

Town of Montville Public Works/Solid Waste Sub-Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, August 24, 2011
5:30 p.m. – Room 102 – Montville Town Hall

1. Call to Order

Chairman McFee called the regular meeting of the Public Works/Solid Waste Sub-Committee to order after establishing a quorum.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present were Councilors Buebendorf and McFee, absent was Councilor Beetham. Also present was Public Works Director, Don Bourdeau and Sandie Gregory, volunteer coordinator, Re-use/free items.

4. Presentations – none.

5. Alterations to the Agenda – none.

6. Approval of the August 3, 2011 Special Meeting Minutes

Councilor Buebendorf was not present for the August 3, 2011 special meeting and therefore can not vote to approve the minutes so this item will be added to the September agenda for approval.

7. Remarks from the Public Regarding Items on the Agenda

Chairman McFee asked three times if there was anyone from the public who would like to address the Committee regarding items on the agenda.

8. Old Business

a. Update/discussion regarding re-use/free items and tag sales.

Ms. Gregory stated sales and donations continue to be down, stating groups are netting fewer than three hundred dollars on average. She stated she will begin to schedule sales for next year in October or November.

b. Update/discussion regarding the Adopt a Road program.

Mr. Bourdeau stated he did not have anything to discuss regarding the Adopt a Road program this month.

- c. Update regarding road repairs and chip sealing/paving.

Mr. Bourdeau stated chip sealing will begin on Fire Street next week. He discussed repairs to Kitemaug Road and the detour on the street. Chairman McFee stated there are significant pot holes and road disrepair and he is concerned regarding the emergency routes if bad weather hits the State at the end of the week. Mr. Bourdeau stated the road will be striped next week to help motorists maneuver the road and arrow signs have been installed on the sharp corners.

- d. Update/discussion regarding Transfer Station Operations.

Mr. Bourdeau stated the inmates are not utilized at the Transfer Station any longer due to a requirement of the State that the Town provide insurance and take responsibility for them while they are on Town property. He stated he continues to work on a STEAP grant for renovations to the Transfer Station.

- e. Update/discussion regarding bridge repairs.

Mr. Bourdeau discussed repairs to the Montville Road Bridge, stating Montville is eligible to apply for a STEAP grant for a portion of the repairs. He stated there is no local bridge money available and hopes the STEAP grant come through. He plans to set up a meeting with the City of Norwich to discuss options for the repairs.

Mr. Bourdeau discussed the repairs to the bridge on Kitemaug Road, stating the road was closed after it was discovered a rock from the side wall fell and is now supporting the headwall. He stated the wall will collapse if the rock that fell is removed because it is now supporting the remaining portion of the bridge. He stated the plan is to repair the headwall and catch basin and re-line the wall. A discussion was held regarding a time line for the repairs and the extent of the damage.

- f. Discussion/workshop regarding amendments to the proposed sidewalk ordinance.

Mr. Bourdeau stated the proposed sidewalk ordinance was not well received by the Town Council. He explained an ordinance should be implemented because the liability is currently on the town if someone should get hurt while walking in the roadway because the sidewalk is not cleared. He stated that the sidewalks need to be cleared, either by putting the responsibility on the homeowner or on the town to avoid future lawsuits. Chairman McFee requested Mr. Bourdeau provide him with data regarding how many people will be affected by the ordinance and how many feet of frontage the residents that

