

**Town of Montville  
Town Council  
Public Hearing Minutes  
January 12, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.  
Montville Town Hall – Town Council Chambers**

1. Call to Order  
Chairperson May called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of our military
3. Roll Call  
Present were Councilors Brian Baker, Billy Caron, Joseph Jaskiewicz, Tim May, Rachael Novak, Nicholas Sabilia, and Kate Southard. Also present was Mayor Leonard Bunnell, Sr.
4. Public Hearing

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE  
NOTICE OF ORDINANCE HEARING**

The following Ordinance, copies of which may be obtained at the office of the Town Clerk during office hours, was introduced at a regular meeting of the Town Council held December 8, 2025 and a public hearing thereon and for its consideration by the Town Council will be held at Town Hall Council Chambers, January 12, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.

**Chapter 370, Article III  
All-Terrain Vehicles Ordinance**

**§ 370-18 Declaration of Policy.**

**§ 370-19 Definitions.**

**§ 370-20 Prohibition.**

**§ 370-21 Penalties.**

**§ 370-22 Sign Posting Required for All-Terrain Dealers.**

**§ 370-23 Sale of Gasoline for Illegal Purposes.**

**§ 370-24 Appeal.**

**§ 370-18 Declaration of Policy.**

As authorized under C.G.S. Section 14-390, the Police Chief and Police Commission have become concerned with unregistered and unsafe vehicle use in Montville. Therefore, all-terrain vehicles, mini bikes, mini motorcycles and dirt bikes on streets and public property are prohibited.

**§ 370-19 Definitions.**

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section:

*All-terrain vehicle* means a self-propelled vehicle designed to travel over unimproved terrain and which has been determined by the commissioner of motor vehicles to be unsuitable for operation on the public highways and also defined as any three (3) or more wheeled motorized vehicle, generally characterized by large, low-pressure tires, a seat designed to be straddled by the operator and handlebars for steering, which is intended for off-road uses by an individual rider on various types of non-paved

terrain. Such vehicles do not include trail bikes, golf carts, agricultural tractors, farm implements and construction machines.

*All-terrain vehicle dealer* means any person engaged in the business of manufacturing, selling, leasing or renting all-terrain vehicles, mini bikes, as defined by this section, mini-motorcycles, as defined by this section, or dirt bikes, as defined by this section, at retail having a regular and established place of business within the Town.

*Dirt bike* shall mean a two-wheeled motorized recreational vehicle designed to travel over unimproved terrain and not designed for travel on a highway.

*Mini-motorcycle* shall mean a vehicle that has not more than three (3) wheels in contact with the ground, has a manufactured seat height of less than twenty-six (26) inches measured at the lowest point on top of the seat cushion without the ride, and is propelled by an engine having a piston displacement of less than fifty (50) c.c.

*Pocket bikes, mini bikes, mini sport bikes, mini dirt bikes, chopper scooters, motor scooters, bicycles with helper motors, and any other similar vehicle (hereinafter collectively "mini bikes")* shall mean any wheeled vehicle designed to transport one (1) or more persons that is powered by any type of motor.

As used in this section, "all-terrain vehicle", "mini bike", "mini motorcycle" and "dirt bike" shall not include the following:

- (1) Any registered "motorcycle" as defined in General Statute § 14-1(61);
- (2) Any registered "motor vehicle" as defined in General Statute § 14-1(60);
- (3) Any moped that meets Federal Department of Transportation guidelines for use on streets and is approved by the State of Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles for use on streets, provided, however, the moped is operated pursuant to all applicable state laws, rules, and regulations and all Town ordinances;
- (4) Any wheelchair or similar mobility assisting device utilized by a person with a physical disability or whose ambulatory mobility has been impaired due to age or physical ailment;
- (5) Any self-propelled snow plow, snow blower or lawn mower when used for the purpose for which it was designed and operated at a speed not to exceed four (4) miles per hour;
- (6) Any vehicle owned or leased by the Town; and
- (7) Any electronic assistive mobility device such as a wheelchair.
- (8) Electric ("E") Bikes as defined in General Statutes § 14-1.

