

Town of Montville Finance Committee

Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

Council Chambers

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Chairperson May called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. In Attendance: Chairperson Tim May, Councilor Joe Jaskiewicz, Councilor Billy Caron; Also present Chief Bill Blanchette, Lt. Dave Radford, Finance Director Barbara Griffin, Treasurer Patrick Wall and Mayor Leonard Bunnell, Sr.

4. Remarks from the Public relating to matters on the agenda with a three-minute limit: None

5. Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz seconded by Chairman May to approve the minutes from the October 29, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes. Discussion: None. All in favor.

6. No alterations to the agenda (standard for Special Meetings)

7. Discussion and Remarks of current Year-to-Date Budget Report as follows:

Overspent statuses;

1. **10340 – 52046** Legal Services, Labor – \$891.00 Treasurer Wall is working on this
2. **10330 – 53014** balance of \$3,709.49 - Chairperson May confirmed with Mayor Bunnell that there is enough for one more booklet, totaling 3 per year.
3. **10410 – 51100** Treasurer Wall said preapproved OT by the Mayor for the Assessor's Office to work on the Grant List was overspent by \$334.85; Finance will be transferring money out of the Tax Refund surplus to cover it and he sees no issues moving forward; Chairperson May commented that supplements may need to be made due to personnel changes throughout the year however, Treasurer Wall doesn't predict anything to the extreme. Chairperson May stated that we didn't have a Tax Collector at the time so there is money in that salary line item that has not been spent. Finance Director commented that the Tax Collector who is filling in, is almost working full time and is being paid slightly higher than what our Tax Collector pay would be paid at an hourly rate, so it wouldn't be a straight savings; Chairperson May said he was just trying to clarify a range; Finance Director added, until we get a Tax Collector hired, after the holidays, the Tax Collector who is filling in now would like to reduce her hours once the new Assistant Tax Collector starts in December. Chairperson May said to work out the details and asked for an update next meeting. Joe Jaskiewicz asked if the Finance Director will square away the line-item overages by the next meeting. Chairperson May said that there will be inter-departmental transfers. Chairperson May would like to see an update once it's worked out.
4. **10425 – 52024** General Fund, Other Insurance -\$69,869.80 Treasurer Wall mentioned these were increases to the insurance rates and were much higher than anticipated; Chairperson May asked if the plan for this is this contingency or from another source; Finance Director noted taking care of the negative balances; Chairperson May made a recommendation to send to Town Council that we take \$69,869.80 from contingency; Councilor Jaskiewicz made the

motion to move to Town Council for the resolution -all in favor.

5. **10450 – 52111** Debt Principal, 2017 Leasing Purchase -amortization schedule error made by the previous Treasurer. Treasurer Wall recommends taking amounts from contingency.
6. **10460 – 52111** Debt Interest, 2017 Lease Purchase -\$812.32; Treasurer recommends resolving this with contingency as well; Jaskiewicz motioned to send items #4, 5 and 6 to Town Council all in favor.
7. **10720 – 51100** Social Services OT over budget by \$2.87; Treasurer Wall doesn't recommend any action from Finance Committee but he has spoken with Social Services Director Kathie Doherty-Peck and she is aware of the need for interdepartmental transfers.
8. **10880 – 51100** Fire Protection OT overspent by forty-thousand due to scheduling; Chairperson May made a recommendation to resolve at some point; new FF has made a difference to the OT; second FF hire will further plateau the OT; Treasurer Wall recommends making the adjustment sometime in Quarter 3 after the new year.
9. **10890 – 52011** Safety Building-Building Maintenance budgeted at \$8,000 and currently over budget by \$720; this Maintenance budget covers the town but price increases were higher than expected which included dumpster hauling, pest control, water cooler rentals, and delivery fees. Water bill in the new year will be increasing by \$4 per jug, rental fees and delivery fees will increase; primary driver of increased costs are dumpster fees; Lieutenant Radford recalls the Public Works Director saying they'd save about \$200 per month by removing it; right now \$5,387 is encumbered (reserved); Treasurer Wall is hopeful that this will carry us out through the whole year but not confident due to price increases after January; Chairperson May suggested taking it from another line item to make an adjustment. Reassess in January 2025.

Chairperson May would like to be alerted to any underspent accounts. Councilor Jaskiewicz and Chairperson May will begin to review the budget topic early to plan for future adjustments.

