

TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
Regular Meeting – March 24, 2025 -- 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Montville Town Hall

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.

Vice-Chair Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Vice-Chair Stephen Stewart and Commissioners Brian Baker, Mickey Gillette and Karen Perkins. Chairperson Murphy and Commissioners William Bauer and Tracy Callaghan were absent. A quorum was present.

4. Alterations to the Agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Baker; seconded by Commissioner Perkins to modify Agenda Item 13.A to read the “*existing*” M-37 Rescue Truck. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

5. Special Recognitions and Presentations. -- None

6. Communications:

Copies of monthly statistics reports from Fire Departments, Fire Marshal, Police Department, Animal Control and Building Official.

Vice-Chair Stewart reported on having received the monthly statistical reports for Oakdale, Mohegan and Chesterfield fire companies. Commissioner Perkins confirmed not having received the report from the Montville Company. The reports from the Fire Marshal, Police Department, Animal Control and Building Department were received by the Commission.

7. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve minutes:

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2025.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette, seconded by Commissioner Perkins to approve the Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2025. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Motion carried.**

8. Remarks from the Public. (Agenda items only).

Vice-Chair Stewart asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

9. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

Lt. Radford read into the record the Animal Control reports for the month ending February 28, 2024. See Agenda Item 10.B for those statistics. The Lieutenant also reported that general construction has started on the new Animal Control Facility and the groundbreaking ceremony will be this Saturday, March 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the site. As to the Dispatch radio upgrades, he met with Steve and was advised that the radios are all installed, programming is being completed, and the radios should be completely functional in a week or so. Police Officer candidate interviews will be held tomorrow, and Vice-Chair Stewart and Commissioner Gillette were thanked in advance for their assistance in the process. Lastly, Lt. Radford concluded his report with positive correspondence for Chief Blanchette, Lt. Radford, Sgt. Sumpf, Detective Noyes, Officer Fazzino, Officer Lalumiere, and Officer Smith concerning officers present on February 25, 2025 when an accident occurred with a motorcycle in a small group of riders. On behalf of Back the Blue Riding Club, Michael Zito in his email expressed sincere thanks and appreciation for the assistance provided by all of the Officers noting particularly their professionalism and community service during a tough situation.

Fire Marshal Report

Fire Marshal Barnes read into the record the Fire Marshal Statistics for the month ending February 28, 2025, that were submitted as follows:

Fire Marshal's Office Activities	February 2025
Inspections of Businesses and Apartments	29
Fire Investigations	1
Incident Responses Q64 (Deputy Fire Marshal Meigel)—Broken sprinkler pipe (Home Depot)	1
Incident Responses Q54 (Fire Marshal Barnes)—Broken sprinkler pipe (Home Depot), 1 Fire alarm	2
Burn Permits Issued	2
New Business Inspection	0
Emergency Management Obligations	8 hours

The Fire Marshal also reported that the amendment presented to the Commission this evening concerning the Town of Montville Local Emergency Medical Services Plan (EMS) has an error that will be corrected and re-presented to the Commission for review. He also addressed his interest in the old M-37 Rescue Truck for use as an investigation vehicle that he will discuss under Agenda, Item 13.B. Commissioner Baker inquired if he had talked with the Fire Chiefs

about the EMS Plan; the Fire Marshal reported that the Fire Chiefs had given him the information but that he updated the staffing and coverage according to the new staffing regime. Mayor Bunnell apologized for the correction needed on the Local EMS Plan and that he would get the information to Fire Marshal Barnes.

10. Committee and Liaison Reports:

a. Report from Fire Department Liaison. (*Perkins*)

Commissioner Perkins read into the record the Montville Fire Activity statistics for February 2025 and reported again that she received the February 2025 monthly reports from Mohegan, Oakdale, and Chesterfield Fire Companies. No report was received from the Montville Company.

