaping of Camp Oakdale with a focus on the natural landscape and any additional work to improve the center area of the park (*Chase*). Choosing and prioritizing is not optimal as improvements are needed in other Park areas for which there are no funds (*Stone*).

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The cost for plans for each individualized area will be greater overall and there are items in the CIP that have not been touched, i.e. the splash pad (*Stone*). It was noted that a plan was needed for each area to prioritize those that need the most work and an engagement with an architect to determine the location of items with plans in process for the top three (3) (*Chase*). It was also noted that the Commission has the ability to prioritize and put items in order, however there was a plan for a building discussed 2-3 years ago that still has not been built in addition to plans for a handicap walking track around a part of Field 7 that has been on the CIP for some time (*Stone*). Communication with the Town Council on the matter was suggested. It was proposed to get ideas to an architect right now concerning the Pavilion area (*Barlow*) and making plans for when funds are available (*Chase*). Per his opinion, Mayor Bunnell remarked that there are multiple parks in Town, but attention is focused on the Camp Oakdale Large Pavilion. He referenced projects that were worked on and achieved, i.e. tennis courts, dog park, pickleball, volleyball court, the restroom facilities and the refurbished Large Pavilion. The Mayor asked, “What is missing?” and asked what is there for the Commission to complete—he stated it is the need for a motion to recommend that an RFP be submitted for a consultant/architect to create a conceptual drawing to include parking and to provide enhancement with scenery or for whatever is needed. The biggest issue is the lack of parking. Mayor Bunnell reported that years ago the Army Corp of Engineers was going to take on the parking concern at the present location of the Dog Park and had ideas to realign Simpson Lane, but the plan got dropped. He reiterated submitting a plan and a motion for an RFP for ideas and what they will cost. Architects work with clients to develop a design plan according to Commissioner Chase who proposed the following motion: **Motion** by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Plikus that the Commission proceed upon a reasonable time frame to work to the issuance of an RFP for design or any architectural proposal services in connection with Camp Oakdale Pavilion, tennis courts and park center area. Discussion: Commissioner Chase noted that the Commission asked Mayor Bunnell about a path to move forward and noted he is familiar with municipal process, how the Town Hall works, is familiar with the bid process and suggested this way to move forward with hope that the Mayor will work with the Commission to make things happen. Chairperson Stone expressed his reluctance given the motion does not address improved parking and traffic at the Camp Oakdale area. He deemed the motion generic and spoke of realigning intersections so that they line up and the parking area is improved. Commissioner Barlow remarked that the Commission can meet with an architect and get professional information and feedback as to how to develop the steps needed and to work with Public Works to create a master plan thus the motion should be about improvement. Commissioner Plikus added that the motion should be as generic as possible. **Motion withdrawn** by Commissioner Chase for an alternative motion. **Motion** by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Barlow that the Commission proceeds to consult with Town officials, included but not limited to the Mayor and Public Works Director to work towards the issuance of a RFP for park improvement to encompass Camp Oakdale Pavilion, Dog Park, tennis/pickleball courts and associated park center areas and to issue said RFP park proposals within a reasonable time frame from its advertisement. Discussion: Commissioner Chase asked who issues the RFP. Mayor Bunnell responded that the Finance Director issues the RFP and that the Commission asks Finance to send out the RFP which should be in the form of a motion. Furthermore, the costs are targeted in next year’s budget through CIP and someone From the Commission will submit a proposal for the same. Chairperson Stone spoke with CLA

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regarding the cost for the bid package, \$5,000 - \$10,000 and remarked that the motion was fine as it is. He will also ask Town Councilor Southard to put this item on the Town Council agenda and make contact with the Finance Director. The Chair responded to the Mayor that his reason for the cost issue is that architects will not come out without having funds upfront. Commissioner Chase remarked that the poll initiated by the Chair regarding a sense of priority of items should proceed since it is a good idea. Commissioner Barlow concurred with moving forward with a prioritized list noting that Camp Oakdale will be the primary issue addressed. **Voice vote: 6-0-0; all in favor. Motion carried.**

11. Communications. -- None

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

Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. Mayor Bunnell remarked as to the motion for the RRP per Item 10d. noting that however the motion is worded the intent is to move forward with the items identified i.e., landscaping and parking. The architect will make the decision as to where the landscaping should go and acquire the cost for the same. The Mayor was pleased with the removal of the hill so that everyone could see the beauty of the area and proposed that the ideas discussed be placed on the CIP for funding once the design is determined. As to ARPA funds, Mayor Bunnell remarked that they have been questionably handled and it is unknown as the funds remaining and where it is but said it would cease. He also reported that the plans for the tool shed for Public Works went to Public Works Director Carlson. Specifications for bids per DECD requirements for the Animal Control Facility will be received by mid-November. Mayor Bunnell made the point to let's get things done.

13. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Southard.

Town Councilor Southard remarked that the Town Council is trying to determine the status of the ARPA funds. A meeting was held but there is no answer yet. The Commission discussion will brought to the Town Council at its next meeting and Town Councilor Southard will meet with the Chairperson May.

14. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway. -- None

15. Remarks from Commissioners.

Director Bushway responded to questions of the Commission concerning feedback from area towns regarding rental fees. Commissioner Schober suggested that costs versus activities should be considered toward raising fees particularly for nonresidents for discussion at the next meeting. The Director did receive information back from four (4) towns whose fees were lower and/or higher than those charged by the Department. One town has a pavilion, and fees are based on hours from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. – 10 p.m. or for a full day. These fees generate funds for repairs; the Department funds go into the General Fund.

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16. **Adjournment.**

Motion by Commissioner Barlow; seconded by Commissioner Plikus to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 6-0-0, 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.**