

Montville Housing Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2026
5:00 PM
Independence Village, 41 Milefski Drive, Uncasville, CT

1. Call to Order

Chair Kathleen Doherty-Peck called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present: Chair Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Vice-Chair, Tenant Commissioner Deb Suarez, Treasurer John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee. Absent with cause: Commissioner Karen Perkins

4. Remarks from Tenants and Public

a. A tenant asked two questions:

- Whether cable service would be staying
- How the 10% rent calculation would work relative to the 30% cap

b. Leonard Bunnell, Mayor of Town of Montville, Little John Drive, offered public comment:

- Commended DeMarco Management and their snow removal contractor for storm response
- Stated the town would continue opening main throughways at housing authority locations for public safety, though they are not approved town roads; final clearing remains the contractor's responsibility

5. Written Communication

None

6. Agenda Amendment and Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Agenda amendment to add public remarks.

- A motion was made by Suarez and seconded by Szarzynski to amend the agenda to add public remarks prior to remarks from commissioners, with adjournment renumbered accordingly.
- The motion passed 4-0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

b. November 18, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

- A motion was made by Deb Suarez and seconded by Szarzynski to restore the November 18, 2025 minutes to their original version. Discussion: There was a great deal of discussion with Commissioner Suarez and confusion on which minutes she would like amended and which she was going to retract; going back and forth between the two meeting in discussion.

- The motion passed 3–1, with votes in favor: Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee; and votes against: Kathleen Doherty-Peck.

c. December 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

- No formal vote was taken on the December 9, 2025 minutes.

d. January 20, 2026 regular meeting minutes; Vice-Chair Suarez requested amendments to her recorded comments regarding PHA Web access.

- A motion was made Suarez and seconded Szarzynski to approve the January 20, 2026 minutes with the discussed amendment to Vice-Chair Suarez's comments. Lengthy discussion included with Commissioner Suarez going back and forth between meeting dates and again confusion of which one she was referring to and which statements she wanted to amend or retract.

- The motion passed 3–1, with votes in favor: Angela Sherbanee, John Szarzynski, Deb Suarez; and votes against: Kathleen Doherty-Peck.

e. February 9, 2026 special meeting minutes.

- A motion was made by Kathleen Doherty-Peck and seconded by Sherbanee to approve the special meeting minutes of February 9, 2026.

- The motion passed 4–0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

7. Management Report and Financial Discussion (00:26:00–00:49:00)

a. Housing Manager Lisa Axson presented the management report:

- Recertifications for Independence Village and Freedom Village scheduled for May 2026; no HQS inspections due or failed.
- Five work orders received, three completed; 16 active applicants on waiting list with 4 additional applications sent out.
- Freedom Village has 2 vacancies (units 44, 47 clean-out quote pending for relocation); Independence Village has 4 vacancies (units 23, 28, 33, 34), quote pending from Latham Movers; units 33 and 34 held for relocation.

b. Financial and budget items:

- December and January financials distributed; budget prepared, submitted, and approved by CHFA.
- Maria DeMarco noted commissioners will receive monthly actual-vs-budget reports once budget is input into the system.

c. Resident concerns and upcoming activities:

- Continued complaints about unattended dogs and pet waste; no grievances received.
- Recertification packets distributing next week; Social Services agreed to assist residents with completion.

- Annual unit inspections begin March with advance notice; rent increase notices sent and posted; tenant meeting scheduled March 11 at 5:00 p.m.
- Maria DeMarco clarified the commission approved the budget inclusive of the 10% rent increase (capped at \$50/unit per state limits), rent year runs July 1–June 30, individual rents calculated after receiving resident financial information, with 45 days' notice required.

d. Additional management updates:

- Lisa Axson compiling cable/internet options for commission decision.
- Audit by Costello delayed; management to request status update.
- Previous snow removal contractor terminated; Chair Doherty-Peck identified replacement vendor (Tobey) for remainder of season; bids for landscaping and snow removal to be solicited.
- Unpaid water testing invoices from 2021 and 2024 identified; Chair Doherty-Peck offered to contact state water department to verify work performed.

