

Town of Montville
Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2025, 6:00 PM
Room 102 – Town Hall

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerk at townclerk@montville-ct.org at least **1 working day in advance. Written comments may not be read in their entirety, but rather similar messages may be aggregated or paraphrased for submission to the Mayor, Council, Board or Commission.**

- 1) Call to Order -6:00 p.m.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Roll Call- Chair John Guetens, Commissioners Jessica LeClair, Adam Heckle, Catherine Hinojosa, Alternate Commissioner Elaine Hess were present. Town Council Liaison Nick Sabilia, Mayor Leonard Bunnell Sr., and Town Council Chair Tim May were present. Nick Gauthier, State Representative, was also present
- 4) Presentations -none
- 5) Comments from the Public on Agenda Items - Nick Gauthier, State Representative, shared some general themes that he heard following the meeting on the Bond property at the Senior Citizen Center on February 25th: Cost to the town, concern over town not having control over property, the role of Avalonia. He suggested that the Bond property video shown at this meeting would be an effective way to share a better understanding of the benefits of the property and clear up some of the misconceptions the public might have about the property. He also encouraged more one-to-one contact and more media exposure to get the word out. Linda T, a member of the public, suggested more informational meetings about the Bond property and shared concern that it seems like a last minute effort. Town Council Chair, Tim May, stated that the Bond property has been discussed with the town since 2022, but the June 2025 deadline was recently presented by Avalonia as necessary to prevent the loss of major grant funding the organization received toward the purchase.
- 6) Approval of Meeting Minutes from Feb 4, 2025- Commissioner LeClair motioned to approve, Commissioner Hinojosa seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.
- 7) Communications- A postcard advertising a conference at Connecticut College, called “Branching Out Together” was shared.

8) Old Business Agenda

- a. Bond Property update- the discussion focused on the dates for the upcoming informational meetings, walk throughs, and mailer distribution.
 - Town Council Presentation-March 10th 7:00 p.m.
 - Commissioner Hinojosa stated that a walk through with the Girl Scouts is scheduled for Saturday, March 15th. Combining this with a public walk through was discussed.
 - Public Informational Meetings -Chair Guetens will confirm dates with Avalonia for possibly March 19th or 20th and look into possible locations.
 - Public Hearing-April 7th (~~Montville High School Town Hall~~ Town Hall, evening)
 - Vote- April 9th (Montville High School, evening)
 - Commissioner LeClair suggested a Zoom informational meeting. Chair Guetens will check with Avalonia for possible dates and logistics.
 - The distribution of the informational mailer -TBD
 - Chair Guetens said he is still working on the signs.
- b. Montville Trails System Brochure review- Commissioner Hinojosa said it would be ready for Trails Day, June 7th.
- c. Connecticut Trails Day- June 7th and 8th. More discussion on our plan is needed before we post to the Ct. Trails Day website.
- d. Conservation Center Update. Commissioner Heckle will check out trails at both the center and Horton trail. The following suggestions were made: organize a volunteer work day, consider planning to create a walkover for the beaver pond, and place a bench near the Fair Oaks entrance to the Conservation center.
- e. Garden Club- Commissioner Hinojosa and Commissioner Heckle said they have been working at the Veterans Memorial site cleaning up the area. They are planning a volunteer day- TBD

9) New Business Agenda -none

10) Comments from the Public - Get the word out about the Bond Property

11) Comments from Town Council Liaison - We need to focus on our timeline on the Bond Property

12) Comments from Commissioners - We need to contact more groups to get them involved in the informational meetings and walk through. Suggestions included the Rotary, Lions/Leos, School PTO's.

13) Adjourn -7:15 p.m.