

AMENDED  
(July 12, 2010)

**Town of Montville Town Council  
Special Meeting Minutes for May 26, 2010  
6:00 PM – Town Hall – Council Chambers**

1. Call to Order – Chairperson Jacobson called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call – Present were Councilors Beetham, Buebendorf, Caron, Hillman, Jacobson, McFee and Murphy. Also present were Mayor Jaskiewicz and Finance Director Terry Fafard.
4. Executive Session – None.

Chairperson Jacobson addressed the Council and the members of the public and asked that all remain respectful and constructive in their remarks, and that no one make any personal comments towards Council members, the Mayor or Town of Montville department heads.

5. Remarks from the Public

*Mr. Thomas Sanders, Assistant Planner, President of the MAME Union*, suggested that the Council postpone this discussion until they have a better handle on the deficit in the current year's budget. He stated that the Board of Education should not be exempt from budget cuts, and that all departments in the Town should work together to find a solution. Mr. Sanders stated that the union he represents, as well as the other unions within the Town, are willing to work with the Town Council and the Mayor to resolve these budgets issues.

*Lt. Leonard Bunnell* stated that he respects the Council for the difficult job that they will have in making tough decisions for the benefit of the Town. The police department currently consists of 23 officers, and he has requested over the past three years for an additional officer to be hired; the department needs 3 officers per shift to run efficiently. Lt. Bunnell stated that he understands the dire times we are in and can continue to make it work with what they have, but cannot afford to have fewer officers on the force. If the Council implements a hiring freeze, the department is in jeopardy of losing two officers; one that is in the academy now and one that is scheduled to attend in August. This may also affect the department's eligibility for future grants.

*Mr. David Jensen, Assistant Deputy Building Official, Union Steward for Teamster Local 493*, stated that the Town employs very hard-working and dedicated people that have served the Town for many years and want to continue doing so. Mr. Jensen stated that all of the unions would be happy to work with the Mayor and the Council on this matter, and noted that no one from his union has been contacted up to this point to discuss this matter.

*Mr. John Leonard, Vice President of the DPW Union*, stated that he has lived in Montville for 35 years. He asked that the Council please consider not having meetings at 4 PM, as was the case at Monday night's special meeting, as people that work are unable to attend such an early meeting. Mr. Leonard stated that no one from the DPW union has been contacted to discuss concessions or the budget in general. He also agrees with Mr. Sanders that all departments within the Town should work together that the Board of Education should not be excluded from participating in these discussions and possible concessions.

*Mr. Russell Weiner, Public Safety Commission member*, stated that the foundation of a community is in its public safety, explaining that if you want a community in which people are going to want to live you must provide them with the best possible services. Mr. Weiner stated that cutting jobs in order to balance this budget is not the right choice, and he would like to see all departments of the Town work together to get through this difficult time. Mr. Weiner works for the Mohegan Tribe, and stated that although many employees have been affected in one way or another by these bad economic times, no employees lost their jobs. He also asked the Council to consider that it is a historical fact that when the economy is bad, crime goes up; and this is not the time to cut public safety jobs.

*Ms. Carmen Neland, Building Department*, stated that she has been an employee of the Town for 15 years and has seen the general government budget cut time and time again, but not the Board of Education budget. She asked the Council to consider why they would want to cut the general government budget when it is the smaller budget, and not even consider cutting the Board of Education budget.

*Mr. Kevin Fritch, 12 Morgan Street*, stated that the proposed Mill Rate increase of .2 will increase taxes by 10%, which will adversely affect everyone in Town, especially the elderly and those on fixed incomes. Mr. Fritch asked that the Council take their time in reviewing the budget line item by line item, being sure to look at actual year-to-date spending in projecting next year's budget. The entire Town is in this crisis together, and the Board of Education should not be exempt.

*Mr. Donald Bourdeau, Public Works Director*, stated that the monies budgeted to the Public Works Department cannot be cut any more than it has already been cut, and the department cannot afford to cut any more employees. If the budget is cut and we begin just fixing roads when they require it instead of maintaining them, this will lead to more expensive work to be done over time.

*Ms. Marcia Vlaun, Town Planner*, expressed her concern once again that the larger Board of Education budget is being exempt from cuts, but the smaller General Government budget is the one that gets cut year after year. She stated that many of the employees that may be affected by cuts have worked hard for the Town for many years, and the Council needs to closely consider that laying someone off may affect their pension. Ms. Vlaun noted that the employees of the Town have significantly contributed to the positive economic development in the town with their hard work and dedication. Ms. Vlaun asked that all discussions regarding the budget and the Town's financial situation should be done in public and should include the taxpayers and employees.

