

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – March 18, 2026 -- 6:30 p.m.
Room 203 – 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.

This is an informational meeting as a quorum was not present.

1. Call to order.

Chairperson Stone called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Chairperson Rocky Stone, Vice-Chair William Barlow, Commissioners John Plikus and Deborah Schober. Commissioners Noah Carver, Jon Chase, Mary Hillman, and Morgan Matthewson were absent. A quorum was not present.

Also present were Recreation Director Peter Bushway, Town Council Liaison Kate Southard and Mayor Lenny Bunnell.

4. Alternations to the Agenda – No action taken

5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit).

Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. Resident Brian Baker of 560 Old Colchester Road, remarked about Agenda Item 11.b. concerning an increase of all rental fees and the rationale for the same for the large pavilion. He cited several factors for consideration by the Commission prior to its decision that is summarized as follows:

- The \$100 minimum charge for the electric meters before use by a renter, the cost increases associated with the number of devices used, if there is entertainment such as a band and the cost of lighting;
- Water testing at a cost of \$155/month from mid-April thru November;
- The large pavilion \$100 cost for a portable toilet rental;
- Weekly mowing/trimming from mid-April to November 1st in addition to weekly trash removal, rental bathroom cleaning, permanent bathroom cleaning and seasonal winterization;
- Labor, equipment hours and materials for site maintenance;
- The Town investment in upgrades, repairs, and maintenance for the infrastructure;
- Who is monitoring rental times for adherence purposes;

- The number of residents and non-residents that rent the facilities annually;
- The importance of the rental deposit so that is kept separate and not deducted from the rental fee.

Resident Baker also remarked that it may be beneficial to consider implementation of a rental program for Town residents and another for non-residents. In many cases, non-residents do not contribute to the community financially through taxes and is reasoning to evaluate their benefit from taxpayer funded resources. Also, although the large pavilion is one (1) of the eight (8) Town facilities noted, all require attention. Rising annual operational costs for all the facilities would in his opinion require increasing the rental fees. Resident Baker concluded that fully recouping expenses for the facilities may not be feasible, but effort should be made to recover a portion of the costs as ongoing revenue loss is not sustainable as annual operational expenses rise.

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve.

- a. Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2026 -- No action taken

7. Recreation Director’s Report for March 2026.

Recreation Director Bushway reported on Department activities as follows:

- The two (2) Easter Egg Hunts have 200-250 children who participate. Fire trucks will be present from Oakdale and Montville fire stations, and the Masons, who sponsor the events, have donated \$400 toward the eggs. The Masons also donated the flashlights for the Flashlight Egg Hunt.
- Montville High School will be using the gym during the upcoming summer so the summer camp will be relocated.
- A \$1.5 million grant for the Camp Oakdale parking lot is pending approval by the Governor.

Chairperson Stone reported on a problem with the Pickleball Courts that are being used as a waste dump in addition to the misuse of the fields. The Commission may want to pick a date to look at it. Vice-Chair Barlow asked whether repairs to the parking lot are done; Recreation Director Bushway remarked that the work will be done in the spring and it will include repair of the cracking around the posts in addition to restructuring and painting.

8. Report from Finance.

Recreation Director Bushway reported that the account balances are looking good. Spending has been slow with no spending occurring for a few weeks. No line item overages are anticipated. He will also provide the total revenue for the year as requested by Chairperson Stone. The dance, gymnastics and summer camp revenue will be supplied, as well. The Chairperson also inquired about revenue from soccer and lacrosse.

9. April Newsletter.

Recreation Director Bushway reported that the Farmers Market information has not been added yet to the newsletter as it was just received from Town Councilor Southard. Summer Camp applications have been coming in slowly, but the information will be added to the website per the Recreation Director. Vice-Chair Barlow asked whether the job applicants must be 16-years old; the Recreation Director responded “no” noting that some have had babysitting experience and can apply for a work permit. The Recreation Director also noted that summer camp applicants

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work in pairs of two (2) often interacting with 20 kids. Commissioner Schober questioned why Bill Bauer’s name had been added to the newsletter as a commissioner and asked if he is a new Commission member. Town Councilor Southard commented about the Town Council process for review of Commission applicants that is done in executive session. The Town Counselor remarked that Mr. Bauer’s name should be removed from the newsletter at this time.

10. Unfinished Business.

Chairperson Stone asked for follow-up from Public Works Director Carlson on the unfinished Commission that was reported upon as follows:

a. Projects and funding status:

1) Pickleball Parking Improvements (\$175,000 State Bond)

Public Works Director Carlson reported that a truck drove through the parking lot a couple of years ago and sank into the asphalt so there are now soft spots that need to be repaired. The challenge for the Department is there are no maps as to where anything is underground. The septic system and the leaching system for the bathrooms are also being investigated. Work toward improving drainage issues will be addressed with test kits close to catch basins.