### **§ 370-20 Prohibitions**

- (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike and/or for any owner of an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, motorcycle, or dirt bike to knowingly permit the operation of his/her all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike on any street or sidewalk in the Town or on any public property, including but not limited to school property, playgrounds and parks, within the Town.
- (2) It shall be unlawful for any person to ride as a passenger on an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike and/or for any owner of an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike to knowingly permit any person to ride as a passenger on his/her all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike operated in violation of subsection (1) above.

- (3) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike, ride as a passenger on an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike, and/or for any owner of an all-terrain vehicle or mini cycle to knowingly permit its operation on any private property, within the Town, without first obtaining the written permission of the property owner if the property is not owned by the operator, passenger, and/or owner of the all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike. Said written permission shall be kept with the person and available for inspection upon demand by any law enforcement officer.
- (4) This section shall not be applicable to any dirt bike being operated upon any road or highway provided that, (i) said dirt bike is properly and validly registered with the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles and (ii) is being operated in compliance with all applicable motor vehicle laws of the state.

**§ 370-21 Penalties.**

- (1) Any person who operates an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike in violation of subsection 370-20(1) and/or 370-20 (2) above, or is the owner of an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike who knowingly permits its operation in violation of subsection 370-20 (1) and/or 370-20 (2) above, shall be fined one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for a first violation, shall be fined one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) for a second violation, and shall be fined two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) for a third or subsequent violation.
- (2) Any person aged sixteen (16) or older who rides as a passenger on an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike in violation of subsection 370-20(2) above, or is the owner of an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike who knowingly permits a passenger to ride on his/her all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike in violation of subsection 370-20(2), shall be fined two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00).
- (3) Any police officer that observes any person in violation of this section may detain such person for purposes of enforcing the provisions of this section. Any all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike used in violation of this section shall be seized by any police officer and shall be forfeited to the Town, subject to any bona fide lien, lease or security interest in the all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike, including, but not limited to, a lien under General Statutes § 14-66c.
- (4) Any all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike ordered forfeited pursuant to this section shall be either (i) sold at public auction conducted by the Town pursuant to Connecticut General Statute § 14-390 , with the proceeds of such sale being paid to the finance director of the Town who shall deposit such proceeds into the general fund of the municipality, or (ii) be destroyed by the Town.

**§ 370-22 Sign Posting Required for All-Terrain Dealers.**

Each all-terrain vehicle dealer in Montville offering for sale, lease or rental any all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike shall post this section in a prominent location at said all-terrain vehicle dealer's place of business. Any all-terrain vehicle dealer who violates any provision of this section shall be fined one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00).

**§ 370-23 Sale of Gasoline for Illegal Purposes.**

- (1) No retail dealer of gasoline shall sell, offer for sale, or attempt to sell, any article or product represented as gasoline for use in an all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike as defined in this Ordinance, unless that vehicle is conveyed to

and from the retailer's premises by a registered motor vehicle, as defined in General Statute § 14-1, as may be amended, and no individual shall purchase or attempt to purchase gasoline for this purpose.

- (2) Signs with the words "FUELING OF UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES PROHIBITED" in English and "PROHIBIDO DESPACHAR GASOLINA A VEHICULOS NO AUTORIZADOS" in Spanish at least one (1) inch in height with a contrasting margin shall be posted at all dispensing locations. The location of warning signs shall be based on local conditions but shall be visible and legible from all gas pumps, subject to zoning sign permits.
- (3) An individual or retail dealer of gasoline who violates any provision of subsections (1) and/or (2) of this section shall be fined two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per each day the violation occurs.

#### **§ 370-24 Appeal.**

An appeals hearing process shall be made available to the owner or lien holder prior to forfeiture of a motorized recreational vehicle, as provided in Connecticut General Statute § 7-152c, as amended.

This ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days from the date of its adoption.

Dated at Montville, Connecticut this 11th day of December 2025.

Katie Haring, Montville Town Clerk

Chairperson May recited the published notice for this evening's Public Hearing regarding the conveyance of real property located at 20 Bridge Street and corrected the following section:

#### **§ 370-18 Declaration of Policy.**

As authorized under C.G.S. Section 14-390, the Police Chief and ~~Police~~ *Public Safety* Commission have become concerned with unregistered and unsafe vehicle use....