6. Communications – None.
7. New Business

A. **Motion** by Councilor Hillman, Second by Councilor Caron to discuss the 2009-2010 and proposed 2010-2011 General Government Budget revenues and expenditures, the proposed 2010-2011 Capital Improvement Plan, the proposed 2010-2011 Mill Rate, and the proposed 2010-2011 Board of Education Budget, per the request of the Town Council Finance Committee. **Discussion:** Councilor Hillman reported that she had spoken with a few departments, and she communicated some possible cuts that were offered by these individual departments. She stated that the fire departments are willing to make cuts, and she asked that the residents of Montville do their part to support the fire departments by supporting fund raising efforts. Mayor Jaskiewicz stated that he is still working with the Mohegan Tribe to possibly move the \$500,000.00 from capital improvement into general government. He has also contacted the labor attorney to begin discussions with union leaders regarding possible givebacks. The Mayor realizes that the issues with the 2009-2010 budget will carry over to the 2010-2011 budget if they are not reviewed and worked out, so time needs to be spent reviewing the current budget before working on next year's budget. Ms. Pamela Aubin, School Superintendent, addressed the Council and stated that the Board of Education is very willing to work with the Council and the Mayor to do their part in working through this situation, and will look into returning to the general government budget any additional funds that may be left over in the 2009-2010 budget. She also stated that there are minimum budget requirements that the Board of Education has to meet in order to qualify for some State programs and grants. Ms. Lisa Terry, Town Clerk, addressed the Council and suggested that the Council send the budgets back to the Finance Committee for further review and work, stating that this process is too critical to rush into and needs to be worked on with each department head before moving forward. Mayor Jaskiewicz agreed with Ms. Terry that the process should not be rushed into, that the Finance Committee should begin working with each of the department heads to fix the 2009-2010 budget. Regarding setting the mill rate, the Council could either set the mill rate from last year, or simply not proceed and it will automatically carryover from last year at the end of this fiscal year. Councilor Murphy explained that it was not the intention of the Council when asking the departments to return a zero balance to imply that it was the Council's goal to reduce positions or reduce employees' hours in order to balance this budget. He stated that asking for each department to return a budget with a zero increase will assist the Council in understanding what kind of impact that would have on each department. Councilor Murphy stated that he feels that a mistake was made a couple of years ago when the taxpayers voted to move monies from the reserve funding, and that that Council had then stated that moving that money could cause potential shortfalls in the coming years. Councilor Beetham adamantly disagreed with Councilor Murphy's statements on this matter. Mayor Jaskiewicz requested that the Council pass the mill rate and move forward to work on fixing the 2009-2010 budget shortfalls before working on the 2010-2011 budget. Ms. Fafard explained that the different versions of the budget are due to the fact that revenues are received on a daily basis, which in turn changes the numbers and she wanted the Council to have the most up-to-date information to work from. She also noted that she has not received any suggestions from employees on how to realize savings in the budget, but that she would welcome any suggestions that are received. Chairwoman Jacobson asked Ms. Fafard if she had spoken with the Town Attorney regarding letting the fund balance fall to 5%; Ms. Fafard stated that it would be best for the Council to vote and have a 2/3 majority in favor of allowing the fund balance to drop to that percentage. It was discussed and agreed that the Council would cancel the special meeting scheduled for Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup>, and send the budget back to the Finance Committee for further review. Councilor Buebendorf requested that the meetings either be scheduled at a later time so that the public can attend, or have the Finance Committee meetings recorded in Council Chambers so that the public has access to the discussions. It was agreed that all upcoming Finance Committee meetings on this matter would be recorded for public access.

B. **Motion** by Councilor Beetham, Second by Councilor Jacobson to discuss the possible implementation of a hiring freeze for the remaining 2009-2010 fiscal year, a hiring freeze for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, possible layoffs, the possibility of turning a full-time position or positions into part-time, possible Union concessions, and future expectations for contract negotiations. There was no discussion on this Motion.

#### 8. Remarks from the Public

*Mr. Thomas Sanders, Assistant Planner,* suggested that instead of looking at cuts, possibly look at identifying revenue sources, such as fee increases. Ms. Sanders noted that the general government departments received a memorandum from the Mayor and Finance Director stating that there was to be no further spending in this budget year, but the Board of Education was exempt from that memorandum.

*Mr. Keith Truex, Chief of the Chesterfield Fire Company,* stated that the department does not have enough funds now to make ends meet, and any more cuts will significantly impact the services offered. The department currently makes ends meet by fund raising, and cannot afford to have any additional funds cut from the budget. At risk of losing the one career firefighter that is on duty 8 hours per day to cover the day shift while the remaining volunteers are at their paid, full-time jobs.

*Mr. Russell Weiner, Public Safety Commission member,* asked the Mayor for clarification on a hiring freeze. The Mayor stated that a hiring freeze means no additional personnel; if someone leaves the department, they will be replaced. The Town will maintain its current staff numbers.

#### 9. Remarks from Councilors

Councilor McFee thanked everyone from the public and the Town employees who attended the meeting, and suggested that a public hearing be scheduled in a large venue in order to hear the public's feedback and suggestions on this matter.

Councilor Hillman stated that in her conversation with Chief Truex, he had suggested that a possible option for manning the Chesterfield Fire Company was to move one of the paid firefighters from the Mohegan department to the Chesterfield department since the Mohegan Tribe fire company could serve as a close back up to the Mohegan department.

10. Adjournment – **Motion** made by Councilor Caron, Second by Councilor Murphy to adjourn the meeting. **Voice Vote:** In Favor; Councilors Beetham, Buebendorf, Caron, Hillman, Jacobson, McFee and Murphy. Opposed; None. **Motion Carried 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sandra Anderson CPS  
Minutes Clerk  
Montville Town Council