Montville Fire Activity (February 2025)		
Total Calls:	271	
Fire Calls:	42	Out of the 42, 2 were assists out of Town
Medical Calls – Ambulance/Medical:	229	Out of the 229, 4 were assists out of Town; 2 were assists FROM out of town
Lift Assists:	15	
Calls between 6:00 PM and 12:00 Midnight:	67	

Commissioner Perkins noted that the fire activity report has personal information on it. Police Chief Blanchette reported that any information on the report should not violate HIPPA and that he would have the reports sent to the Commission as requested by Commissioner Baker. Commissioner Baker noted that he was asking to receive the information ahead of time; having respect for her as the Fire Department Liaison, Commissioner Perkins asked the Commission to send direct questions to her about the data prior to the meeting.

Montville Fire Company (February 2025)—No Report

Incidents:	Total
Canceled Calls	
EMS Calls	
Fire Calls	
Motor Vehicles Calls	
Other Calls:	
Total Calls:	

Mohegan Fire Company (February 2025)

Incidents/Calls:	In District	Out of District/In Town	Mutual Aid

EMS	67	54	1
Lift Assists	7	6	
Fire Alarm	4	13	
Structure Fire			
MVA	4	6	
Brush/Grass/Wet Down			
Smoke Investigation		1	
Water Rescue			
CO Emergency	1		
Haz-Mat Incident		1	
Utility Emergency	1	1	
Vehicle Fire	1		
Service Call		1	
Total Calls:	85	83	1

Oakdale Fire Company (February 2025)

Incidents:	Total
Cancelled Calls: (Dispatched & canceled en route)	19
EMS Calls: (EMS call excluding vehicle accident with injury (40); Emergency medical service incident, other (1))	41
Fire Calls:	0
Motor Vehicles Call: (MVA with no injuries (1); MVA with injuries (1))	2
Other Calls: Power line down (8); (Medical assist, assist EMS crew (7); Alarm system activation, no fire, unintentional (3); Smoke detector activation due to malfunction (2); Alarm system sounded due to malfunction (2); (Cover assignment, standby, move-up (2); Person in distress, other (1); Water evacuation (1); Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO (1))	27
Total Calls:	89

Chesterfield Fire Company (February 2025)

Incidents:	Total
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Cancelled Calls: (Dispatched & cancelled en route)	22
EMS Calls: EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	17
Fire Calls:	0
Motor Vehicle: MVA accident with no injuries; MVA with injuries	2
Other Calls Incident type not listed (20); False alarm or false call/other (2); Cover assignment, standby, move-up (2); Hazmat release investigation, w/no Hazmat (1)	25
Total Calls:	66

b. Report from Animal Control. (Callaghan)

The February 2025 Activity Reports for the Towns of Montville and Salem submitted by Police Officer/ACO Bruce Rebelo were read into the record under Agenda Item 9 by Lt. Radford as follows:

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (February 2025)

Activity	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded:	9	79
# of Animals Sold as Pets:	4	23
# of Animals D.O.A.:	1	3
# of Animals Euthanized:	1	3
Total Complaints Investigated	61	463
Total Animal Bites Investigated:	0	17
Total Enforcement Action:	2	13
Total Other Calls for Service:	50	456

Town of Salem Animal Control Report (February 2025)

Activity	Month	YTD FY
# of Animals Impounded:	0	5
# of Animals Sold as Pets:	0	0
# of Animals D.O.A.:	0	0
# of Animals Euthanized:	0	0
Total Complaints Investigated:	5	29
Total Animal Bites Investigated:	1	5
Total Enforcement Action:	0	0

Total Other Calls for Service	0	0
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c. Report from Police Department Liaison. (Gillette)

Commissioner Gillette read into the record the Police Department statistics for the month ending February 28, 2025, as follows:

Police Department Activity	Total
Total Calls for Service	923
Citations:	
Infractions	38
Juvenile Summons	0
Misdemeanors	9
Written Warnings	148
Total Citations	195

d. Report from Building Department Liaison. (Stewart)

Vice-Chair Stewart read into the record the Building Department statistics for February 2025 as follows:

2024-2025 Building Department Report												
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Permits Issued	135	153	108	157	118	85	107	62				
Pending Permits	99	102	83	88	81	95	96	85				
Inspections	118	106	124	162	125	114	108	71				
Active Blight	248	252	256	259	260	264	272	277				
Blight Abated To Date	529	531	532	535	537	538	543	547				
Blighted Property Liens			3	2								

Vice-Chair Stewart reported that he did not have the chance to find out the number of blight issues that are pending, as questioned by Commissioner Gillette. The Vice-Chair will get that information for the next Commission meeting.