Referring to correspondence received from a parent of the Town regarding a September 27, 2024, incident, Chairperson May stated that the proposed Ordinance was unrelated to the event and requested that the Town Council and public honor their request and focus their discussion on the operational impacts and the Ordinance, itself. He asked if any members of the public would like to speak regarding the proposed Ordinance.

Councilor Novak recited the following correspondence received from a resident who was unable to attend this evening's Public Hearing:

Melanie Attwater-Young, Chapel Hill Road, having witnessed individuals trespassing private properties and speeding, popping wheelies, and riding on the back wheels of ATV vehicles on public roads – reckless, disrespectful, and dangerous behaviors – over the past several years, stated her support of the overarching concept of the proposed Ordinance, with reservations. She expressed her concerns with Montville Police Chief Wilfred Blanchette's statement regarding the establishment of a magistrate system, as published in the December 31, 2025, edition of *The Day* newspaper, and questioned the makeup, cost, and process involved with its establishment.

Nicholas Manavas, Old Colchester Road, stated his opposition to the proposed Ordinance. He expressed his appreciation to Police Chief Blanchette and Mayor Bunnell for listening to his concerns and engaging in positive conversations regarding the matter. As a landowner, he has encouraged and invited his family and friends, especially their children, to recreate on his property on their ATVs and dirt bikes. The proposed Ordinance would require all

users, including their own children, to carry a permission slip at all times or risk having their vehicle seized. While in agreement with penalizing non-local individuals riding stolen vehicles on public roads and the “street takeover crowd”, he believed that the Ordinance would more likely affect the law-abiding residents of the Town. The Ordinance would also prohibit riders from crossing a road at a 90° angle, which is how he accesses his property and is allowable per state law. The Ordinance would also negatively affect their neighbors, whose driveways they often plow. Due to the Police Accountability Act, police officers are unable to pursue suspected offenders and Ordinances, such as this one, would not preclude the offenders from acting illegally. Lastly, the use of ATVs and dirt bikes is heavily regulated by the state and state laws allow the police to levy fines for riding on public roads. The issue is not the lack of laws. Rather, it is the criminals who do not abide by the law. He cited and provided copies of the following statutes to the Town Council: C.G.S. (Connecticut General Statutes) 14-390(m), P.A. (Public Act) 25-80, C.G.S. §14-379 to §14-389, and C.G.S. §14-390.

Katlyn Martinez, 55 Hale Haven Court, spoke in opposition to the proposed Ordinance. A wife and mother of two sons, ATV riding is a bonding experience for her family. The activity teaches her children laser-sharp focus, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, boosts confidence, and resilience. It also keeps them off their screens and provides physical benefits, activates their mechanical, safety, and risk assessment skills.

Daniel, an 8-year resident of the Town, echoed Mr. Manavas’ opposition to the Ordinance and stated his understanding that the intent of the proposed Ordinance was to manage the “street takeover” incidents. He was fortunate to have grown up riding ATVs as a child in Maine, which is not possible for the average Connecticut resident who does not reside on a large property or is unable to travel to engage in the activity. He opposed the seizure of one’s vehicle that may have personal value due to a misunderstanding, including crossing a road to plow a neighbor’s driveway. He believed the document should include provisions for such instances. He requested that they further review the Ordinance to ensure that it would not punish law-abiding or helpful citizens.

Britany Hatfield, Lathrop Court, expressed her opposition to the Ordinance, stating that her son worked hard to save the funds necessary to purchase a quad. The thought of having the vehicle seized as he travels down the road to plow an elderly neighbor’s driveway is unthinkable, as is requiring a permission slip to ride his ATV on personal property. Her children are not reckless riders, are always equipped with the proper safety gear, and are not criminals. As previously stated, the activity is a bonding experience for her children.

Anthony Kobyluck, expressed his opposition to the Ordinance, stating that there are other alternatives, including requiring individuals to enroll in riding programs, courses, and/or requiring vehicles to be registered and insured, rather than impounding the vehicles and charging exorbitant fines.