e. After-hours emergency call issue:

- A weekend no-heat call was not properly routed; Vice-Chair Suarez was contacted by tenants after multiple failed attempts. Maintenance person Bob resolved the issue. There was no resident without heat, all apartments have baseboard should the other one go out. They all worked and were turned on.
- Office phone now forwards to 24/7 live answering service with escalation chain (maintenance, Lisa Axson, Sherry, Maria DeMarco) and 15-minute response windows; correct after-hours number (860-848-1739) confirmed; outdated number (860-800-0015) removed.

f. Aging report and outstanding tenant balances:

- Maria DeMarco recommended writing off balances for former residents (moved out or deceased) and allowing current residents to verify or dispute balances before collection.
- A motion was made by Sherbanee and seconded by Chair Kathleen Doherty-Peck to remove past balances of individuals who have moved out or passed away.
- The motion passed 4–0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

8. To Consider and Act on a Motion to enter into Executive Session with Commissioners and Management Company for the purpose of discussing internal commission issues.

No Executive Session

9. Chairperson Report and Administrative Matters

- a. Chair Doherty-Peck announced a motion will be placed on the next agenda to move the meeting start time from 5:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Bylaws specify the third Tuesday and alternating locations but do not specify a time.

b. Chair Doherty-Peck stated a proposal for the town to serve as domain administrator for commission emails will be placed on the next agenda for discussion and vote.

c. Chair Doherty-Peck confirmed with Attorney Wrona that meeting minutes need not be verbatim but concise summaries capturing the substance of discussions.

10. Treasurers Report

None

11. New Business

Secretary Hiring and Bill Approvals

a. Agenda amended to add unfinished business before new business.

- A motion was made by Suarez and seconded by Szarzynski to amend the agenda to add unfinished business before new business.
- The motion passed 4–0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

b. Maria DeMarco reported the recording secretary candidate she had in mind is unavailable due to scheduling conflict; She will have one for our next meeting.

c. Bills from June 2 to present had been paid but not formally approved; agenda amended to add approval under unfinished business.

- A motion was made by Angela Sherbanee and seconded by John Szarzynski to approve the bills from June 2 to present.
- The motion passed 4–0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

d. No new business was raised by commissioners.

12. Remarks from Tenants, Public, and Commissioners

a. Tenant concerns raised:

- Requested restoration of water delivery/service
- Reported two non-working baseboards in her unit; urged other residents to check theirs
- Stated elderly residents need patience, timely call responses, and follow-up on meeting issues; has repeatedly been told she would receive answers but never does
- Another tenant stated management has failed to properly explain procedures to new residents at move-in for approximately 10 years

b. Commissioner Szarzynski maintenance items:

- Asked Housing Manager Lisa Axson to look into the baseboard issue

- Stated maintenance checklist must include periodic hand-testing of radon mitigation unit motors at Independence Village, as units have no failure sensors

c. Vice-Chair Suarez remarks:

- Nexus Energy site visit with Eversource scheduled March 2nd, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
- Noted tenant concerns about Freedom Village radon reading report and lack of communication; Commissioner Szarzynski confirmed report had been distributed to all commissioners

d. Commissioner Szarzynski update on Independence Village renovation:

- CHFA unexpectedly stated it would wait for Eagle Environmental's radon mitigation recommendation rather than making its own
- Construction application near finalization with minor items remaining; once complete, final closing and construction start date can be set

e. Vice-Chair Suarez again raised status of Legion Court, Veterans Court, and Liberty Road, presenting documentation indicating they are town roads adopted November 20, 1984.

- Mayor Bunnell disputed this, stating that is incorrect and that the roads are not town-approved roads and that he had previously provided documentation including maps to the commission.
- DeMarco Management President Maria DeMarco noted the road ownership question is moot since the town has committed to clearing the roads

13. Adjournment

a. A motion was made by Sherbanee and seconded by Szarzynski to adjourn.

- The motion passed 4–0, with votes in favor: Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Deb Suarez, John Szarzynski, Angela Sherbanee.

b. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.