11. Remarks from Fire Chiefs.

Chesterfield Fire Chief Truex reported that the new Rescue Truck M-37 will deliver at the end of June to inspect and drive back. The truck is arriving quicker as the vendor already had the chassis. New career staff training with Firefighter Chris Dennis has started, but the Chief

deems the training is lacking as the firefighter arrives at 7:00 a.m., stays to 3:24 p.m. on the east side of Town and thereafter moves to the west side where he would normally be at Oakdale all day and go out on calls received. Reporting to Chesterfield, a shift would occur creating noncompliance with the way career staffing is done--Oakdale during the day and Chesterfield in the evening or when working at Mohegan. Chief Truex remarked that a better option, as he has said before, would be to assign the new firefighter to a 24-hour shift with a very experienced crew and continue with 24-hour shifts. Commissioner Perkins inquired how long the firefighter would be on the shift. Mayor Bunnell remarked that he would discuss more beneficial schedules with the Fire Marshal. Commissioner Baker reported that during interviews consideration was given to those who had a lot of experience with fire and EMS calls for assisting and driving. Chief Truex noted the new firefighter lives in another part of the state and would be unfamiliar with the streets and will not have transported to L&M or Backus Hospitals. The partner of the firefighter will and can provide direction per Commissioner Baker. According to the current contract, hours of service are 8.4 per day Monday – Friday. Vice-Chair Baker noted that Mayor Bunnell's idea concerning scheduling is a good one to get a wide range of training; but funding is an issue and Firefighter Dennis is already qualified with vehicles from his former location.

Mohegan Fire Chief Suarez spoke on a letter he sent to the Commission last October concerning ideas for volunteer recruitment noting that several people have reached out to him. He remarked that it has been five (5) months since his letter concerning the need for new ideas from the Commission to increase manpower and is willing to meet with the Commission on the same. In response to a question from Commissioner Perkins concerning a signup sheet, the Chief reported there are 20-plus volunteers on the roster but less than 10 respond noting that many are 60-70 years old, have done their time, but are still trying to help. It was asked by Commissioner Perkins that this item be considered for the next meeting agenda. Chief Suarez also noted that discussion has been had with other Fire Chiefs but that he is looking for advice from the Commission to keep the initiative moving forward. Vice-Chair Stewart will think on it and give the information to the Recording Secretary for the next meeting agenda.

12. Unfinished Business.

- a.** To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve a Policy to systemize and retain firefighter data to observe trends and effectiveness.

Vice-Chair Stewart asked if there were any updates; Mayor Bunnell reported that the Fire Chiefs are still deliberating on what will replace EMS Charts. Chief Truex reported there is no issue as it is a matter of looking at options, capabilities, and costs all of which are being considered. He remarked that the choice maybe ESO or another program, if available, but noted due diligence is needed before a firm decision is made. Chief Turner and Chief Messer will attend FDIC next month and will meet with vendor, but Chief Truex noted that the contract with EMS Charts still has 3-4 years remaining but will sunset the fire reports this coming December. Chief Suarez reported that Mohegan has an annual contract as there was no benefit or cost savings to do otherwise.

b. Fire Companies Radio System Upgrades. (Baker)

Commissioner Baker remarked that Lt. Radford gave an update on this item during his report this evening.

13. New Business.

a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve the FY2025-2026 Fire Department Capital Improvement Plan. (Tabled at PSC 02-24-2025 meeting.)

