

**MONTVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Special Meeting Agenda**  
**May 5, 2026 -- 4:30 PM**  
**Independence Village -- 41 Mileski Drive-- Uncasville, CT 06382**

1. Call to Order.  
Chairperson Doherty-Peck called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.  
All stood and pledged the flag.
3. Roll Call.  
Present were Chairperson Kathie Doherty-Peck, Secretary Karen Perkins, and Commissioner Angela Sherbanee. Vice-Chair Deborah Suarez and Treasurer John Szarzynski were absent from the meeting. A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were DeMarco Management Corporation President Maria DeMarco and Housing Manager Lisa Axson,

4. Speaker: Penny Fisher, CHFA – Montville Housing Authority FY 2026 Budget.  
Chairman Doherty-Peck remarked on discussion with M. DeMarco regarding expenses, an influx of management costs and the need to send a budget to satisfy P. Fisher. M. DeMarco reported on additional expenses incurred in 2026 thus far that include extra water for Freedom Village, horrific snow removal costs and leaving units unoccupied for renovation purposes for temporary relocation of tenants. P. Fisher remarked that the 2025 year end went pretty well but the audit was problematic . Additional funds are not available to support the operating budget requiring line item reductions to support the budget overage. Which expenses can be included in the budget was a question that was posed.

M. DeMarco reported on having retained the services of the previous bookkeeper although there are no funds available for it. The 2022-2025 bank statements were requested and are housed in her Hartford office. As to the 2026 budget, rents were reviewed and a \$50 increase is proposed. The current overage is \$105,000--\$65,000 for Freedom Village (Freedom) and \$40,000 for Independence Village (Independence). Budget expenses were reviewed line by line and critical costs include bottled water and a property manager three (3) days per week with a shortage of funds. The snow contractor attempted the first winter storm and walked off the job thereafter. A second contractor was found at a higher cost. Furthermore, the fee to pay the management company is

based on rents and the lowest rents are here. Rent in the low 3's especially with renovations as well as affordable housing is subsidized by tenants with more income for those with lower rent. Current vacancies include three (3) at Independence and two (2) at Freedom that must be kept empty, according to L. Axson. Potential tenants who have been on the list for years have been told "no" and sending a letter to them is all that can be done at this time.

M. DeMarco spoke on the renovation work that will begin first at Freedom--tenants must be relocated into the swing space or move out until completion of the work. The timeline for completion is 8-12 weeks. Independence has an application waiting for the attorney for closing to move the project along quickly. Construction is scheduled to begin in late May or early June. The Freedom application is nearly completed with project plans at 90%. The biggest issue there is the lead in the water sourced by wells but the water at the tap is lead-free, and purchase of water will not be done this year. A lead laden well will require the removal of the casing, digging a new well or converting to public water. The cost to SCWA pumphouse is mid-\$100,000 for faucet water to the pipes. According to P. Fisher, funding is available for this work. If a construction application can be obtained for Freedom it would want to be started once Independence is 75% along.

Once a schedule for renovation is finalized, meetings will occur with individuals as all household items must be moved or put in storage. The moves will depend on the general contractor, and a stipend is provided to offset expenses noted P. Fisher. As to the budget, the aim is to reduce the big line items, reduce or waive taxes for a year and pay 10%, 5%, or 0% for shelter rent by figuring out what the cost will be. Discussion was had about snow removal/plowing and rebidding a contract for this service including assigned parking costs. The Town clears the road, doorways and the common walking areas. Backhoes were needed due to the severity of the winter storms at a cost per inch.

P. Fisher emphasized looking at the expenses more closely noting the water tests for wells are required and/or the cost to pay for public water. M. DeMarco reported that the Citizens Bank account of \$80,000 that has one (1) signatory was to be closed by the Treasurer. A. Sherbanee agreed to close the account this Saturday morning. New accounts were opened and the STIP reserve of \$101,000 will be exhausted. Two (2) separate accounts are needed for each site; A. Sherbanee was asked to get a cashier's check to deposit at Charter Oak.

L. Axson reported that the wait list is not closed; there are currently 16 on it but the list has not been updated but requires cleaning and purging by contact with individuals. Suggestions were had to contact Cathy Osten regarding funding, Elder Resident Assistant Payment (ERAP) is now transferable, charging more for rent but with subsidies and reaching out to Norwich \_\_\_\_\_ for vouchers.

M. DeMarco reported that there are no funds for contingencies. A manager is present three (3) days, but a 40-hour week manager was proposed. General expenses and related topics were discussed as follows:

- Two (2) part-time workers to complete work orders (\$10,000),
- A unit that has a smoker will require cleaning the AC system and walls as you cannot evict anyone for smoking;
- Renegotiate insurance cost—there is a special organization for housing authorities;
- Watch yearly expenses and develop a more realistic budget whereby changes can be made in order to break even;
- Acquiring a company that charges less for water testing; sending a general email to all companies suggested; and
- Reduction to costs for PILOT, advertising, water testing, and the purchase of bottled water.

5. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve the Montville Housing FY 2026 Budget, as presented.

**Motion** by Commissioner Sherbanee; seconded by Commissioner Perkins to accept the FY 2026 Budget with potentially reduced budget lines items for cost purposes as follows: (1) negotiate Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) with the Town; (2) eliminate Advertising, (3) reduce Repairs, Maintenance and Materials; (4) reduce level of Snow Removal service; (5) less expensive Water Testing Company; (6) reduce the cost of Background Checks; and (7) cost effective ways to purchase Bottled Water. **Roll Call vote: In Favor, Chairperson Doherty-Peck, Commissioner Sherbanee and Commissioner Perkins. Opposed: none. 3-0-0, Motion Approved.**

6. Adjournment.

**Motion** by Commissioner Sherbanee; seconded by Commissioner Perkins to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Discussion: none. **Voice vote: 3-0-0, all in favor. Meeting Adjourned.**