Dillon Troxell, Route 163, stated his opposition to the Ordinance, which adds another unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. There are multiple redundant state laws that criminals do not follow and those who engage in “street takeover” activities would be unaware of the Ordinance and continue their illegal behavior. Additionally, administrative tasks to handle such matters would burden the Town unnecessarily.

Nate Martinez, 55 Hale Haven Court, expressed his opposition to the Ordinance, as drafted, specifically §370-21(3), Penalties, which states that “Any police officer that observes any person in violation.... Any all-terrain vehicle, mini bike, mini motorcycle, or dirt bike used in violation of this section shall be seized by any police officer and shall be forfeited to the Town, ....” He questioned how a police officer would determine that an individual is violating the Ordinance and feared that officers would assume that all individuals riding an ATV are guilty, violating a fundamental right.

Kimberly Manavas, a 37-year resident and mother of Nicholas Manavas, also expressed her opposition, stating that the Ordinance would not stop or deter individuals from criminal behavior. The Ordinance would place an unnecessary burden on the Police Department, which would be required to monitor individuals and their activities. She questioned whether the Ordinance, which would negatively affect its law-abiding citizens rather than those committing the offense(s), was the best for the Town.

Chairperson May asked three times if any members of the public would like to speak regarding the proposed Ordinance. There being none, the Public Hearing was closed.

5. Remarks from the Councilors and the Mayor

Councilor Southard thanked everyone for attending the meeting and voicing their thoughts. She felt that, while the underlying Ordinance was positive, it required some tweaking. The intent of the Ordinance is not to punish the law-abiding citizens. She is hopeful that the resulting Ordinance would be agreeable to all.

Councilor Jaskiewicz echoed Councilor Southard's comments, adding his appreciation to the residents for attending the meeting and providing their comments in a civil manner. The intent of the Ordinance is not to punish their children but to improve the safety of their Town and protect its residents. They will continue to review and work with the Police Chief on an amended draft.

Councilor Caron also echoed the Councilors, thanking everyone for attending and speaking at the meeting. He also commended Mr. Manavas, who introduced several valid points.

Councilor Novak also thanked everyone for attending this evening's Public Hearing and agreed with many of their points. She believed the Ordinance was drafted to keep all residents safe on the public roads, not to allow Police Officers to enter their private properties and confirm that the riders are permitted to ride on the property. She was confident that an Ordinance, agreeable to all, would be drafted.

Councilor Baker thanked everyone for attending this evening's meeting and echoed the Councilors' comments. He did not believe that the intent of the Ordinance was to punish the law-abiding citizens. He stated that the issue is nationwide and is not improving. As such, it is their intent to establish a framework ensuring that all individuals are operating their vehicles in a safe, respectful, and lawful manner, not to take away an individual's personal rights, enjoyment, or recreational abilities. He thanked the speakers for introducing many good points and was confident that, working together, an agreeable Ordinance would be drafted. While he has received several phone calls from residents expressing their support of the Ordinance, he understood the reasons for their opposition. He, too, was hopeful that the final document would provide the Police Department and the residents with the necessary teeth to make the right decisions and punish those who are not behaving in a safe, respectful, and lawful manner.

Councilor Sabilia also expressed his appreciation to the public for attending and speaking at this evening's Public Hearing, which is a true reflection of the democratic process. He thanked them for sharing their concerns and perspectives – some of which they were not aware of, making it clear that the Ordinance requires additional review.

Chairperson May thanked everyone for attending this evening's meeting, their civility, and the importance of receiving the public's feedback. The Ordinance was drafted in response to the public's comments requesting that the Town take action on those who are engaging in such illegal activities. He noted that many of the points discussed this evening include legal uses. Having witnessed such illegal activities on a public road, endangering the public's safety, he believed that there should be repercussions.

Mayor Bunnell assured the residents that no one would be searching for violators. Having spent 42 years in the Police Department, he stated that the Officers primarily respond to complaints. He clarified that the Ordinance includes several items that are excluded from the state statutes, further strengthening their ability to enforce and respond to complaints.

6. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Caron, seconded by Councilor Jaskiewicz, to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING CAN BE FOUND ON THE TOWN'S  
WEBSITE LOCATED UNDER RESOURCES – MEETING RECORDINGS**