Vice-Chair Stewart noted that the Fire Department Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY 2025-2026 was tabled at the February meeting of the Commission for changes. Commissioner Baker remarked having sent the Commission the updated CIP a few weeks ago noting that revisions were made to it. **Motion Amended** by Commissioner Baker to approve the FY2025-2026 Fire Companies Capital Improvement Plan in the amount of \$2 million dollars; no second to the motion (as requested three (3) times). Vice-Chair Stewart noted that there would be no funds for the new ladder truck in FY2025-2026.

b. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve the disposal of the Rescue Truck M-37.

Vice-Chair Stewart reported having sent to the Commission an information sheet for disposal of the Rescue Truck-37 identifying items to be kept or removed and sold individually. Also included was an appraisal of the truck in the amount of \$20,491.67 done by one member at Chesterfield that does this for a living. The Vice-Chair reported on the Commission having received interest for the truck including a letter of request from Fire Marshal Barnes for its use as an Investigation Truck particularly for nighttime structure fire investigations where an engine or rescue truck must remain on standby at the scene. The Fire Marshal explained to Commissioner Perkins the reasons for his request stating that the Fire Marshal and the Deputy Fire Marshal currently carry tools in their cars when responding to calls that can last for 2-7 hours that would have fire personnel unable to respond elsewhere in Town. The M-37 would serve as the Emergency Management vehicle for the Fire Marshal's office for the bags in that office for resident sign-in and kits for shelter individuals that can go directly to the shelter. The Fire Marshal noted the truck has an onboard generator and tripod lights that frees up the fire companies once a fire is out with no threat. A call to the State Fire Marshal would be required only if there is a death or arson. The M-37 would allow the Fire Marshal's office to carry evidence collection items, tools, gear, and scene tape so that everything needed would be housed in it. Discussion has been had with the Deputy Fire Marshal and a plan of operation if they obtain the M-37. It was asked by Commissioner Perkins whether the vehicles the Fire Marshal's office has now supports its equipment; Fire Marshal Barnes reported that tools are limited now as to what can be carried or what is had. He noted that the Deputy Fire Marshal Meigel should not carry any tools in his truck as there is no separate compartment and the amount of tools needed are various. Some items such as pipe poles, drywall poles, and certain rakes cannot be carried on the trucks currently in use. With the M-37, all of these items would be accessible on the truck. Commissioner Perkins noted that since the truck is Town apparatus

should it make the decision. Mayor Bunnell noted having asked for the matter to come before the Commission as the decision resides with Finance and the Mayor. Commissioner Baker noted that was why he gave the Commission a copy of the Town ordinance to understand what it says and who has the authority to make the decision on disposal of the M-37. Per a question by Vice-Chair Stewart, the Fire Marshal remarked there was not a requirement by the NFDA, but the truck would help tremendously for Fire Marshal and Emergency Management matters. The budget request this year from the Fire Marshal's office for two (2) new vehicles with a rollway tray was noted by Commissioner Baker, specifically two (2) crew pickups. With use of the M-37, the Ford Explorers used by the Police Department would carry the dirty items reported the Fire Marshal. He also noted that he and the Deputy Fire Marshal need vehicles as dirty tools and gear must be kept separate for cancer reasons but would not serve for generators—Commissioner Baker noted a portable one could be used. The Fire Marshal would prefer that it is housed with the turnout gear in a separate compartment due to the loss of a dear friend. Two (2) new vehicles in lieu of one (1) pickup or transit with a separator to store dirty items was suggested by Commissioner Baker. Police Chief Blanchette, who noted he was not arguing for or against the matter, remarked that at anytime at a fire scene tools used must be cleaned and inspected and supporting documentation completed on the same. The dirty tools must be cleaned for purposes of accelerant and put back in a separate facility. Per the new cancer bill that all should be aware of, the Chief reported that dirty tools or bags cannot be transported inside of an SUV and any deviation would be a disservice to the Fire Marshal's Office. The Fire Marshal explained that gear would be placed in an investigation bag to take to the firehouse where the gear and tools would be washed. As to modification of the M-37, none is needed as it can be used as it is. Commissioner Baker wanted to see a financial breakdown of maintenance costs and insurance for the M-37; Commissioner Perkins noted that the truck is already owned by the Town. Further, Vice-Chair Stewart remarked that it would be nice to know but currently there is no maintenance information supplied for the police vehicles as it is the responsibility of Public Works. Commissioner Baker noted that the Town has an ordinance regarding the disposal of property of surplus personal property. This information was just received by the Commission and had yet to be reviewed and that getting rid of any property falls under the purview of the Commission. Mayor Bunnell remarked that there would be no cost to prepare for moving the M-37 but questioned where it would be housed; Fire Marshal Barnes remarked that the truck would run one (1) time a week and serviced as needed but would be parked at Chesterfield or here at the Town Hall and if housing comes up it will be parked there. Commissioner Baker noted his intention not to vote on this matter given the financial information he mentioned, review of the disposal of property ordinance and having received the request by the Fire Marshal at 3:13 p.m. today. Fire Marshal Barnes explained that he was off on Friday and wanted this simple request sent to the Commission as an agenda item for the meeting and apologized for its lateness. Vice-Chair Stewart remarked that he was not looking for a decision to be made this evening given the Commission has until July. Mayor Bunnell proposed having the Fire Marshal return to next month's meeting, with a fully recovered Chairman Murphy present, with a written proposal as