2) Large Pavilion Phase 1 Parking Improvements (\$200,000 State Bond)

Public Works Director Carlson reported that he was not sure if there is conduit underneath the parking lot as there is concern for lighting installation. The islands will be adjusted to attain more parking spaces. State Bond is pending on this item.

The Public Works Director also reported that paving work has been done under the football bleachers where a lot of litter was found. The space can accommodate ambulances, and the paving has raised the bleachers. Also, the robot for line painting has been good for painting lines on the football field at the high school in a matter of two (2) hours and is an awesome learning tool. Vice-Chair Barlow asked if a call could be made to locate the electrical; the Public Works Director reported that there is a company that does that work, but the cost is high. He noted having used the company once for the Field #7 lights on the outside of the field. The Public Works Director noted that he is trying to be proactive with projects. Commissioner Schober asked about the septic for the bathrooms; the Public Works Director noted that the work was done in the late 1970’s and although he found the map, the septic system location is unknown. He also added that he does not know where the tennis lights are underground.

3) Pickleball Camera Project (\$26,250 CIP Budget)

Public Works Director Carlson reported that a good location is being sought to run wiring for the cameras at the site as internet is needed for transmission. Again, lines must be located underground in order to start digging for this project that is coordinated with the Town IT Department. This process is delicate to prevent pulling up tennis court lights and creating a barrier for the same.

4) Pickleball privacy screen (up to \$2,500 from Fund 079)

Public Works Director Carlson reported that the privacy screen has been installed.

5) Camp Oakdale Maintenance Building

Public Works Director Carlson want to install a burglar alarm, do some grading work and a pad to protect the building when backing in a vehicle. Concrete is needed at a cost of \$2,000. Three (3) trees were removed around the garage doors since he had a dump truck available. He also noted a tree removed from Fair Oaks as it was dying and the top had fallen off of it.

6) Carnival Committee

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Town Councilor Southard reported on the status of the carnival. A pizza food truck has been acquired for Friday and Sunday. Recreation Director Bushway reported working on to get a barbecue truck and confirmed that the rock wall is scheduled for Saturday. Commissioner Schober is looking for a balloon company. The Town Councilor also reported on the following food trucks: Mr. Hotdogs, Republicans, Turkey Turkey, and Under the Palm Tree that are not yet definite. Chairperson Stone noted that the carnival is in good shape with more food than last year. The Town Councilor added that there are more sponsors and even more are being sought. The Recreation Director also noted that the letter to sponsors can be done according to Mayor Bunnell.

11. New Business.

- a. Camp Oakdale Parking Improvements
 - 1) CIF Grant for \$1,150,000

Chairperson Stone reported that approval for the grant is still pending.

- 2) Mayor requested bid package be generated

Chairperson Stone reported that Mayor Bunnell has requested a bid package for the Camp Oakdale parking project with July 2026 as the time frame.

- b. To Consider and Act on a Motion to raise the fee charged to rent the Camp Oakdale Pavilion to \$150 for a half day and \$300 for a full day. – No action taken

Chairperson Stone reported a vote cannot be had tonight but noted that Public Works Director Carlson had sent information on the same. Public Works Director Carlson responded to a question from Commissioner Schober concerning the monthly water testing that he said is required but did not pass one time at a cost of \$1,500. The Chairperson remarked further that the motion will be reformulated for presentation at the next meeting. Thereafter, the motion will be forwarded to TARP and then to the Town Council for final approval according to Town Counselor Southard.

12. Communications.

Chairperson Stone reported on the email received from Public Works Director Carlson regarding the maintenance storage building.

13. Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit).

Chairperson Stone asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison Southard.

Town Councilor Southard loved the idea of having two (2) separate fees for Camp Oakdale rentals. She expressed disappointment of not having a quorum present and commented on the time wasted, the lack of courtesy, and not calling about a meeting absence given the importance of this Commission.

15. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway.

Recreation Director Bushway remarked on having spoken to the company outsourced for the Pickleball Court privacy screen. There is apparently an issue with the Town of Montville QR-Code as to the quality of it as they cannot get it to work. The original code may be needed for completion of the privacy screen that will be 191' x 9' at a cost of \$3,200. Chairperson Stone noted that \$2,500 was authorized but a cost adjustment can be considered.

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16. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Schober remarked again on the addition of a commissioner on the newsletter and questioned whether the problem during pickup time at summer camp experienced by Vice-Chair Barlow has been resolved. Recreation Director Bushway reported that the person who did not follow protocol will be replaced. Vice-Chair Barlow questioned whether there are rules for absences from the meetings that he deemed uncourteous; Town Councilor Southard noted that there is a process. Chairperson Stone remarked that a request is made to the commissioners to notify him of an absence when he sends out the meeting packet. Had he known there would not be a quorum, he would have cancelled the meeting. The Chairperson remarked that he could send an email to each commissioner individually regarding the same.

17. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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 USING THE “RESOURCES” LINK.**