

Town of Montville
Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2024, 6:00 PM
Room 102 – Town Hall

- 1) Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 6 p.m. by Vice Chair Jessica LeClair.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Roll Call – Vice Chair Jessica LeClair, Commissioner Adam Heckle, Commissioner Bonnie Bacon, and Alternate Commissioner Elaine Hess were present. Vice Chair LeClair asked for a motion to have Alternate Commissioner Hess stand in as a voting member for absent Commissioner (Chair) Guetens. Commissioner Bacon made the motion. Commissioner Heckle seconded. Motion was unanimously passed.
- 4) Presentations -none
- 5) Comments from the Public on Agenda Items -none
- 6) Approval of Special Meeting Minutes from November 12 and November 17, 2024 – Commissioners reviewed the minutes, then Vice Chair LeClair asked for a motion to approve. Commissioner Hess motioned for approval of the minutes from November 12, 2024. Commissioner Heckle seconded. Motion was unanimously passed. Commissioner Hess motioned for approval of the minutes from November 17, 2024. Commissioner Heckle seconded. Motion was unanimously passed.
- 7) Communications -none
- 8) Old Business Agenda
 - a) Conservation Center
 - i. Discuss proposal for a shed located near Conservation Center – Commissioner Heckle described the need for a shed, possibly located near the Conservation Center and Fair Oaks school, in which to keep Conservation Commission and Garden Club tools and materials. Use of an alternative shed at the Senior Center is not feasible due to the poor condition of that shed.
 - ii. Remaining ARPA funds/use – Commissioner Heckle proposed using some of the remaining funds for construction of a shed, estimated at approximately \$1000. Commissioner Hess priced out a De Walt electric string trimmer with battery charger and extra string for trail maintenance at the Conservation Center, estimated at approximately \$485. Vice Chair LeClair requested a motion to approve funding. Commissioner Hess made a motion to approve funding for the string trimmer and the shed construction materials for costs up to the remaining ARPA funds, approximately \$2300. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Heckle. The motion passed

unanimously. Commissioners Hess and Heckle will work with Chair Guetens to move the purchases forward before December 31, 2024, which is the date of expiration of ARPA funding.

9) New Business Agenda

- a) Approval of Meeting Calendar for 2025 – Commissioner Bacon (as Secretary) noted that all dates are the first Tuesday of the month, including November 4, which is election day. Vice Chair LeClair stated that the calendar looks fine, and if the Commission later needs to cancel a meeting and arrange a special meeting, that can be done as needed. Vice Chair LeClair called for a motion to approve. Commissioner Bacon motioned for approval of the Meeting Dates below. Commissioner Hess seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING DATES 2025

Tuesdays at 6:00 pm – Room 102
Montville Town Hall

January 7, 2025
February 4, 2025
March 4, 2025
April 1, 2025
May 6, 2025
June 3, 2025
July 1, 2025
August 5, 2025
September 2, 2025
October 7, 2025
November 4, 2025
December 2, 2025
January 6, 2025

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month.
Commissioner

- b) Discussion of 2024 report draft - Commissioner Bacon provided a draft report covering work done at the Conservation Center, Trail Day activities, the Farmers Market booth, participation in trail walks, participation in social media and websites, updating the open space index, and the Garden Club. She recommended that Commissioners send additional suggestions to her via email so that a final version can be approved at the Jan 7 2025 meeting.
- c) Discussion of Bond Property walk and next steps -Vice Chair LeClair stated that the Mayor asked the Conservation Commission to “get the word out” regarding the Bond Property acquisition efforts. Many residents in Montville currently are not aware that Avalonia has requested funds from the host town of Montville, in addition to substantial grants which they have received from the state and other entities, to complete the purchase of the 669 acre Bond property in Montville. This would be the largest conservation area created by Avalonia. The Commissioners had the opportunity to tour the property on Nov 17 to see the ponds, fields, hills, woodland streams, and buildings

(envisioned as possibly an education center) within the property, all currently accessible by roads. Commissioner Heckle noted that the property could be widely used by Montville residents for recreation, children's summer camp trips and education, and suggested Montville residents-only days once the conservation area is open to the public. Commissioner Hess suggested inviting Avalonia to the January meeting to brainstorm ideas on how to get information out to Montville residents, including drone videos and perhaps offer tours. Commissioner Hess is also looking into Aarp.org community challenge grants.

- 10) Comments from the Public – Catherine Hinojosa, who is up for appointment to the Conservation Commission at the December 18 Town Council meeting, said she is interested in designing brochure materials, and also suggested that the Commission should develop a plan to participate in the Town of Montville parades (Memorial Day parade and December Holiday parade). Reporter Dan Drainville of The Day is interested in doing an article on the Bond Property acquisition by Avalonia with support from Montville. There was discussion of using a letter to the editor or op-ed to get more information out to the public.
- 11) Comments from Town Council Liaison -none (not present)
- 12) Comments from Commissioners – Vice Chair LeClair proposed discussion of Trails Day, 2025, as an agenda item for the January meeting, because of the advanced preparation needed. It was suggested that trail information for trails in Montville, for instance as presented in Chair Guetens's pamphlet, be added to the town website.
- 13) Adjourn – Vice Chair LeClair called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bacon motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Hess seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.