the Mayor is seeking a decision as to whether to scrap or put the truck to use. Commissioner Gillette remarked that the truck only has 20,000 miles on it, is already owned by the Town, and will not be used all of the time nor take part in parades stating it can be used for another 10-15 years. **Motion** by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Perkins to dispose of the old Chesterfield M-37 Rescue Truck to the Fire Marshal's Office. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor:* Commissioners Gillette and Perkins. *Opposed:* Commissioners Stewart and Baker. **2-2-0. Motion failed.** Vice-Chair Stewart remarked that the matter would be brought up again next month for discussion.

14. Remarks from the Public three-minute limit.

Fire Chief Truex expressed regret that the vote for the Fire Companies CIP was not approved, nor understanding why, and that it was for a good reason. He remarked that it was a great way to show support for the volunteers that come out.

15. Remarks from the Mayor.

Mayor Bunnell congratulated and praised the Police Department for its successful Level 3 Certification described as a huge undertaking and Officer Lindsey Michaels for her dedication and commitment for a huge step in a short amount of time. Initiation of the career firefighter CDA began this month with more meetings scheduled. The Mayor also spoke with Chairperson Murphy who is on the mend and regrets not being here. Agreements with Bozrah and Colchester concerning animal control was approved by the Town Council and will be sent to the towns for signatures. Lastly, Mayor Bunnell remarked that a ladder truck is a lot of money, but he has started making plans by speaking with Senator Osten to introduce a bill for funding of the truck.

16. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Sabilia remarked that he appreciated the time involved with the information concerning the M-37 and although not faulting Fire Marshal Barnes he spoke to the costs to move the truck, having it sit in a parking lot and if it will require replacement. The matter does require more time and thought than a couple of hours.

17. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Perkins remarked that if the Fire Chiefs come to the meeting they can still come to the Commission to address their needs. She also addressed Chief Truex about his positive feedback for volunteers emphasizing that she is a volunteer of the Commission. Lastly, Commissioner Perkins remarked on the positive feedback regarding the MVA reported by Lt. Radford noting it is what the Town needs. Commissioner Baker remarked on having always supported the Public Safety team as it is not an easy job and encouraged the team to keep up the good work as they are appreciated. Vice-Chair Stewart congratulated the Police Department for the Tier III Certification, and the press conference held on February 26 for the grant for rural road speed maintenance. He also wished all a Happy Easter and thanked the responders for what they do noting that we all are volunteers that do their best.

18. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by:
Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN
OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**