8. Comments/Discussion from Chairman and Councilors:

- Chairperson May made a motion to send to Town Council the Special Duty Administrative Fees which he refers to as Private Duty
- Chief Blanchette commented that the Private Duty cost has to be adjusted. The Town of Montville charges the contractors \$79.05 per hour; it's \$20 per hour for the vehicle and then a 10% administrative fee which totals \$108.95 per hour. Compared to Ledyard Police- A Police Officer with a cruiser is \$129.48 and the City of New London charges a 30% Admin Fee and they also charge \$75 per hour for the cruiser so their hourly rate is \$205 which effects some of the contractors who hire police officers. Chief Blanchette suggests that we can adjust the admin fees and potentially allow the town to recoup some of their money. Chief Blanchette suggests increasing the price of the cruiser to at least \$20 an hour to \$40 an hour. Chairperson May mentioned possibly even \$50.
- Chairperson May would like to send to TARP certain town roads that meet the state road requirement such as heavily traveled roads like Raymond Hill Rd., Fitch Hill Rd., Old Colchester Rd. which could make for a safer environment especially for night time road work. Chairperson May said that the town road requirement is not a given -that we have a police vehicle on the road right now; Lt. Radford said it is not a given, however, they do call to say where they are working and we will mandate them on town roads, depending on where they are working and what they are doing. Every case is looked at individually and any crew not following the rules gets shut down.

Back to New London's rates: Chief Blanchette stated that \$75 an hour is expensive, we are putting that price onto the contractors and he is for the cops having the work and the town making a little bit of money but now the price of all these jobs are going to have to be rebid so eventually it's coming back to us anyway. Chairperson May motioned to revisit after Chief Blanchette sees Finance; Chief Blanchette is going to provide something for the Town Council to

vote on next week; Chair May made a motion to send to the Town Council a revision to the Special Duty Administration Fees and made a recommendation to TARP that they start looking at high traveled roads.

Councilor Caron, also in agreement with Chief and Lieutenant, but the pending contract will hopefully be agreed upon soon and will probably have an increase. By the time the Town Council gets it at the next council meeting we can probably make the decision to increase the Administrative Fee. Inflation is prevalent and time is very valuable. Chief Blanchette is willing to go to \$40 or \$50 in agreement with this as long as our officers are protected, too.

Chief Blanchette commented bringing it to Town Council to make the decision.

Chairperson May will recommend to TARP.

Lt. Radford stressed that the wording 'First Right of Refusal' be in the language and Chairperson May agreed with that idea.

9. Comments/Discussion of Police New Tasers for next year's budget:

Chief Blanchette said it's a five-year plan; current tasers are little over ten years old and are being phased out- no longer under warranty and no longer provide service or parts for them, several are broken right now; two models available -Taser 7 and Taser 10; smart choice moneywise in the long run is Taser 10, it's been out for about a year and will bring us where we need to be for at least the next ten years; guaranteed to have a service contract, parts & everything we are going to need; after the five-year commitment it will be cheaper to operate than with the Taser 7; coming fiscal year 25-26 we pay \$29,000 fiscal year 26-27 we pay another \$29,000 all the way to the five years, similar to a lease program; Taser National has agreed to take that next payment next July; just looking for a commitment that the Town is going to move in the direction of signing on with Taser National next July.

Lt. Radford commented that Taser could take less the first year and the remainder can be stretched over the remaining years.

Chairperson May said this will have to be put on capital for sure; no vote but in the record that all have agreed.

Chief Blanchette will let Chairperson May know when they have the numbers to proceed.

10. Chairperson May made a motion to approve the Finance Committee Meeting dates for 2025; Councilor Jaskiewicz read them off: 1/28/2025, 2/25/2025, 3/25/2025, 4/29/2025, 5/27/2025, 6/24/2025, 7/29/2025, 8/26/2025, 9/30/2025, 10/28/2025, 11/25/2025, and 12/30/2025, meetings start at 6:00p.m. All in favor.

11. Chairperson May motioned to recommend to the Town Council to moving thirty thousand dollars from the General Fund balance to cover legal fee overages for line item 10340 – 52046 Legal Services; for unexpected legal issues and robust union negotiations that drove this cost up. All in favor.

12. Public Remarks 3-minute limit: None

13. Remarks from the Councilors: Councilor Jaskiewicz welcomed back Barbara Griffin.

14. Meeting adjourned: 7:00 p.m.

Cindy J. Breton, Executive Assistant to Mayor Leonard G. Bunnell, Sr.