are affected have. He also would like to go out for an RFQ to determine how much it will cost the taxpayers to hire out to clear the sidewalks so the residents know how much their taxes will increase if this option is chosen. Mr. Bourdeau stated to compile the information requested is time consuming because someone would have to pull the Assessor's cards for each property to determine the footage of each property affected. Chairman McFee stated he feels the sidewalk ordinance will lower the value of the homes affected by the ordinance and suggested giving those homeowners a tax break if an ordinance is implemented. He stated it will cost more to maintain the properties and the homeowners should be compensated for this. Councilor Buebendorf suggested Chairman McFee look into the legality of giving tax breaks to offset a sidewalk ordinance to determine if it can be done and she stated he is assuming the ordinance will lower property values and this is not a proven fact. She stated any ordinance will be burdensome to some but is implemented for the good of the town as a whole. She stated most people already clean up their sidewalks after a storm and it is only a very few who choose not to do so. An ordinance would put the liability on the homeowners and not on the town as it is only a matter of time before someone sues the town if they get hurt while walking in the road. Chairman McFee stated he is not in favor of implementing the ordinance without giving something back to the homeowners affected by the ordinance. Councilor Buebendorf stated it does not hurt to send the ordinance to Public Hearing so the Town Council can hear what the taxpayers have to say and how they feel about implementing the ordinance. Councilor Buebendorf stated it is only a matter of time before there is a lawsuit against the town that can be avoided by implementing an ordinance that clearly spells out who is responsible for clearing the sidewalks of snow and debris. She stated it is inconsistent to have an ordinance for the Route 32 corridor and not for the rest of the town. She stated there is no harm in holding a Public Hearing as it does not obligate the Town Council to implement the ordinance, it just gives the residents the opportunity to speak for or against it. Councilor Buebendorf stated she believes it is too late to implement an ordinance prior to the election and suggested removing this item from the agenda and to allow the next Council to bring it back if they choose to do so.

Motion made by Councilor Buebendorf, seconded by Councilor McFee to remove this item from the agenda and to leave it up to the next Council to re-visit the proposed sidewalk ordinance in the future if they deem it important to do so. Discussion, none, voice vote, 2-0, all in favor, motion carried.

g. Update/discussion regarding the Pay as You Throw Program.

Chairman McFee stated he believes the Pay as You Throw program would benefit the Town but at this point it is moot to continue to talk about it with the possibility of a new Council in November. He stated the new Council can put this item back on the agenda after November if they choose to do so. He stated it is still a viable option and he hopes the new Council will move forward with it.

Motion made by Councilor McFee, seconded by Councilor Buebendorf to remove this item from the agenda, discussion, none, voice vote, 2-0, all in favor, motion carried.

- h. Discussion regarding removal of materials at Camp Oakdale.

Mr. Bourdeau stated he has been in contact with the Administrator of the WPCA to discuss storing the materials currently at the Camp Oakdale site on the Pink Row site acquired by the WPCA in a land swap. He hopes to have all the materials moved from the Camp Oakdale parking lot as soon as the property is available to him so the Fire Departments can move forward with their training. He discussed options for areas to store materials, stating the town needs to look into making areas available for storage of materials.

- i. Discussion regarding tree survey cost estimate.

Mr. Bourdeau stated the town currently does not have a handle on the extent of the damage to some trees throughout the town. He hopes to get a survey done of the town to determine the extent of the work and to incorporate it into the towns Capital Plan in the future. He stated this needs to be addressed.

- j. Discussion regarding the disposal of surplus property.

Mr. Bourdeau stated this item is now in the hands of the Finance Committee to implement a procedure for the timely disposal of town owned property.

Motion made by Councilor Buebendorf, seconded by Councilor McFee to remove this item from the agenda, discussion, none, voice vote, 2-0, all in favor, motion carried.

- 9. New Business – none.

- 10. Remarks from the Public

Ms. Gregory discussed a huge tree that fell on Jerome Road and stated she sees many trees in bad shape in town. She agrees the tree issue needs to be addressed before a tree falls on a building or a car.

- 11. Remarks from the Councilors

Councilor Buebendorf stated the Public Safety Commission is disappointed with the inaction of the Town Council to implement a sidewalk ordinance. She stated they believe it is a public safety concern and she hope the next Council will resurrect the ordinance because the town needs one.

12. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Buebendorf, seconded by Councilor McFee to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. Discussion, none, voice vote, 2-0, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Audrey Ulmer, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville.